



**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**THE CURSE CREDENTIAL: A REVELATION OF TRAUMA AND FEAR IN  
THE CHARACTERS OF *THE BOOK THIEF***

A Project submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for  
the award of the Bachelor of Degree

**ANAGHA RANJITH C**

**Register No.: DB18AEGR001**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project Supervisor: Mr. Sarath Krishnan**

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## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “The Curse Credential: A Revelation of Trauma and Fear in the Characters of *The Book Thief*” is a bonafide work of Anagha Ranjith C, who carried out the project under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Project Supervisor

### Declaration

I, Anagha Ranjith C, hereby declare that the project work entitled “The Curse Credential: A Revelation of Trauma and Fear in the Characters of *The Book Thief*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English. It is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Sarath Krishnan of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Angadikadavu.

I also declare that this project has not been submitted fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Anagha Ranjith C

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DB18AEGR001

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## Table of Contents

	Page no.
Introduction	1
Chapter One	3
Theoretical Framework of Trauma	
Chapter Two	12
The analysis of <i>The Book Thief</i>	
Chapter Three	22
Trauma in <i>The Book Thief</i> and escapism of the protagonist.	
Conclusion	32
Works Consulted	34

## Introduction

The project titled “The Curse Credential: A Revelation of Trauma and Fear in the Characters of *The Book Thief*” is an attempt to draw out the elements of trauma in Markus Zusak’s work *The Book Thief*. The purpose is to bring out traumatic elements that are present in a novel. Trauma is any emotional or physical injury caused by or followed by any stressful event. Any stressful event can make someone wounded for a long time. Characters are an important element of a fiction and thus tries to explores the trauma of different characters. The novel views the fear of the people during the time of war. It tries to show how one deals with the trauma and fear of death during certain critical period like war and how the protagonist escapes the death. It is also an attempt to show some defense mechanism the protagonist, being a child uses: certain times to deal with trauma.

The project is divided into three chapters. It also provides a conclusion of the entire project. The first chapter titled “Theoretical framework of trauma” provides the detailed analysis of trauma in the psychoanalytic theory. It tries to give a detailed idea of trauma theory and some of the defense mechanisms proposed by Freud and Anna Freud.

The second chapter titled “The analysis of *The Book Thief*” contains the briefs about the author Markus Zusak. He is an Austrian writer of immigrant German and Austrian parents. He wrote the story by combining certain incidents that were real in Germany, but it is work of fiction. The chapter attempts showcase the themes portrayed in the novel and some based on the work. It provides a detailed view of the novel with all the major characters and death as the narrator.

The third chapter depicts how trauma is found in the novel among the main characters. Each person facing trauma would have something common in them. The trauma mentioned in the novel is mostly based on death; trauma due to death of a person or by holocaust. The chapter further analyses the fear of death or fear of being dead among the main characters of the novel and further the escapism of the protagonist. It also showcases the defense mechanisms used by the protagonist to overcome some traumatic situations in her life.

## Chapter 1

### Theoretical framework of trauma theory

Psychoanalytic criticism is a form of literary criticism which uses some of the techniques of psychoanalysis in the interpretation of literature. Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind. The repressed fears and conflicts which are causing the problems are brought into the conscious mind and openly faced rather than remaining buried in the unconscious.

It was Sigmund Freud who gave his idea the name psychoanalysis in 1896. Sigmund Freud was an Austrian neuropsychologist. Jean Martin Charcot, founder of modern neurology, through his work with patients called the hysterics and introduced Freud the possibility psychological disorders might have their source in mind rather than brain. As a result of his own clinical experience with other hysterics the revolutionary method was introduced by encouraging the patient to express any random thoughts that came associatively to mind, the technique aimed at uncovering the unarticulated material from the psyche called the unconscious. He said that people are motivated by desires, fears and conflicts of which they are unaware. They are unconscious of these forces. The forces are stored in our memory and are repressed. This unconscious mind is a sub-section of the mind, lying below the level of consciousness, and it organizes our current experiences and emotions. The unconscious is dynamic and is always at work, controlling us from the very depths of our being. There are many defenses by which we keep the unconscious under the check. Transference and projection are two of these defenses. Transference describes the phenomenon where the individual redirects emotions and feelings, often unconsciously, from one

person to another and projection is when individual attribute characteristics they find unacceptable in themselves to another person. Then there is regression, a short return to the past experience which is relived. It is a good therapeutic tool for cure. When some of these defenses breakdown we have anxiety. We have partial access of unconscious through our dreams and creative activities. During our dreams the unconscious is free to express itself. The dream becomes a nightmare, when it is too fearful or threatening. It may lead to trauma when the conscious defense breakdown. Death and sexuality are fascinating themes for study in psychoanalysis. Critics of this persuasion have varied notions on how these concepts can be fruitfully applied to literary criticism.

Freud uses the term dreamwork to refer to the ways by which real events are transformed into dream images. These are called displacement and condensation where displacement is one method by which the repressed returns in hidden ways, and in condensation a number of dream elements are combined. Events are represented in a dream very much like they are represented in literary works. Abstract ideas and feelings are concretised. Dreams show or reveal things as literature does. Dreams are like literature. The purpose of a work of art, like the purpose of the dream is the secret gratification of a forbidden infantile wish. All of his work depends upon the notion of the unconscious, which nevertheless has a strong influence upon our actions.

The Indian edition of *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the fact that the word trauma is Greek in origin and defines trauma as a deeply distressing experience, physical injury, emotional shock following a stressful event. (811)

Merriam-Webster's dictionary gives us the idea of trauma as an injury (such as a wound) to living tissue caused by an extrinsic agent or a disordered psychic or behavioral state resulting from severe mental or emotional stress or physical injury.

Psychological trauma, its representation in language, and the role of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities are the central concerns that define the field of trauma studies. Psychoanalytic theories on trauma paired with additional theoretical frameworks such as post structural, sociocultural, and postcolonial theory form the basis of criticism that interprets representation of an extreme experience and its effects upon the identity and memory. The concept of trauma, itself a source of critique, is generally understood as a severely disruptive experience that profoundly impacts the self's emotional organization and perception of the external world. Trauma studies explores the impact of trauma in literature and society by analyzing its psychological, rhetorical, and cultural significance.

Trauma studies first developed in the 1990's and relied on Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether. This model of trauma indicates that suffering is unrepresentable. Following it came the more pluralistic model of trauma that suggests the assumed unspeakability of trauma is one among many responses to an extreme event rather than its defining feature.

Freud's theories on traumatic experience and memory define the psychological concepts that guide the field. The origin and effects of trauma arose in the nineteenth-century study of shock and hysteria by researchers. In Freud's early work he argues that traumatic hysteria develops from a repressed, earlier experience of sexual assault. Freud and Breuer emphasize in *Studies in Hysteria* that the original event was not traumatic in itself but only in its remembrance. Because the original event continues to inflict harm, the talking cure or abreaction is required to understand the effects of the past and gain freedom from its symptom causing grasp. Importantly, the traumatic event is understood only after a latency period of deferred action that delays the effects and

meaning of the past. It is only a contemporary event that calls forth the previously repressed event that the past event can become known in the process of remembering inflicts the psychological pain but also ascribes value to a previously repressed experience in the unconscious. This traumatic remembering is termed “pathogenic reminiscences” for pathologic symptoms the memory causes. Trauma is thus defined in relation to the process of remembering and as an event harbored within the unconscious that causes a splitting of the ego or dissociation. The fundamental phenomenon of hysteria involves dissociation which the author argue is a defense mechanism that arises from repression; another mode of defense is amnesia. The notion that trauma causes dissociation or a gap in psyche is taken up by Freud throughout his career. The concept of the latency period between the event and its pathological effects, along with the idea that trauma fragments the psyche, can cause dissociation, and continuously wreaks havoc or infects it, are principles that Freud adjusts later in his career but still influence the contemporary definition of trauma for literary critics.

Freud’s work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) was on war neurosis and the problem of traumatic repetition and adapts the earlier theories on the defense mechanisms of the ego as well as the origin and effects of the trauma upon the psyche. Traumatic events create conflicts in the ego which split off from the unity of ego and are repressed but later often return in dreams. According to him the mind is an organism which contains outer and inner layers, with the outer layer having a protective shield against the harmful external stimuli. However, the fright is the state a person gets into when he has run into danger without being prepared for it, the lack of anxiety coupled with the external stimuli cause neurosis. Anxiety acts as a protection mechanism against traumatic neurosis but unexpected fright carries no defense. Trauma is imagined as both an external agent that shocks the unprepared system and an internal action of defense

against overstimulation. The traumatic experiences are repeated compulsively, divide the psyche, influence memory differently than other experiences and are unable to be experienced initially but only in narrative reproduction of the past, are the key ideas informing the development in trauma studies that address the theory of trauma and the ways that trauma influences memory and identity. This criticism employs psychoanalytic theories to analyze emotional suffering in the texts as well as the language of loss, disruption and fragmentation. The concepts of latency, pathology, dissociation, and infection are central to the first or traditional model that suggest trauma is an unrepresentable event that suggests trauma is an unrepresentable event that fundamentally fragments the psyche. A flood of scholarship in 1990's arose to examine the concept of trauma and its role in literature and society most prominently by Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, and Geoffrey Hartman.

Cathy Caruth's work *Unclaimed Experience -Trauma, Narrative, and History*, remains a remarkable text for reading trauma. When it was firstly published, 'trauma studies' was not a formally declared field. In the mid 1990's, research on trauma was pursued in clinical areas such as psychology and neurobiology, and marginally by holocaust studies. Caruth's text was one of the first to shape the now recognized field, along with others. Caruth resists the designation of trauma studies and claims that the phrase has the disadvantage of codifying the term 'trauma' and eliminating some of its surprise and literariness. Her work offers an extensive framework for reading the narratives of traumatic experience through psychoanalytic and literary theory. Caruth's crucial and contemporary resonant question for the experience of trauma is posed in her introduction: "is the trauma the encounter with death or the ongoing experience of having survived it?" Caruth approaches this question by analyzing the "double telling" an oscillation between the "crisis of death" and "the correlative crisis of life" or a

confrontation of death and then of survival, which is elucidated by an intersection between the language of literature and psychoanalytic theory. By exploring different works of European psychoanalysts, philosophers and filmmakers, Caruth argue that the texts “stubbornly persist in bearing witness to some forgotten wound” in the absence of an immediate understanding of the traumatic experience.

By primarily reinterpreting Freud’s writing on trauma, Caruth illustrates that the language of trauma is literary because it defies, even as it claims our understandings. Beyond pathology, Caruth argues that within these passage is the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of the reality or truth that is not the otherwise available. Working with Freud’s concept of latency, Caruth explains that trauma is deferred experience that returns to repeatedly haunt the survivor. After the traumatic period during which the traumatic symptoms are not apparent, subjects then engage in an involuntary cycle of repetition, or a reliving of the traumatic experience. For her this repetition happens because the traumatic experience was not assimilated by the subject at the inception, the trauma is so unexpected that the subject experience a rupture in perception and this rupturing experience then repeats as nightmares or flashbacks. Caruth suggests a rethinking of the reference resituating trauma in our understanding through which history arises.

Cathy Caruth’s introduction *The Wound and the Voice*, opens new ground on a problematic explored by Geoffrey Hartman, Elaine Scarry, and Slavoj Zizek- the relation between pain and language, in its narrative, historical, and ethical dimensions. She argues that trauma when it occurs first is incomprehensible. It is only after the latency period that it can be placed in the narrative; the impact of traumatic events lies precisely in its belatedness, in its refusal to be simply located. Traumatic narrative is

strongly referential, but not in any simple or direct way. And the construction of history develops from delayed response to trauma.

Caruth presents de Manian reference as a literary symptom, an unconscious, inevitable imprint of events on texts in the form of verbal tricks and she quite efficiently reinterprets de Man's blindness and insight model in terms of traumatic impact and later inscription. She invites consideration of de Man's wartime writing and his failure ever to refer to them as he refers the fall and then oblivious to gravity rise again. So she asks where in text one can note the impact of and reference of the fall. Caruth seems to suggest that de Man's mature writing cannot help but refer to his fall, that its refusal to refer is still an imprint of reference.

Trauma in sociology is not a reaction to a historical cause at all, but a collective construction. For people trauma is what they experience as unsupportable, horrifying or overwhelming. Trauma as term is a social fact in itself and it points to some underlying social experience. Trauma in reality is an ex-post construct. Prager defines social trauma in a theoretical framework that addresses social reality and at the same time, psychoanalytically reflected individual experience, as an event or series of events that are remembered as so dangerous as to be preserve an equilibrating belief in a world that presumes our presence. He speaks about three types of trauma, firstly the trauma of lethality, where the loving self is at risk, secondly trauma of violence and bodily harm, where the safety and security promised by the society based on equal rights is undermined and thirdly, trauma of personal invisibility, when the failure to be recognized as individual produces anti-social results and thus withdrawal of solidary connections.

Cultural trauma is a concept coined by Alexander et al. underlining that social facts are not causes but attribution. The state that events are not inherently traumatic, it is a socially mediated attribution. The attribution may be made in real time as the event happens or even before that. Sometimes events that are deeply traumatizing may not actually have occurred at all. The traumatic events in history are constructed reference points of memory or re-projection of societies, serving their group identity.

Vamik Volkan while developing the concept of chosen trauma as an identity marker for ethnic, national, or religious groups, usually uses collective trauma instead of social trauma. His theoretical approach is based on the transgenerational transmission of a shared imagination of the mostly archaic, traumatic event. Thus, the concept of the collectively chosen trauma combines a trauma concept derived individual psychoanalysis to a sociological approach. The collectively shared imagination of the trauma serves as a symbol that psychologically links large group members together.

The notion of “historical trauma” was quite different from the social trauma, cultural trauma or collective trauma that has been emerging in historiography since the 1990’s. In Cathy Caruth’s seminal work and Dominick LaCapra opened a debate that challenged historiography over the irrepresentability of the Holocaust. Some historians developed a strong interest in psychoanalytic approaches to individual testimony as a historical source and established empirical cooperation. From the science of history doubt arose regarding the validity and objectivity of testimonies as historical sources. The trauma concept in sociology, historiography, philosophy, and cultural and literary studies provoked serious criticisms. Kansteiner and Weilnbock objected that the concept of cultural trauma is a paradigm error, an understandable but misleading application of a psychopathological concept to society.

Defense Mechanism is a term in psychoanalytic theory. It was first used by Sigmund Freud in his paper “The Neuro-Psychoses of Defense” in 1894. Basically, defense mechanism is any group of mental processes which enables our mind to reach compromise to conflicts that are unable to resolve. This process is unconscious and the compromise mostly involves concealing one’s internal conflicts and feelings that threatens to lower the self-esteem or provoke anxiety. The concept of defense mechanism is based on the psychoanalytic hypothesis that there are forces in mind that opposes and battle against each other.

Some of the major defense mechanisms by psychoanalysts are repression, which is the withdrawal from consciousness of an unwanted idea and desire to push it down or repress it under the unconscious part of the mind, another mechanism is reaction formation, which is the fixation in the consciousness of an idea which affects an opposite desire to a feared unconscious impulse. Sublimation is the diversion or deflection of instinctual drives, usually non instinctual channels, the psychoanalytic theory holds that the energy invested in sexual impulses can be shifted in pursuit of more acceptable and even socially valuable, artistic and creative achievements. It is the channeling of unacceptable feelings, desires and impulses into positive, socially approved activity. This can be creative but it is not necessary to be creative. Freud considers it as a matured defense mechanism.

Denial is the conscious refusal to perceive those painful facts exist. Denial keeps the pain temporarily away and allow us to presume functioning. Withdrawal is another defense mechanism where one avoids people or withdraws themselves from a problem-solving action or frustration. Displacement is another defense mechanism by which people cope with their acute anxieties by transferring their emotions about a stressor onto other objects or activities that are less threatening.

## Chapter Two

### The analysis of *The Book Thief*

Markus Zusak was born on 1975 in Sydney, Australia. He was the youngest child of immigrant German and Austrian parents. His parents didn't knew English when they first arrived Australia. So, they wanted his four children to master in English language. They encouraged them the read at an early age. He started writing fiction when he was sixteen; has a degree for teaching and is a professional author. *The Book Thief* was published in the year 2006. It was a great success. The novel is recognized with Publishers Weekly Best Children's Book of the year 2006; the award given for best book of teens in 2007 that is Michael L. Printz Honor Book. It was also recognized as a young adult novel using holocaust and World War II as its setting. His other works include *I Am The Messenger* (2004), *Bridge of Clay* (2018), *Getting The Girl* (2001), and *Underdogs* (2011) an anthology which consists of his first three books namely, *Under Dogs* (1999), *Fighting Ruben Wolfe* (2000), *When Dogs Cry* (2001).

War is always threatening: there would be a lot of destruction, building collapses, bombs will be dropped from planes, environment is disturbed; many lives get injured and make others surrender to death. Death mostly welcomes everyone who approaches him and sometimes it chooses to take lives before time, even at a young age.

*First the colours.*

*Then the humans.*

*That's usually how I see things.*

*Or at least how I try.*

*-Death*

Death narrates the story of a book thief. A young girl of ten named Liesel Meminger, who escapes from his hands and was left alone after war. Liesel Meminger lived with her mother and younger brother. She knew nothing about her father, the only thing she knew was that he was a communist. In the year 1939, her mother decides to send her children to foster parents. On the way, during the train journey her brother dies. It was the first time death had noticed her. Her brother was buried in the snow in a distant graveyard. She saw a book fall from a gravedigger boy's pocket; she stole it in memory of her brother. Hans Huberman and Rosa Huberman was her foster parents who lived in Miguel street. They were non-Jew but had no hatred for Jews. In the beginning her foster parents had difficulty in creating a bond with her as she refused to obey them. But as days passed she started liking her foster father whom she calls Papa.

On reaching Miguel Street she missed her brother a lot. Every night she would have nightmares about his death and when she wakes up she would always finds her Papa sitting next to her bed. He would be always there to comfort her. One day Liesel asks her Papa to read her the book that she had hidden in her pillow and on Papa's enquiry she lied that it was hers. Her Papa was not a proficient in English but tried to teach her whatever he knows by spelling the words. They would always read at night when she wakes up from her nightmare and her Papa would even play his accordin for her. Thus, she builds an intimate relationship with him. He loved to smoke cigarettes and it was Liesel who rolled the cigarettes. He would teach her in the basement during the night using his painting materials. He was a painter and was not a member of NSDAP: the party members who were the haters of Jew. He was different from the party people; he helped the Jews and had no hatred for them. It was the main reason for

him to deny to fill up the application for being party member in the beginning. But later found the necessity and gave his application but they refused to consider the application as he helped Jews by repainting their shops.

Rosa Huberman whom she calls Mama was entirely a different person from her papa. She was different in showing her love, she used words like 'saukerel' and 'saumench' to call her and her Papa. She used to contribute to the family by washing and ironing the cloths from the neighbouring places. Some of her customers were Jews. She started losing customers as many Jews were forced to leave the street. The wartime was another reason for losing other customers as well. So her Mama started sending Liesel to help her with her work by collecting the cloths from different places and returning them back after ironing; so that they would not try to make the little girl unhappy. Liesel missed her biological mother a lot; she wrote many letters to her but all was unanswered. She later found out the fact that her biological parents were communist. The reason for the suffering and splitting of their family was Hitler.

She used to walk around with her best friend Rudy Steiner who loved her. He was her neighbour as well her classmate. Both of them together went for the Hitler youth meetings and was always with one another in every deed. He would help her with stealing the books and she would help him steal food with other boys in the street. He always encouraged her and knew her strength; he would accompany her wherever she goes. One of her mother's customer was Ilsa Herman who was Mayor's wife, she had lost her son in the war and was living a life among her books. When Liesel stole her second book on Fuhrer's (Adolf Hitler) birthday in 1940 Ilsa Herman saw her and this made her frightened to visit her house. But soon they became good friends and she let Liesel to read from her library. This was her hobby those day and she loved to spent time at her house. One day she gave Liesel her favourite book and gave her an envelope

for her mother. She read the letter and understood that she was backing out from their ironing due to some wartime crisis. This made her angry and returned Ilsa Herman's book. She was sad to lose her favorite place as well company.

By the time they had a visitor hiding in their basement. Hans Huberman's life was saved during a war by a Jew, Erik Vandenburg. He had taught the Huberman to play the accordin. One day he made Hans stay back by suggesting his name to write some names on the envelopes; on that particular day all those who went to war was blown off. It was Erik's accordin that Hubberman used to play for Liesel. After Erik's death he visited his family and offered them help. Years later his offer was accepted by them. As war began the Jews were beaten up and killed. Max Vandenburg, Erik's son somehow managed to escape with the help of his Nazi friend Walter Kuglar. He was forced to abandon his family behind and move forward. His mother gave him the address of Hans in case of emergency. He survived for many days in a dark room unaware of the dawn and dusk until it became difficult for Walter to hide him. So he approached Hans for help and travelled by train to Himmel street by carrying *Mein Kampf* for protection.

The Hubermans hid him in their basement. They made Liesel swear that she won't tell anything about Max to anyone if she wanted her Mama and Papa to be with her. She was frightened by her Papa's words; thus became a promise keeper. Max slept for three days and woke up seeing her. He was frightened by look in her eyes; he feared if she could keep a secret. Slowing they became close and their company grew into a stronger bond. Max narrated about his past and even she communicated to him about every day of her life. She would make him see the sky by describing its colours and appearance of the clouds, and often would bring him newspapers and articles from the streets.

Max and Liesel were similar in many cases; both lost their family during war, Max was a fist fighter and Liesel was also good at fighting. Both had nightmares that disturbed them and both liked reading books. In February on her birthday her parents gave her a book as a gift and she thanked them. She expected that Max would give her *Mein Kampf* but he didn't, still she thanked him by hugging him in order to break his loneliness. Days later she got her gift from Max in the form of a handmade thirteen-page book named *The Standover Man*. He made the book by painting the pages of *Mein Kampf*. The words of Hitler were erased with paint and gave new life to the book. He wrote down about his life in the past and present about the person standing over him from his birth to Liesel's twelfth birthday. He concludes the book by telling that his best standover man was not a man at all but Liesel. At times he used to write down some random thoughts on the painted paper and it had become a collection. By Christmas he even became ill due to the snow and slept for many days. Liesel sat beside him and read 'The Whistler' to him until he wakes up, which he didn't but her mama promised to inform her if he did. She collected thirteen presents to give him when he wakes up. She went to the mayor's house and stole another book for Max and waited for him to wake but she feared about Max being dead. By the time he woke the outside world was ready for war in March.

Death narrates his experience during the war. The Cologne was bombed using planes and he took away many bodies and threw them over his shoulder; he carried the children in his hands safely. The party was preparing themselves for war; they were searching for basements as shelters to escape from the attack of bombing. They checked Huberman's basement where the Jew was hiding, luckily they didn't get to know about Max; even they didn't find the basement suitable as a shelter.

After a somedays there was the first air raid in the dark. On hearing the sirens they moved to their neighbour Fiedler's basement leaving Max alone in the basement and promised to come back. Different peoples carried different things with them to the basement. Be it photo album or some wooden box, Liesel carried her books with her. But her papa had forgotten his accordin. The basement was filled with twenty-two people from the neighbouring families; everyone was filled with fear. They survived it but the next raid was real. On a September night the radio gave the sirens of the air raid and they rushed to the Fiedler's basement. The basement was filled with noise, cries and fear and Liesel started reading her books loudly. Soon the basement was silent except for the book thief's turning pages and reading. Everyone was distracted from the fear of the air raid especially Frau Holtzapfel, who had some issues with Rosa. After that for many weeks there were no raids, so Frau Holtzapfel would make Liesel read the rest of the chapters from *The Whistler* on Monday and Friday at four.

Meanwhile the soldiers marched the Jews to the concentration camp in Dachau through Molching. They were a three-truck full in number; among them was an old man who was very sick. Hans Huberman couldn't see him fall so he rushed to give him some bread. This was noticed by the soldier and both were whipped. Soon he realized that the soldiers would come to his home to give him punishment and would find Max. So, it became necessary to make Max leave the house inorder to escape from the soldiers. One night Max fled. From that day her Papa was in fear of being taken away. Also he even had the guilt for not saving Max. After three weeks two soldiers came and enquired for Rudy. They had come to make Rudy join the school where they create elite German citizens. Rudy was found suitable for it as he had proved himself in the Hitler Youth carnival by winning three medals; he was good at his grades, also he was selected from school by the doctor after his checkup. The Steiners were not ready to give away Rudy.

As a punishment Rudy's father Alex Steiner was sent away from home to Austria, to an army hospital where he had to alter the uniforms of soldiers. Huberman was also given punishment for his deed. He was sent to be part of German army in Stuttgart. He was among the air force special unit which rescues the injured ones during the raids; the ones who carried the dead bodies. On a particular day their van was destroyed and he was injured in his legs and the rest were badly injured. He was sent back, as a handicapped man was of no help to them.

Meanwhile in Munich Street there were another march of the Jews. Liesel looked for Max among them. She just wanted make sure that he was still alive, but she couldn't find him. She and Rudy used to throw bread pieces on the roads before the Jews came and would hide behind the Christmas. Once they were about to get caught but they somehow managed to escape. There was another raid; Liesel read in the Fiedler's basement and it was over with not much harm. Later Rosa gave her the sketchbook made by Max, which he asked her to give it Liesel when she was ready. The book was titled The Word Shaker, which included pictures of most events that happened in his life and it included a story connecting Hitler, Liesel and Max. This book gave her a hope that Max would come back. It also made her believe that her words can bring some change in the world and she has same power as Hitler.

Many parade passed through Munich street in between and finally Liesel found Max among them. She talked to him without getting noticed, but when she was caught she was made to step aside and was even whipped. Followed by this Liesel confessed her secret to Rudy. Her stealing still continued during that time. One day Ilsa Hermann visited her and gave her a black book and aksed her to write. She began writing her own story titled The Book Thief. The raids continued in between and one day in 1943, the Himmel street was bombarded without any warnings or sirens. It resulted in Holocaust,

except Liesel everyone died in the raid. She was saved only because she was writing her story in the basement. This incident adds similarity of hers to Max as both were in the basement hiding from death; also both of them were once saved by a book. The LSE man found her among the bombarded buildings and saved her. She then sat beside her foster parents recollecting all her memories with them and Rudy on finding their dead bodies.

Death finds out about her from the book written by her. It was thrown among the waste collected from Munich Street. He further assures the readers that Liesel was saved that day and she lived till an old age; she died the last day of the present time. He says that Alex Steiner had come home from the war. He regretted for not sending Rudy to the school of elite Germans, which would have saved him from being killed in the raid. The war was over when Hitler surrendered to the death. Alex Steiner reopened his tailor shop and Liesel joined him as a helping hand. By 1945 Max came back to find Liesel.

Death have seen many such stories in his life but certain stories make him remember him and one such story is of the book thief. Her story had distracted him a lot as he had seen her so close many times; but she always manages to escape till the end. She surrendered only when she was ready to go with him.

The anniversary edition of *The Book Thief* contains a bonus material where author says that he started writing this novel even before he knew that he wanted to be a writer. Markus Zusak's inspiration for writing was the stories of his parents who as children lived in Munich and Vienna. Most incidents in the novel were true incidents. Markus Zusak gave it a new form by providing fictional characters. One such incident

is the bread giving incident in the novel, actually two boys were whipped for giving bread for the Jews and in the novel, it was replaced by Hans Huberman.

The major themes in the novel are the kindness and cruelty of humans; concept of love, the dualities of people during the Nazi era, holocaust, death. Moreover it deals with the relationship with different people especially Liesel's relationship with Max, her Papa, Rudy and Ilsa Hermann etc. and with the power of words. It was the power of the words which helped her to build a close relationship with her Papa, Max, Ilsa Hermann and Frau Holtzapfel. It helped her to overcome the tension in the basement during the bombings and it helped her to write her own story. The power words ultimately had saved her life in the end.

Earlier researches on the novel gives us the representation of literacy as power, which is of the idea that each of the characters see book differently. Liesel and the Nazi party addresses books differently. The research is of the idea that how literacy conveys the representation of power. The Nazis value book as trash and burns it to celebrate a new era. But for Liesel the books were important and she steals it. The Nazi's are always devoted to Hitler, they consider him as the supreme power and tells everyone to follow his propaganda, one such example is of Hans junior who advices Liesel to read *Mein Kampf* and considers her other books as powerless ones. The words of the *Mein Kampf* are too dangerous for a young girl and even Max considered it as dangerous propaganda though it saved his life, the words in it were dangerous but he unfolds it by painting them into new books by attributing new meaning to the pages of the book.

Another research on *The Book Thief* is the woman resistance against the Nazi regime based on liberal feminist theory. The research aimed to focus in analyzing the main character's resistance towards Nazi by analyzing main character's background,

social relation and discrimination and the result shows that the resistance consists of ideological differences, making alliance with Nazi enemy, humiliation which leads the main character to resistance, and feeling empathy towards other race and ethic.

## Chapter Three

### Trauma in *The Book Thief* and the escapism of the protagonist

This chapter analyses the trauma affected by different characters in *The Book Thief*; the defenses they use in order to overcome that trauma and escape from the death which becomes a cause for trauma. Trauma is mostly studied in relation with Holocaust and it usually connects with war. This particular fiction is set during the time of World War II and it has certain memories of World War I.

Markus Zusak personified death and made him the narrator, who himself is a cause of trauma for most characters in the novel. Death begins his story with a statement “You are going to die” (3). The statement itself make us anxious and worried. Dealing with death is hard, especially if one is a juvenile, it becomes really hard; similar was the condition of Liesel Meminger, she lost her only brother during a train journey. Her mother was sick and was carrying her both children to foster parents. Liesel very well knew that she and her brother was send to foster parents as their mother was sick. For her it was still a kind of abandoning. Her only relief was that her younger brother would always be with her; but she had to face the unexpected, her brother died on the way during the train journey. He died in front of her staring the floor in stillness. The boy was buried in an unknown place in the snow, “still in disbelief, she started to dig. He couldn’t be dead. He couldn’t be dead. He couldn’t- Within seconds, snow carved into her skin. Frozen blood was cracked across her hand” (24), the protagonist couldn’t handle the death and struggled to check on her brother again until she was dragged away by her mother and she screamed aloud. Losing a sibling is really hard, sibling is the one with whom one can have silly fights, whom one can share their things and

feelings, who cares for each other a lot, but Liesel couldn't enjoy or at least know about these, she was just nine years old and her younger brother was just six years old.

Even before that she lost her father at a very young age, she knew nothing about her father. She didn't know what he did or why he died. For a young child it is necessary to be loved by both their parent, but her whole family left her at a very young age. Similarly, it was not at all easy for her mother, she left her children to foster care thinking that at least they could be able to provide food and shelter, which in her condition she was not able to provide. This clearly state that she too felt the pain of separation as well as trauma of losing her husband and both her children until she lived. Liesel's pain of separation was shown firstly by covering herself in her mother's coat and on reaching Himmel Street she refused to get out of the car and later clung onto the gate resisting to go inside and it was followed by her refusal to wash herself for days until she got adjusted with the new family.

The nights were harder for her as she was facing the effects of trauma every day, she would always have the nightmare of her brother's last stare on the floor of the train; she would wake up in the middle of her dream screaming and would find the bed on the other side of the room, which was arranged for her brother; floating like a boat in that darkness and slowly it disappears. This continued and days later she started making her bed wet due to her hysteric dream. Her most dreams included the happenings of her surroundings and ultimately leads her to the train journey and her brother's last stare. During the day she would just miss him and cry in the washroom quietly and certain times she would whisper Mama and she would appear a hundred times in front of her and vanish. In the beginning since she didn't know to write and read, she was made to sit with younger kids, who were just beginning with alphabets lessons; this disturbed her. The happenings had spoiled her education. After days of

struggling, she was moved to her rightful year but she was mostly made to stand outside. During a reading test at school, she was anxious to read as she wanted to know her improvement. “Each time Sister Maria looked at her list, a string of nerves tightened in Liesel’s ribs. It started in her stomach but had worked its way up. Soon it would be around her neck, thick as a rope” (80). Sister did not call her at all and thus discouraged her; but still she stood in front of the class and started reading. Soon the pages became dark and the sentences faded away. Her eyes were filled with water and whatever she read was not from the text but from the stolen book that she memorized. She got punishment and everyone laughed at her. All these things were not easy for a child of her age to handle.

She was worried about her mother and wrote letters expecting her to reply, but she never replied. Liesel had no idea about her mother and it added to the trauma she already faces. Not only Liesel but most characters in her life was trauma stricken. Her Papa Hans Huberman was worried because of the deteriorating relationship with his son due to their political point of views. Also, the family always worried of the consequences they might face for not being a party member. They were not given the party membership as he painted the walls for the Jews; also, at first Hans had denied to join the party as he considered Jews as his fellow beings and once a Jew had saved his life. The life saver’s death was traumatic for him. Erik Vandenburg, was dead in World War I. It was he who taught him to play the accordin and Huberman used to play accordin in memory of his friend. On visiting his wife, he had promised to help them in any way possible. Years later Max Vandenburg, his son came for help to provide him a shelter. He was made to hide in their basement. This incident made them cautious and concerned for themselves as they were hiding a Jew in their basement. During the time between the wars it was really difficult for the Jews to survive in Germany.

Max Vandenburg's life was filled with traumatic events from the beginning itself like Liesel. At the age of two he lost his father. Further he lived with his uncle and his six cousins but tragedy struck him again as his uncle died. The Jews were beaten up and removed from the country. So he had escape leaving behind his family. At first he was not ready to leave his family but they pleaded him to do so; thinking that at least he would be alive. His friend Walter Kuglar was in Nazi army and it was he who secretly helped him. For almost two years he lived in a dark room with a very little food; unaware of the happenings. At first his friend would tell him about his family but soon there were no hint regarding the whereabouts of his family. One thing disturbed him a lot was that he could not stop a moment to bid a final goodbye to his family.

They left, without looking back.

It tortured him

If only he'd turned for one last look at his family as he left  
the apartment.

Perhaps the guilt would not have been so heavy.

No final goodbye.

No final grip of the eyes.

Nothing but gone-ness. (209)

This made him worse, moreover he was filled with fear of getting caught. Soon Walter Kuglar was appointed to a faraway place, so Max had to find a new hiding. They approached the address given by his mother and reached Molching. He was worried on knowing that Huberman had a small daughter as he thought that kids can't keep secrets for long. The journey was cruel, every step was threatening, fear and anxiety caught

captured him every moment of being identified as a Jew. He even had nightmares of his family, friend as well as his enemy and fought with Hitler in his dreams.

“When a Jew shows up at your place of residence in the early hours of the morning, in the very birthplace of Narcism, you’re likely to experience extreme levels of discomfort. Anxiety, disbelief, paranoia. Each plays its part, and each leads to a sneaking suspicion that a less than heavenly consequence awaits. The fear is shiny. Ruthless in the eyes”. (215) The condition of the Huberman family is clearly stated by the narrator. They became more worried when Max got fever and slept for many days. Liesel would visit him everyday whispering not to die and to wake up; she was not ready to lose more people in her life. They feared of him dying and had no idea what to do with a Jewish corpse. Their fear can be traced out from Rosa Huberman’s words.

what if he doesn’t wake up?

What if he dies here, Hansie?

Tell me. What in God’s name will

We do with the body? we can’t

Leave him here, the smell will

kill us...and we can’t carry

him out the door and drag him up

the street, either. We can’t just

say, ‘You’ll never guess what we

found in the basement this morning...’

They’ll put us away for good. (351)

But days later he woke up. The basements of every house were searched for hiding at the time of war by the Nazi soldiers to safeguard the people while bombing. For their luck they didn't find Max.

The war began with the sirens and they shifted to the Fiedler's basement leaving behind Max in their basement. People were panic stricken. The bombing was finished and everyone rushed out find out whether their house was safe; whereas the Huberman family was praying for Max's safety. Huberman was totally in trouble when he helped an old Jew by giving a piece of bread. The Jews were starving and were made to walk under the hot sun. Liesel's father was beaten up for this behaviour and it was just a beginning of their sufferings. Due to this reason he had to make Max escape before the Nazi arrive for an enquiry. Max left and they had no idea about him. Huberman till his death was traumatized for not being able to fulfill the promise given to his friend's wife. Later he was sent away from his family as a punishment to Stuggart. He was sent to clean the cities and collect dead bodies after bombing. The places he had to visit were traumatic; he found out a dead body of a boy named Rudy. This reminded him of Rudy Steiner and prayed to keep him safe.

The best companion of Liesel was her only friend Rudy Steiner. His was a quite big family with five children. His father was a tailor but was losing customers due to the removal of Jews and because of war. He would be starving most of the days. He was selected for giving further training to make him an elite German. His parents were not ready for this, as a result Steiner was sent to Austria. Both the families had the same trauma of separation; they had no idea whether they would meet each other again. Both the families were broken. Liesel could see her Mama effected by the trauma of her Pappa leaving. She had fallen silent and always hugged Huberman's accordin close to her. Liesel was not able see her Mama's condition. Even Rudy fell silent and didn't

speak to her many days. Liesel had the visions of three people for whom she prays to keep alive. “She saw her Papa in the window at her school. Max often sat with her by the fire. Alex Steiner arrived when she was with Rudy” (468). The illusions gave her a hope to live. Meanwhile many parades of starving Jews passed through Molching on different days; they secretly gave bread to Jews. Liesel always searched for familiar face, at least to make herself believe that Max was alive.

The mayor’s wife Ilsa Herman was someone close to Liesel. She liked her very much. Ilsa was always gloomy and was never happy. She was a victim of trauma caused by war; her only son, John Herman was killed in the war. Even though she acted really proud being a mother of a martyr, but was totally broke that she rarely talked to people as she couldn’t come out of that trauma. She spent most of her time in the library; reliving the memories she had with her son reading books. Losing one’s only child can sometimes makes them question on their own existence and purpose of their life.

Similar was the case of Frau Holtzapfel. Liesel had begun a good relationship with her. It began in the basements during the bombing. Michael Holtzapfel, her son had come home after being shot in the ribs and finger being blown off. Moreover, he had seen his brother dying in front of him after war; he was guilty that he could not do anything to save his brother. Frau Holtzapfel was broken on hearing her second son’s demise. She was injured by the death that she didn’t felt to go to the basement in order to save herself. She was ready to face death. Later she was ready to live for her elder son who needed her. There were many bombings which the people of Munich had overcome. In between Liesel had to face more deaths in front of her. She had seen a pilot die in front of her in the plane crash. The people tried to save him but all was in vain.

Huberman at Stuttgart met with an accident and broke his leg. He was unable to continue serving as an LSE so he was sent home. A broken leg had become a reason to celebrate for them. They were happy but not Rudy. He tried to laugh and smile but he had an inner feeling thinking that why not his father was injured and back home. He missed him badly. On Hans arrival she checked him several times at night to see whether he was still there. She had the fear of losing him again.

The parade of Jews continued and Liesel could feel their pain and felt sorry for them. She had no hatred towards the Jews. But she hated Hitler; not only her even Rudy hated him and all the Jews including Max. She witnessed Michael Holtzapfel hanging body at one of the shops and she knew that he died because of the guilt of living. He may also have had the nightmare of the trauma he faced. He loved his mother very much and didn't want to leave her; but he was dying every day. So, he committed suicide. Frau Holtzapfel felt the intense pain; she lost her two sons within the gap or six months. But she could do nothing, all she did was hugging his body for a long time and screamed. Liesel still hoped that her friend Max Vandenburg would be alive: she never stopped checking for him. In the end she found him among the parade of Jews. His were the only eyes that were straightly looking onto the Germans. Without thinking she went up to him, both got whipped but they were happy at least to find each other.

On seventh October the Munich was bombed again without sirens and everyone died except Liesel Meminger. She was saved because she was sitting in the basement. When she woke up she could find nothing. There was no Himmel street. She was worried and didn't know what she did. She was talking to LSE people about Max "we have to get my papa and mama. We have to get Max out of the basement. If he is not in there he's in the hallway, looking out of the window. He does that sometimes when there's a raid -he doesn't get to look much at the sky, you see. I have to tell him now

hoe the weather looks now. He'll never believe me..." (568). A little bit of happiness which she had made up for herself was also snatched from her. She became all alone as she used to be in the beginning. She cried and wailed for her family, for her friends, for her loved ones. She couldn't believe her eyes. She laid between her Papa-Mama and recalled her memories with them; she told them how much she loved them from the days she arrived at the Himmel street. She tried her best to make Rudy wake up, but he didn't. She loved him a lot and kissed him a final goodbye. She was devastated; she was left alone. She was sayings things to herself while walking to the Amper River; she missed Rudy a lot. She searched for her books near the collapsed buildings but that too had gone with her Papa and Mama. Death had always played a very cruel role in her life.

Holocaust is always terrifying. She lost everything her parents, her home, her friends, the place where she lived; the things she was most attached to. All had come to dust in a single night. She was left alone to suffer till her death. She lived many years with the memories of her past.

Everyone feared death, Liesel too. Death was always at their doorstep waiting for someone to open the door. It was expected in any form either by the Nazis or by bombs. Holocaust was the way that death chose to take them. All of them surrendered to death but Liesel was not ready to surrender as she had to write her story. She was busy in the basement that death didn't notice her, she escaped it.

Liesel uses the defense mechanism to get along with her trauma and to escape from her fear. In the basement she tries to overcome her nightmare by attaching herself with the books. She uses the mechanism of sublimation by converting her behaviour into more acceptable form. Also Liesel and Rudy used to steal food for themselves but

later altered their behaviour from bread stealers to bread givers. When she was made fun of by her teacher for reading something out of the text, she showed displacement by being angry and beat two of her classmates to avoid her frustration. She uses reaction formation to hide her hatred towards Hitler. It was he who caused all her problems but still she puts that into darkness and calls out Heil Hitler. Similarly, she loved Rudy very much but she always avoided him when he asks for a kiss; she also denied of him being called her boyfriend by her Papa. When she stole the second book on Hitler's birthday, she expressed withdrawal by staying away from Ilsa Herman's house as she had seen Liesel stealing the book. She used the defense mechanism of repression to believe that her mother was still alive. Her mind was unknowingly blocking the thought of possibility of her mother being dead; so she wrote letters to her mother even when she got no replies from her. Similarly, she never believed that Max was dead. She searched for him in every parade of Jews. Also in the times spent in the basement she made everyone to repress their fear of death in the unconscious by reading books to them. In the beginning also she expressed denial when the Ilsa Herman cancelled the washing and ironing. She couldn't accept the fact that she was restricted to go to one of the places where she loved the most. In the end she was not ready to accept the reality that her parents and Rudy were dead. She expressed denial; she slept in between them and said about her feeling about them. She told about how much she loved her Mama and Papa. She tried so hard to make Rudy wake up; she even told him about how much she loved him. She kissed Rudy who always asked her for one for long, only to find that he was already dead but was not ready to accept it.

## Conclusion

The project aims to bring out the elements of trauma in Markus Zusak's novel *The Book Thief*. Further tries to bring out fear of death among the people during a critical period like war and the escapism of the protagonist from death. It also tries to explore the defense mechanisms the protagonist use as a child in order to deal with the trauma.

War is always a crucial time period. War ultimately leads to death and death causes trauma. The impact on trauma is really threatening for people. Markus Zusak's novel speaks of the time of Second World War, but the effects of first world war is also seen in the novel. These effects were the beginning of trauma in Liesel's life. As a child it is really difficult for someone cope with the trauma. Losing of her family, teasing from friends and teachers, leaving of her loved ones, constant facing of deaths in front of her; all causes trauma for her. Ultimately the Holocaust made her all alone. Similar is the case of Max Vandenburg, losing his family, hiding in basements, fear of getting caught all causes trauma. The story mostly deals with trauma that is caused by death of some people; but there are situations where trauma arises by leaving of loved ones. The wound is really hard to heal. Most of the characters had to face trauma at some point or the other. Everyone has a different story to tell. Even though the story is about Liesel's life, there many traumatic experiences relating to other characters in the novel.

Death is haunting. War causes death of many individuals leading to trauma for those who are living. It is not easy to cope up with such trauma. So everyone fears death. They would always have the fear of losing someone or giving up themselves. Their life will be filled with anxiety. They feared it so much that they were always ready to move out to their neighbours basement in order to save themselves from death. In the

end people of Himmel street dies in a holocaust leaving behind Liesel Meminger. She was escaped because she was writing from the basement. The books had always helped her either to overcome her trauma or to save her from death. Liesel did not fear death as she had overcome the fear by reading the books in the basement. She even read to others and made them repress their fears. She uses such Defense mechanism to overcome all the elements of trauma. The defences helped her to cope up with the situations that aren't easy for a child to handle. Entirely the project brings out trauma among the people along with their fear of death. Further it gives the defense that Liesel uses.

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DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE  
ANGADIKKADAVU

FEMINISM IN THE NOVELS OF ANGELA CARTER

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

APARNA SURENDRAN

Register No: DB18AEGR002

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Mr. Sarath Krishnan

June 2021

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “Feminism in the novels of Angela Carter” is a bonafide work of Aparna Surendran, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Aparna Surendran, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Feminism in the novels of Angela Carter” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Sarath Krishna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Aparna Surendran

8-06-2021

DB18AEGR002

## Table of Contents

Page no.

Introduction	1
Chapter One	3
Feminism as a literary movement	
Chapter Two	11
Carter's novels: An Analysis	
Chapter Three	18
Feminism in the novels of Angela Carter	
Conclusion	25
Work Consulted	27

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Aparna Surendran

## Introduction

This project is an analysis of the famous feminist novels of the renowned writer Angela Carter (1940–1992) is one of the boldest and most original writers of the 20th century. Her work draws on an eclectic range of themes and influences, from gothic fantasy, traditional fairy tales, Shakespeare and music hall, through Surrealism and the cinema of Godard and Fellini. Carter's work breaks many long-established taboos and mores, not least in her forthright realigning of women as central to, and in control of, their own narratives. She is best known for her book *The Bloody Chamber*, *The Passion of New Eve*, *Night at the Circus*, *Wise Children*...etc. are the famous works that she was mainly known for.

The first chapter of the project deals with a deep informatory part about feminism as intellectual movement and as a theory. Feminism as a literary theory is taken into serious consideration as well as is combined with various movements related to feminism. Both the history and the layout of this feminist theory in different countries were analyzed in detail in order to get deep knowledge about its salient features and basics. Moreover, feminism as a literary movement was done in the first section. The large numbers of women writers like, Mary Wollstonecraft, Simone de Beauvoir, Helene Cixous, Virginia Woolf, Julia Kristeva, Elaine Showalter and many other stood firmly for women's emancipation and empowerment.

The second chapter brings forth the detailed figure of the author Angela Carter, both as an individual and as an author, although here, we are taking a look at the novels of Angela Carter and pickup the summary along with the upheld themes and ideas.

Moreover her writing styles the tone and the style of the novels, major ideas that she upholds was analyzed in the second chapter as well. Angela Carter expresses her views of feminism through her various novels, fairy tales, and re-writes of fairy tale. As a

novelist, Carter is generally associated with fantasy and with the Gothic, with the surreal, with fairy tale, with burlesque, with the mystical, magical and metaphorical which all take us away from historical events to a predestined literary place.

The final chapter of the project was a scientific study in order to prove the presence of feminism as a theory that Carter used in her novels and the feministic elements in her novels with the help of the theory of Freud's psychoanalysis and some other key terms.

The novels at the surface level itself reflect traits of feminism, but there were many elements that were hidden from the naked eye of a reader. And this project has become a success in bringing forth such hidden feministic elements in the novels of Angela

Carter Thus the whole project was a pondering over the novels *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, *The Passion of New Eve*, *Wise Children*,

*Sadeian Women: An Exercise in Cultural History*, *The Company of Wolves*, *the*

*Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, *Nights at the Circus*, to discuss the

feministic elements in her writing, views, thoughts in relation with the major themes of Angela Carter.

## Chapter 1

### Feminism as a Literary Movement

The feminist movement is clearly understood as a social movement that seeks equal rights for women. Feminism is nothing but a revolt against the unequal treatment given to women. Feminism is a theory as well as political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. We find that women's are treated unequal in the society and they are consider as lower to men and the things gone in the mind of women and from there the "movement of women" started and today's feminism is the direct product of 1960's "women's movement". Feminists clamour for equal status with men and freedom to decide their own careers and life patterns. Right from the days when Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) appeared, to the present day, women have tried to challenge the idea that they exist merely to please men. The growing feminist movement has left no stone unturned to change society's prevailing stereotypes of women as relatively weak, passive and dependent individuals who are less rational and more emotional than men.

*A Vindication of Right's of Women* can be considered as the first work on feminism. She discusses in the book, the male writer's like Milton, Pope, Rousseau and she talks about how they portrait women and what are the perspectives they expressed in their particular works.

The 'study of feminism' is started 60s, 70s and 80s of the twentieth century saw an unprecedented interest in feminist thoughts. Feminism's protest was always posed in terms of women's perceptions of themselves and their status in relation to men. From the litany of their discontents, feminism gathered an identity for women. It

formulated the demands and aspirations that would transform the social conditions in which men and women would live. The very next critic we have John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), then we have Friedrich Engels who wrote *The Origin of the Family*, We have Olive Schreiner's *Women and Labor*. The writings and campaigns of feminists during these three decades highlighted the prevailing emphasis on women as objects of sexual desire and sought to overturn laws and practices that enforced the inferior status of women.

Feminists came to realize that the need of the hour is to construct a 'New Eve' after destroying the notion of the Eve as a temptress, sinful, ugly and inferior. Two of the most distinguished feminist works of the twentieth century are Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), in that particular book she talks about how women are treated unequally in education, family and alternatives of marriage and motherhood. This work is considered as a significant study of feminism and the French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir's, *The Second Sex* (1949). She introduced the term "Écriture Feminine". Beauvoir's, main thesis in her work is that throughout history, women have been reduced to objects for men. In that particular book she talk about all types of separation's which is imposed on women, Women is seeing as only as a sexual being and 'He' is absolute and 'She' is "other". In the *Second Sex* there is a separate section on D.H Lawrence portrayal of women. She researched in his novels that are in *The Second Sex* there is a separate section on the portrayal of women in the novels of D. H Lawrence. *The Rainbow* and *The women's love* is censored in U. K because it is too sexually explicit. His term called "phallic pride" is criticized by Simone de Beauvoir's. The book *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir is an analysis of the oppression of women and is regarded a major work of feminist literature. The book was published in 1949 and was highly influential for the revolution of 1968. 'Woman' has been

constructed as man's other, denied the right to her own subjectivity and to responsibility for her own actions. The history of the modern western feminist movement is divided into four waves. The first comprised women's suffrage movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, promoting women's right to vote and the common rights. The second wave, (1960-1970) they continued fight on equality and discrimination. The second wave slogan "Personal is Political". This wave is also a liberation movement for equal legal and social right. The third wave (1992) was identified, characterized by a focus on individuality and diversity. This wave is influenced by the Post Modernist Movement, they question's society and redefines ideas about women hood, gender, sexuality, and femininity. The fourth wave, started 2000 onwards, used social media to combat sexual harassment, violence against women and rape culture; it is best known for the 'Me Too' movement. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century women started "writing Fiction and the main focus was on, heroin's choice of marriage partner at that particular time women is considered as the 'weaker sex'.

In the 1970 s great feminist theorists like Betty Friedan, Kate Millett and Ann Oakley investigated the topic of gender-role 'stereotyping' and drew attention to the oppressive effects of the stereotypical representation of women as sex objects. Another group of French feminists like Helene Cixous, Julia, Kristeva and Luce Irigaray's, building on Beauvoir's portrayal of woman as themselves 'other' of man, examined the part played by the phallogentric culture to perpetuate women's subordinate position. In keeping with her times, Angela Carter too joins in with her works to, provide evidence that gender dose not debar women from writing about a range of experience that includes the squalid and the terrifying. Contemporary feminism questions the concept of rationality and the unitary definition of truth. A woman is exposed to human experiences that cannot be called purely 'feminine' experiences. Feminism is a

resistance to patriarchal power. It is committed to the struggle for equality for women, a struggle which has often been seen simply as the effort to make women become like men. In distant future, with a non-sexist, non-patriarchal society, feminism will no longer exist. Women must reject the dichotomy between masculine and feminine as metaphysical (The Feminist Reader). Women are of equal human value in their own way. The theories promulgated by the feminists give due consideration to the question of femininity. Patriarchy wants us to believe that there is such a thing as an essence of femaleness called "femininity". Patriarchal oppression consists of imposing certain social standards of femininity on all biological women, in order to make them believe that the chosen standards of 'femininity' are natural.

It is this position which has enabled male culture to vilify women as representing darkness and chaos or ugliness and sinfulness. Radical feminist theorists like Mary Daly use the term 'patriarchal plot' to mean this deliberate attempt of men to achieve total power. They manipulate language, myths and religions to confuse and dominate women in general. They display rituals and processions as part of their conspiracy to destroy female opposition and achieve total power. Elaine Showalter is a significant figure in the field of feminism or theory because, she talk about three 'phases of feminism' is based on the division of "History of Feminist Writing" and "Gynocriticism" is a term coined by Elaine Showalter, according to 'Gynocriticism' or 'Gynocritics' are those critics who study the books written by women and in her famous essay "Feminist criticism in the wilderness" describes the shift of attention to 'Antrotext' (works written by men) to 'Gynotext' (works written by women). Elaine Showalter is considered as the representative of "Anglo American Feminism". Her *Literature of their Own* is another famous work based on feminist writing. Feminist criticism and the role of theory is mainly differentiated into two, which are "Anglo

American Feminism”, and “French Feminism *French* Feminist adopted and adapted a great deal of ‘Post Structuralism’ and ‘Psychoanalytic Theory’. French Feminism developed out of ‘Philosophical Tradition’ and it is more ‘Theory Oriented’. They study the theory of the role of gender in English language and writing. French Feminist radically claimed that all western language are utterly male dominated. The major examples of French Feminist are Julia kristeva “New French Feminism” and she introduced the term called “Semiotic and Symbolic, Helene cixous *Laugh of the Medusa*, Luce Irigaray’s

*The Sex Which is Not One*. French Feminist was particularly concerned with ‘language’ and ‘philosophy’. The feminist heroines in English fiction of the 1890s were called ‘New Women’. The 'New Woman Fiction' of the 1890s has heroines who aspire to the emancipation which is doomed either through personal weakness or social law. Writers like Grant Allen and Sarah Grand celebrate the ‘New Woman’ largely as a figure of purity. Very often the feminist activist of the late nineteenth century was known as the 'New Woman'. The New Woman in the fiction of 1890s was characterized as some kind of sexless, undersexed, or oversexed monster. She was also known for her unfeminine character. She was almost a parody of ideological biology or the explanation of ideologically constructed social roles in biological terms especially that women are not strong enough to do male jobs or are biologically less intelligent than men

Masculinity is a cultural construct; 'femininity' is also a cultural construct. “One isn't born a woman, but becomes one” as Simone de Beauvoir puts it (*The Second Sex* 295). Patriarchal oppression consists of imposing certain social standards of femininity on all biological women, and making them believe that the chosen standards of femininity are natural. Woman can only understand contemporary formulations of the

real by adopting a masculine persona. To bring about a compromise Carter frames 'bisexual' beings and sets them as 'New Eves' challenging the masculinity concept of women. 'Bisexuality' in its biological sense means 'having characteristics of both sexes'. Feminists like Cixous are not satisfied with the unity of two halves but they want a 'bisexuality' which is the unity of two holes. For them bisexuality means an individual made up of two genders. It is the location within oneself of the presence of both sexes (The Feminist Reader 104). Angela Carter has presented several characters who can be termed 'bisexual' not only because of the presence of both male and female sexual organs, but also other characteristics which are masculine or feminine combined in a single individual. In Carter's Novels, woman is considered 'bisexual'. For several historic cultural reasons, it is woman who really benefits from bisexuality. Man is always determined to remain his glorious phallic mono sexuality.

There is a longing in woman to achieve manhood which finds expression in beings like female men or male women. Women denied the right to create their own images of femaleness, had to conform to the patriarchal standards and women were thus attributed angelic beauty and sweetness. From Dante's Beatrice to Coventry Patmore's *Angel in the House* the ideal woman is considered a passive, docile and selfless creature. Pointing out the other face of women in the work *Sexual /Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*, Toril Moi says: "But behind the angel lurks the monster: the obverse of the male idealization of women is the male fear of femininity". The monster woman is the woman who refuses to be selfless, action her own initiative, which has a story to tell in short, a woman who rejects the submissive role patriarchy, has reserved for her. Women cannot be thought of as living independently, without husbands and free from fathers. 'Patriarchy' is a system in which the father enjoys actual or symbolic power and women are relegated to the subordinate roles of property

and object of exchange. Very often women take their position as natural and submit themselves to the oppression. She proves through her novel that concepts of an all-powerful father and subjugating husband are not natural but only cultural concepts.

“If they are not they will simply coincide with traditional sexism” (Toril Moi, *Feminism and Postmodernism*). Feminist intention is to confront dominant representation of women as misrepresentation. Kate Millet describes family as "a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole" (*Sexual \Textual Politics* 33). Radical feminists have chosen it for their initial analysis of women's oppression the structures of male domination which are ubiquitous and all encompassing, pervade sexual, psychological, social and economic areas of life. Feminism has focused attention on the politics of representation and knowledge-and therefore also on power. Postmodernism is concerned "not just about the body, but about the female body; not just about the female body, but about its desires and about both as socially and historically constructed". Carter's verbal text attempts to code and then recode the colonized territory of the female body; it is coded as erotic masculine fantasy and then recoded in terms of female experience. Women try to conform to the desires of men, Male desire determines the conduct of women. Carter is only trying to tell us that men want women to be found according to their desire, but they cannot tolerate women's desires. In *The Magic Toy shop* women are made puppets by Uncle Philip. Female friendships and women's communities are accorded positive representations. She presents not only 'social and 'erotic' friendships. Besides providing personal fulfillment, these have also public importance they constitute a challenge to patriarchal attitudes. Above all as radical feminists say:

“Only women can give to each other a new sense of self”. That identity we have to develop with reference to ourselves, and not in relation to men. For this we must be

available and supportive to one another, give our commitment and our love, give the emotional support necessary to sustain this Movement. Our energies must flow toward our sisters, not backward toward our oppressors. Women's communities are therefore seen as sites of the development of femininity with reference to women themselves and not in relation to men. This is a deviation from the patriarchal paradigm. The notion of "woman- identification" and the primacy of "women bonding with women" are highlighted by radical feminists. They advocate a bonding between women that is both emotional and political.

## Chapter 2

### Carter's novels: An analysis

Angela Olive Pearce 7 May, 1940 – 16 February, 1992, who published under the name Angela Carter, was an English novelist, short story writer, poet, and Picaresque journalist, known for her feminist magical realism, and works. She is best known for her book

*The Bloody Chamber*, which was published in 1979. In 2012, *Night at the Circus* was selected as the best ever winner of the 'James Tait Black Memorial Prize'. Though Angela Carter was not lucky enough to win the best seller fortunes of some of her contemporaries, she won international esteem. She had a wide range of influence. She was also the recipient of Rhys Memorial Prize in 1968, Maugham Award in 1969, Cheltenham Festival Prize in 1979, and Kurt Maschler Award for Children's. She is best known for her book *The Bloody Chamber*, which was published in 1979. She had a wide range of influence. She was also the recipient of the Good Wizard, a very Dear Friend" observed that Angela Carter was not accorded due recognition though she was the most brilliant writer in England. Angela Carter began writing novels in her twenties. *Shadow Dance* (1966), *The Magic Toys hop* (1967), *Several Perceptions* (1968) and *Heroes and Villains* (1969) were her early novels. It was also at that time that she wrote her novel *Love* (1971). These novels fetched her praise and prizes. Her stay in Japan gave rise to two Novels: *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) and *The Passion of New Eve* (1977), is told in the first person. The narrator Evelyn is the main character and it is written in the past tense. The major theme's in this is Post Feminism, Gender Identity, The illusion of Control Blind Faith, Mythology, and Religion Race. The idea of the 'New Woman' was disruptive of the

patriarchal gender ideology characteristic of the nineteenth century society. Hence the term 'New Woman' or 'New Eve' speaks volumes of or Carter's woman protagonists. In fact she uses the term several times in her novels especially in *The Passion of New Eve* and *Nights at the Circus*. In her novel *The Passion of New Eve*, Carter makes Mother, the Great Parricide, who rules over the profane place called Beulah, capture Evelyn, the man and make him the first victim of her wild justice, trimmed with that knife to Eve, first child of her manufactory. Her intention of creating the 'New Eve' was not to please man or to help him but to take revenge against him for the cruelties committed by him against women. Carter's *The Passion of New Eve* is described as "a feminist tract about the social creation of femininity" (Carter, Notes from the Line 71). She accepts the feminist perspective on gender in the early 1970s with feminine attributes like passivity, dependence, masochism and an inclination towards material's mothering. It is then that Carter makes her female characters liberate themselves from these undesirable qualities by giving them an androgynous mode of behavior. Angela Carter had a special, enchanter's lightness of mind and wit that made her explore the possibilities of presenting women in the strangest fiction. Thus her last two novels, *Nights at the Circus* (1984) and *Wise Children* (1991) have an aerialist heroine and twin sisters playing fairies and feathered creatures on the stage. *Nights at the Circus* is predominantly told by a third-person omniscient narrator who has access to the thoughts and feelings of each character. *Nights at the Circus* is told in the past tense. Themes presented are Suspension of Disbelief, The Bird in the Gilded Cage, Paradoxes. Symbols used in this are 'Sex' and 'wings'.

*Nights at the Circus* by Angela Carter focuses on the whirlwind relationship between reporter Jack Walser and trapeze artist Sophia Fevvers. The two meet when Jack comes to interview Sophia. He is fascinated by her because of her

unusual anatomical difference. Sophia claims that she was hatched from an egg rather than delivered from a woman. She also states that she had two lumps, one on each shoulder, until she reached puberty. At that point, the two lumps began growing until they were full-size wings. These wings are one of the big attractions for Jack. They are also what make's Sophia such a wonder at the trapeze. She was able to 'conjure strangeness out of the familiar' as Marina Warner puts it (Obituaries, par11). Angela Carter loved cinema, vaudeville, songs and circus. Though she could grasp reality, she always believed in change. Besides her novels she has contributed collections of short stories like *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*(1980) and *Black Venus* (1986).

*The Bloody Chamber* is a narrative about a marriage between a young girl and a much older man, whom she knows only the surface of. Throughout she is objectified by the Marquis and it subjected to violent sexual perversion. It becomes apparent to her when she enters the bloody chamber that her husband is a sadist and murderer with the plan to murder her. She is then persistently passive towards the murder but is saved by her mother through shooting the Marquis. Carter makes use of 'Gothic elements' such as the setting a castle on a remote island and the secret room. Women as victims to a powerful perpetrator are also a convention of Gothic characterization. Elements of the mystical such as the enchanted key also indicate the Gothic tradition of transcending normal human concepts and understanding.

"The Sadeian Woman: An Exercise in Cultural History" (1979), she lays bare women's collusion with their own subjection. Using her extensive narrative vocabulary and considerable gifts of language, Angela Carter takes her readers for a trip through a most interesting universe which is dangerous, edgy, sometimes baroque and often hilarious. She tries to evade it through magic, dreams and fantasies. Besides performing a 'psycho-surgery' on men, she is filled with an angry pity for suffering women. This

anger is kept alive in her novels. At the same time she tries to show us "how glorious it is to be a woman" (Passion 152).

A close look at Carter's novels reveals her notable energy and unusual diversity of imagination. Her style emphasizes visual detail and imagery, often giving it a poetic effect. Though found wallowing in fantasies, dreams and mythologies, Carter carts us back from fancies to realities. Violence, mutilation, murder, rape, castration, cannibalism, incest and flagellation are found raw in her novels. A woman's specialty is suffering. Suffering is her vocation. Carter's imagination caters to the needs of suffering women. Angela Carter's women suffer exquisitely until suffering becomes demodded and then they "put themselves away tidily in a store-house of worn out dreams" (The Passion of New Eve). When her novels like *Love*, *Several Perceptions*, *The Magic Toyshop*, *Wise Children* and *Shadow Dance* keep themselves in a world of reality to a certain extent, novels like *Heroes and Villains*, *The Passion of New Eve*, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* and *Nights at the Circus* are so far removed from reality that we almost feel that her characters dream their life instead of living it. In fact women do not live, but only dream their life. In almost all her novels men is either told how women suffer or are made to experience their suffering. Carter's novels are all histories of tragic women. Many of them with all their strange and fabulous nature have one thing unique about them all-they have not experienced much happiness in their lives. She is generally thought of as a spiritual writer who leads her readers into confusion. Her novels are serial and episodic, not hierarchical and organic. It means that the whole significance of her novels cannot be found out from any sample, as it is possible in certain Romantic works. Carter's revelations through her novels are very often so stunning that the reader loses count and is left with the general giddiness. She is not for creating allows them to be subjugated by men, but to put an iron-heart and an

iron-will into every woman. Her novels are meant to create a new body and soul for woman. Carter's novels project her comprehensive vision as to what a liberated woman of the future should be. It is worth exploring how Carter constructs even the minutest aspects of this new woman after sounding the death knell of patriarchy which has reigned supreme to the detriment of women's freedom.

*The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) is one of Carter's novels situated in the border between science fiction and fantasy. It is the story of a war fought against the diabolic Dr. Hoffman who wanted to demolish the structures of reason and liberate man from chains of reality. Angela Carter became an established feminist with her novel,

*The Passion of New Eve* (1977). *Nights at the Circus* (1984), incorporating analysis of the story of a larger-than-life female acrobat and trapeze artist with large bright wings. She is an image of female capacity, resourcefulness and wit and is popularly known as 'Cockney Venus'. Carter's novel "*Wise Children*" (1991) tells the story of Dora and Nora, the illegitimate daughters of Sir Melchior Hazard, the greatest Shakespearean actor of the day, who never acknowledges these daughters until he reaches his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Paternity is always questioned and maternity moves out of the realm of biological certainty. Women of all sorts dominate the community formed by Angela Carter. She also provides a museum of women monsters in her novels. But this vast feminine world still remains unexplored as many of her critics and scholars concentrate more on her fairy tales and short stories than on her novels of such immense potential. Her novels like *Wise Children* and *Shadow Dance* remain unattended and unexplored. The major theme's in this work is 'Power and Objectification'. The book's sexual violence and Carter's feminist world view create a theme of manipulative power and the objectification of women. The genre of this work

is 'Magical Realism'. Carter rejected realism; her characters were circus performers, puppet-masters and many-breasted mother goddesses. Her work is often described as 'magical realism', a popular genre today, but when Carter was writing in the 60s and 70s straight-up realism was seen as the pinnacle of fiction. She was writing a different kind of thing that people didn't know what to call. And guess what, they still don't know what to call it. For many readers Carter's work was their first encounter outside realism.

Carter put women at the centre of the stories and gave them agency over their fate. In *The Bloody Chamber* (based on the story of Bluebeard) the heroine's mother shoots the murderous Marquis and they inherit his fortune. In *The Erl-King*, when the heroine learns the birds in the King's cages used to be girls, she strangles him and sets the birds free. Carter also embraced the erotic element of fairy tales, using them to explore female sexuality. In *The Company of Wolves* by Carter the heroine seduces the wolf that ate her grandmother before he can eat her. As Carter herself admits, amidst her magic's and dreams there are "silences in which the unspoken hung like fog that got in your lung and choked you" (Wise Children 169). Her characters too are a challenge to the colonization by patriarchy. Such a close analysis of Carter's novels gives us a comprehensive picture of the new woman designed by Carter. Her work is like *The Sadeian Woman - An Exercise in Cultural History* cannot be avoided. But her novels by themselves provide sufficient evidence to show Carter's great interest in promoting women's emancipation.

The father of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud in his essay "The Uncanny"; yet how strangely they seem to mirror the figures that cast the ominous shadows of Carter's stories. "She herself is a haunted house. "She does not possess herself; her ancestors sometimes come and peer out of the windows of her eyes and that is very

frightening” — Angela Carter, (*The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*). The *Company of Wolves* explicitly deal with the horrific or corrupting aspects of marriage or sex and the balance of power within such relationships. Carter does not want a simplistic inversion of the current power disparity between men and women. Rather she wants to protest the naturalization through genres like pornography of sexual inequalities. If women can achieve autonomy with their sexuality and their sexual relations, Carter suggests then equality can be achieved in economic and other spheres of society. Carter was a feminist; Women are at the centre of Carter's short stories and novels. She was trying to get away from those particular male-authored fictions while we Discussing

*The Bloody Chamber*, Enright observes how in all those stories "women are freed either by going into the difficulty or by killing the big bad man. It's about liberation; it's a wonderful liberating book". She was interested in a balance of scales, not that women were more powerful than men, but in order to actually have anything that is not just dependency or sucking up or controlling, you have to have equality and share's the idea that she is writing is not anti-man, but anti-misogyny.

## Chapter 3

### Feminism in the novels of Angela Carter

Angela Carter as a feminist strives to resolve the problem of sexual difference and struggles to undermine the phallogocentric logic and revels in the pleasures of open-ended textuality. Angela Carter, expresses her views of feminism through her various novels, fairy tales, and re-writes of fairy tales as a novelist, Carter is generally associated with fantasy and with the Gothic, with the surreal, with fairy tale, mystical, magical and metaphorical which all take us away from historical events to a predestined literary place. Through Carter's fairy tales, Carter is looking to encourage women to do something about this degrading representation by rising up and fighting against the oppression and fighting for equality. Today, Angela Carter is best remembered for her extravagant writings in which she provides a feminist critique of Western culture by exploring themes of power distribution, sexuality, and patriarchal roles. This style helped make her a highly regarded radical feminist writer of what one critic called "unique and imaginative non-fiction and sharply political and insightful feminist non-fiction" (Carter).

Radical-libertarian feminists stressed that just because a woman's anatomy deems her female, that does not necessarily means she can only possess the usual characteristics of beauty, ignorance, charm, serenity, and peaceful. They argue that patriarchal society uses rigid gender roles to keep women passive and men active. Society uses these patriarchal guidelines to ensure that women stay affectionate, obedient, responsive to sympathy and approval, cheerful, kind, and friendly and men stay tenacious, aggressive, curious, ambitious, responsible, and competitive. They rallied that women needed to mix and match masculine

and feminine traits. The way to do this, they declared was for women to dispel men's wrongful power over women by having both sexes recognize that women are no more destined to be passive than men are to be active. Thus, by developing a combination of masculine and feminine traits that best suits one's personality will enable this recognition. 'Radical-libertarian' feminists wanted there to no longer be restraints on women's right to choose. Angela Carter revolved her tales around these radical-libertarian goals. In Angela Carter's pieces, the female characters take on the roles of women who eventually embody male characteristics and engage in acts that are by no means feminine thus serve as an example of an "androgynous person." Carter's tales demonstrate women as being powerful and capable figures that can take charge of a situation and lead it to success. Carter portrays the female heroine as resourceful, clever, and persistent young woman, characteristics that were foreign to women at the time under patriarchal roles, who are able to succeed without any assistance from a male figure Carter continues to promote her radical-libertarian beliefs specifically in *The Bloody Chamber*, where Carter's female protagonists are pursuing their sexual desires and redefining their sexual identity as well as fighting for sexual equality with men, which was the biggest goal for radical-libertarian feminists during the feminist movement. Carter promotes sexuality by not letting the male sexual desires take dominance. Instead, Carter pays particular attention to reinforce the equality of the sexual transactions between her male and female characters. Reclaiming female sexual identity was a widely enforced theme among radical-libertarian feminists and Angela Carter used stories in *The Bloody Chamber* such as *The Tiger's Bride* and *The Company of Wolves* to spread this message by giving women examples of how to reclaim their sexual identity through her female heroines. The majority of Angela Carter's works revolve around a specific type of feminism, radical-libertarian feminism. Her female protagonists often take on empowered roles where they rise up against oppression and fight for both sexual and political equality. As

many scholars have foreseen, the influence of language and speech is the main weapon in Carter's history and she does not support realistic style of writing, regarding the extent to which she promotes feminism due to her eccentric style, referred to as “glam rock” feminism. Carter is most definitely a “glam rock” feminist, using colorful imagery, sensuous prose, and her outrageous imagination to portray her message, the controversial aspect is whether this style is successful. Although classified as “glam rock,” Carter is still a highly effective feminist author because she uses her intense, extravagant style to literally shove feminist ideals into the face of the audience.

The sexual desires of Carter's male antagonist, often in some beastly form, are symbolic of the females' sexual desires. Therefore, when the women engage in these sexual actions, she is claiming her own desires. To get rid of the old opposition between 'masculine' and 'feminine' and even of terms like 'male' and 'female', she expresses her strong belief in the inherently bisexual nature of all human beings. 'Psychoanalysis' explores the terrain of female sexuality, the construction of femininity and masculinity, patriarchal relations, bisexuality, lesbianism rape, dreams, fantasies and male gaze which are some of the main feminist concerns. Carter's novels too closely analyze some of the important psychological realities and the processes through which women came to be in the present psychological condition. In Carter's novels there is a mixture of sex, sadism, masochism, homosexuality, coprophilia and necrophilia. Carter's deep interest in psychoanalysis revealed through her work *The Sadeian Woman: An Exercise in Cultural History* (1979). Feminism in its central attacks on the phallographic idiom of much psychoanalytic thought has always asked the question whether sexual difference is indelibly inscribed in nature or not. Psychoanalysis tries to explain how women internalize this femininity. In many of her texts, Angela Carter constructs a new femininity full of masculine attributes after liberating it from undesirable

feminine attributes. She attempts to erase 'femininity' as it is constructed according to existing social norms.

Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber* (1979) is a good example of the way in which feminist re-writing of Western fairytales can de-centre gender constructions. Carter illustrates her view that "myths are products of the human mind and reflect only aspects of material human practice". Carter continues to promote her radical-libertarian beliefs specifically in *The Bloody Chamber*, where Carter's female protagonists are pursuing their sexual desires and redefining their sexual identity as well as fighting for sexual equality with men, which was the biggest goal for radical-libertarian feminists during the feminist movement. Carter promotes sexuality by not letting the male sexual desires take dominance. Instead, Carter pays particular attention to reinforce the equality of the sexual transactions between her male and female characters. This equal transaction is seen in Carter's "*The Tiger's Bride*" between "*Beauty*" and the tiger. In the scene when Beauty and the tiger go down to the river, the tiger strips naked for her and in return she strips naked for him revealing to him the "fleshly nature of women" (Carter 65). The tiger does not declare that "*Beauty*" get naked for him and get nothing in return. Instead, by both of them stripping naked, Carter is asserting an equal transaction. Carter used stories in *The Bloody Chamber* such as "*The Tiger's Bride*" and "*The Company of Wolves*" to spread this message by giving women examples of how to reclaim their sexual identity through her female heroines. The female heroines serve as prime examples of women reclaiming their feminine libido.

She exposed the "dirty truths" that everyone knew but never spoke about. She was blunt, forceful, dramatic, and horrific in the tales, but they did the job; they helped empower women. Through her heroines in her tales and their experiences, she gave women examples to follow to help lead them through their journey to equality with

man. While she is brilliant in that she puts reality in a magic environment and atmosphere and describes it objectively and in detail by using 'Magical Realism'. *The Bloody Chamber* as a magic realistic novelist, Carter successfully and skillfully employs symbolism, absurdity, exaggeration, presage and many other expressive techniques in this modern fairy tale. Carter was able to draw on traditional fairy stories and create dramatic situations such as family feuds, fatherly or husband-like exploitation, violence or death in the modern dramatic way. Carter portrays a totally different woman who cannot be easily distinguished from men. In her novel *The Passion of New Eve*, Carter released her novel entitled *The Passion of New Eve*, which takes place in a dystopian America where war has broken out between genders and races. It enters on a man who undergoes a forced sex-change operation and re-evaluates everything he once believed about power, gender, and sexual identity. The novel is filled to the brim with shocking scenes of violence and gore, a characteristic of the piece that can attract or repulse some readers.

In "Wolf Alice," Carter reworks the sexual politics of the fairy tale and the Gothic to parody the notion of an essential 'feminine'. However, Carter's approach towards this type of women differs completely from the original gothic. Another representation of femininity which can be found in Gothic literature that Carter restores is that of the "Madwoman in the attic". This model represents the sexual woman who is considered as monstrous and mad by the public and who is imprisoned away and silenced in order not to mingle with outside society and not to spread her infectious "sickness. Discussing who she was in her twenties, she referred to herself as a "person in the process of becoming radically skeptical, that is, if not free, then freer than I had been" (*Shaking* 38). 'Skepticism' is seen here as a positive trait, which makes problematic the contention that Jack Walser's skeptical position at the beginning of

*Nights at the Circus* is something that must be overturned. *Nights at the Circus* is a novel by Carter, recounts the rise of a female foundling who is raised by prostitutes and becomes a celebrated circus performer; she serves as a vital symbol of the new vistas for women that would unfold in the twentieth century. The search for self and for autonomy is the underlying theme of most of Angela Carter's, fiction.

'Parody' and 'satire' are, however, major elements in Carter's three novels that are often classified as science fiction or science fantasy. In *Heroes and Villains*, the *Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, and the *Passion of New Eve*, Carter's protagonists dwell in societies that are described in metaphysical iconography. Carter seems to be questioning the nature and values of received reality. *Wise Children* in which disowned and abandoned children are extravagantly featured, although it is far more sentimental than the bleakly dark fantasies. Carter penned while her own marriage was failing in the early 1970's, it is to some extent a re-visitation of their themes. What Carter's final novel adds to her jaundiced view of family life, however, is the legacy of her middle period preoccupation with the processes by which the substance of childhood dreams and unfathomable experiences can be transmuted into high and low art. Throughout her novels, Carter presents women who pose themselves before mirrors. This is not merely female 'narcissism'. Women are driven to looking at themselves in the mirror, by force of the male gaze. That this 'narcissism' is neither self-love nor selfknowledge is proved by the fact that none of the women are ever satisfied with what they see in the mirror. Mirrors offer women the possibility of making themselves perfect strangers to satisfy male desires. Carter wanted her ideal woman to be like Sophia, in *The Passion of New Eve*. Sophia never exposed herself to the mirror. " She looked like a woman who has never seen a mirror in all her life, not

once exposed herself to those looking glasses that betray women into nakedness" (Passion 54).

Psychoanalysis gives Carter every reason to believe that bisexuality is more feasible than what patriarchy calls an essentially female nature. The roles of male desire and male gaze in the construction of femininity and their controlling nature much resented by the female world are all depicted through her characters. Carter explores areas like 'lesbianism' where desire can also find its expression and proves that there is no natural sexuality like, heterosexuality. Carter in her novels delves deep into the psychological problems created by male oppression like dumbness, madness, lameness, claustrophobia, personal despair, sense of alienation and a feeling of being dispossessed. Carter does not indeed encourage or advocate violence against women, but she seeks to depict the pornographic scenario repeatedly in her works in order to induce or even compel her audience to identify the male brutalism of men as sexual predators and to expose the underlying misogyny of the Western culture and its fascination with violence and the Sadeian inequality against women. Angela Carter can be seen as a devoted radical-libertarian feminist who promotes her beliefs about empowering women to escape male oppressive forces, reclaiming sexual identity, and deconstructing patriarchal roles by acknowledging female curiosity. Nowadays, Angela Carter is best remembered for her extravagant writings in which she provides a feminist critique of Western culture by exploring themes of power distribution, sexuality, and patriarchal roles. This style helped make her a highly regarded radical feminist writer of what one critic called "unique and imaginative non-fiction and sharply political and insightful feminist non-fiction" (Carter 1).

## Conclusion

A close study of Angela Carter's novels reveals her deep insight into the plight of women in the society, who feel dominated by the patriarchal society. She delineates her women character's in the light of their hopes, fears, aspirations and frustrations. Angela Carter as a feminist strives to resolve the problem of sexual difference and struggles to undermine the phallogentric logic and revels in the pleasures of open-ended textuality. Through Carter's fairy tales, Carter is looking to encourage women to do something about this degrading representation by rising up and fighting against the oppression and fighting for equality. Angela Carter is best remembered for her extravagant writings in which she provides a feminist critique of Western culture by exploring themes of power distribution, sexuality, and patriarchal roles. They argue that patriarchal society uses rigid gender roles to keep women passive and men active. Carter is developing a combination of masculine and feminine traits that best suits ones personality will enable this recognition. Another main goal of radical-libertarian feminists was to get women to reclaim their sexuality. Angela Carter revolved her tales around these radical- libertarian goals.

Thus Carter's New Eve is a masculine woman capable of soaring high on the wings of freedom; fully independent of men, forming and having relationship with men only for pleasure, not governed by male desires but free to be lesbian instead of being compulsorily heterosexual. She will abide in a world where there are neither her husband's nor fathers she will establish an iron-rule of women and sit in judgment and mete out punishment to the oppressors of women. Carter is indeed radical in her conception of the New Eve. The New Eve is to enjoy unlimited freedom. She would prefer a single life or a lesbian relationship to a married heterosexual life. Man should

be mentally decolonized and made a fitting mate for the New Eve. Carter's tales demonstrate women as being powerful and capable figures that can take charge of a situation and lead it to success. Carter portrays the female heroine as resourceful, clever, and persistent young woman, characteristics that were foreign to women at the time under patriarchal roles, who are able to succeed without any assistance from a male figure. The majority of Angela Carter's works revolve around a specific type of feminism, radical-libertarian feminism, and her critiques of the patriarchal roles that have been placed on women throughout time.

Angela Carter constructs a new femininity full of masculine attributes after liberating it from undesirable feminine attributes. She attempts to erase 'femininity' as it is constructed according to existing social norms. By blending magic and reality Carter creates strong magic aesthetic effects and deepens the novel's reflection of reality. Carter is also interested in how and why desire is central to the literary tradition. This concern about desire directs her to place her work within the myths of sexual desire carried on in the fairy-tale manner. Carter is attracted to such textual freedom. The notion of the possibility of a freedomization of the will rather than an absolute freewill is key for Carter, as she was versed well enough in the social sciences to be skeptical that one could completely eradicate deterministic factors.

The conclusion of feminism is not world peace or love and harmony, but the removal of the systemic, universal devaluing of women and women's work by society. That will mean more competition, but also much more sharing and cooperation. This project tries to give an over view of feminism in the novels of Angela Carter and her aspects on the style of writing in the fields of feminism. She is trying to develop an idea or a belief to becoming a theory with standard goals and principles.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**PERLUSTRATION OF A WOMAN'S PSYCHE IN *GONE GIRL* BY  
GILLIAN FLYNN**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**DEVIKA M**

**Register No: DB18AEGR003**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Ansa George April 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “**PERLUSTRATION OF A WOMAN’S PSYCHE IN *GONE GIRL* BY GILLIAN FLYNN**” is a bonafide work of Miss Devika M, who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Head of Department

Ms. Ansa George

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Devika M, hereby declare that the project work entitled  
**“PERLUSTRATION OF A WOMAN’S PSYCHE IN *GONE GIRL* BY GILLIAN  
FLYNN”** has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial  
fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of  
original work done by me under the supervision of Ms Ansa George of the Department  
of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or  
partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Devika M

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR003

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## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	1-2
Chapter One:	3-14
Chapter Two:	15-24
Chapter Three:	25-36
Conclusion	37-38
Work Cited	39-40

## Introduction

Art always played a preeminent role in creating the picture of women in the society and the society took those women as an ideal one. Rather than portraying the reality, these carried an illustration of women in the psyche of men. They never tried to know the real women, before that they created a creature that is capable to tolerate anything, sacrifice anything, abide by the rules put forward by the patriarchal society without questioning it. They imprisoned women in the name of protection. They suppressed women and make them believe that the four walls of the house is the only space where they are safe.

Objective of this project is to scrutinize the repercussions of this centuries long servitude of women in the post feminist era, where women confidently claims that they have gained the rights and is now independent to take their own decisions.

This paper concentrates on the psyche of women and explores how the traumatic past is still haunting them, through the work *Gone Girl* of Gillian Flynn, an American novelist. The topic is significant in the current situation where women have the freedom to choose her path at the same time she is compelled to follow the existing patriarchal norms. The situation is synonymous for all the women without regional, religious differences.

This project is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the Jungian concept of collective unconscious. The term coined by psychoanalyst Carl Jung indicates the unconscious mind shared by all humans. This collective unconscious is the collection of those images that are inherited by every human at birth. Individuals are not aware of the contents in the unconscious, but it will arise during the period of personal trauma or crisis. The term was first appeared in the essay, *The Structure of the*

*Unconscious* in 1916 where Jung demarcates personal Freudian unconscious and collective unconscious.

The second chapter carries a detailed analysis of the work *Gone Girl*. The characters and plot are evaluated and compared with similar characters in several works. The author narrates the episodes in the life of a married couple from their point of view and the resulting crises. How a marriage, where both men and women should be in a harmonious partnership turned into a catastrophic fight for ownership is discussed in detail.

The third chapter contains the theoretical application of collective unconscious in women. It also accommodates the terrible past and awful present by focusing on the central character. What necessitated her to be a 'femme fatale' from 'an Angel in the House' is justified in the final chapter. Even after several feminist protests the women are still enslaved either by society which ingrained the patriarchal norms or by the collective unconsciousness.

## Chapter One

A language that presents itself as universal, and which is in fact maintained by men only, is this not what maintains the alienation and exploitation of women in and by society.

Irigaray

Psychoanalytic feminism is a theory of oppression, which asserts that men have an intrinsic psychological need to subjugate women. The root of men's compulsion to dominate women and women's minimal resistance to subjugation lies deep within the human psyche. This branch of feminism seeks to gain insight into how our psychic lives develop in order to better understand and change women's oppression. The pattern of oppression is also integrated into society, thus creating and sustaining patriarchy. Through the application of psychoanalytic techniques in studying the differences between women and men as well as the ways in which gender is constructed, it is possible to reorganize socialization patterns at the early stages of human life. Societal change or a cure can be developed through discovering the source of domination in men's psyche and subordination in women's, which largely resides unrecognized in individuals' unconscious.

Psychoanalytic feminists explain women's oppression as rooted within psychic structures and reinforced by the continual repetition or reiteration of relational dynamics formed in infancy and childhood. Because of these deeply engrained patterns, psychoanalytic feminists wanted to alter the experiences of early childhood and family relations, as well as linguistic patterns that produce and reinforce masculinity and femininity. Critical of Freudian and neo-Freudian notions of women as biologically,

psychically, and morally inferior to men. Psychoanalytic feminists addressed political and social factors affecting the development of male and female subjects.

Feminism focuses on examining and analyzing the position of women and then attempting to change their oppressive/ suppressive status in society. In the few centuries of its existence in an organized form. Feminism has not spoken with a single voice. Just as it arose in response to the changing conditions of 17th century England, so changing circumstances around the world, today has altered its demands. For instance, suffrage, temperance and birth control were once upon a time feminist demands. The Women's Liberation Movement which emerged in the 60s was different. It was a new avatar of Feminism and surpassed all other forms and waves of Feminism in the breadth of its concerns and the depths of its critiques. Apparently this movement was less united than the earlier movements, but it offered a profusion of visions of women's liberation and at the same time, analyzed women's oppression quite methodically.

The earlier feminists had used the language of Rights and Equality, but in the 60s they used Oppression and liberation. The change in language reflects a significant development in the political perspective of contemporary feminism. Feminism, in the 20th century was a sexual revolution and it was considered to be positive and liberating. The beginning of the 20th century also saw the emergence of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), who gave the world a new and powerful way to think about and investigate human thought, action and interaction. With the arrival of Freudian Psychoanalysis on the scene, there also emerged a new theory which aimed at establishing ground rules for trying to make sense of the irrational and unpredictable aspects of human thinking and behavior.

Women's Liberation in the 60s and this was a sexual revolution. The emphasis of this movement was on free love, the self determination of one's sexual life and the freedom of sexual expression. The movement discovered the oppressive character of relations between men and women even in the so called sexual revolution because it was revealed that free love was only for men and not for women and that women paid for it in so many small ways. This led to the realization that the endemic historical experience of women was one of sexual and social oppression. Women wanted control of their lives. This was made possible by transformations in legal and medical sexual technology of the 60s. The pill was the greatest invention guaranteeing sexual pleasure without painful consequences.

Consciousness raising programme brought women from various quarters together. In sharing their personal, autobiographical and everyday instances, they revealed the wider social and historical sweep of patriarchal oppression. The practice of consciousness raising brought in the slogan that "the personal is political". However, this did not suffice or satisfy for long. The feminist movement already had firm historical links with major political movements and theories: Marxist, Socialist or liberal democratic. The movement in the 60s and the 70s challenged the categories of all the political theories it was associated with.

Freud spoke not only of sexuality but also of family. Understanding' the family which was an intimate part of the life of a woman and which became her destiny was important too especially since with the emergence of modern feminism which viewed the family as one of the core reactionary institutions of modern society.

Feminist literary Criticism does not depend on a single system of thought for their fundamental ideas. Rather, every theory has armed the Feminists with weapons to

examine, analyze and fight out their positions more confidently. Feminism was not on very firm ground. It could rightly be termed as a movement attempting to right the wrongs of one half of the society (men) on the other half (women). Feminists needed something that would tell them about the oppression/suppression of women, something substantial and theoretical. Psychoanalysis fulfilled all their demands.

Both Feminism and Psychoanalysis were concerned with female subjectivity and female sexuality. Psychoanalysis also helps to provide an explanation to women's psychological and social positions within a patriarchal culture. It enquires into the nature of female identity, libido, sexuality and development. Juliet Mitchell in *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* proposed that Feminism needed psychoanalysis for its own purposes, to develop a theory of sexual difference in patriarchal society, in order to answer the question of the nature and genesis of women's oppression and social subordination, and how society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity.

The two major schools of psychoanalytic feminism are Freudian and Lacanian. Freudian feminists, mostly Anglo-American, are more concerned with the production of male dominance and the development of gendered subjects in societies where women are responsible for mothering, whereas Lacanian feminists, mostly French, analyze links between gendered identity and language.

The American feminism holds the view that it is the social conditions of patriarchy not penis envy which are solely responsible for women regarding themselves as inferior. This makes the little girl a passive transmitter of social and cultural values, which obliterates her individual subjectivity, making her more passive. But in relation to social values and forces, she becomes a victim.

Self, a conception which sees the individual as essentially rational, unified, and conflict free. But Freud overturned all this. He focused on individual subjectivity, on the complex contradictory emotional experiences of people in relation to society and politics, on the quality of human social relationships, on gender relations and our unequal sexual world, and on fundamental assumptions of Western knowledge and science. A person's selfhood is usually understood to refer to their personality and character which in turn defines them. There is something reliable in this self which is the same almost every day, unless a person is ill or disturbed and this in turn disturbs the entire assumption of a self which is coherent, stable and durable. That there is something fundamental, some core of selfhood was an Enlightenment concept. With the arrival of Freud there was no more a reliable self, but a self which was irrational, unreliable etc. The self, which so far was thought to be supreme and obvious was deconstructed by psychoanalysis as being only one among many regions of subjectivity. Freud concluded that the self does not exist as such, but that it is made, constituted through the unconscious operations of desire. Psychoanalysis posits a basic split in an individual, between a conscious self and that which is unconscious. Emotional self is as important as the thinking self. This emotional self keeps fluctuating. Psychoanalysis recognizes the primacy of certain emotions-love and hatred for instance- in the formation of selfhood and this invariably takes place during childhood. A separation or ending of a relationship in childhood might affect a person adversely or positively.

Post-Freudian developments focus on the psychological relations between human beings rather than the inner world of the individual alone. The reproduction of the patriarchal and social order of modern societies is no longer understood as merely rooted in sexual repression and the denial of deep inner passions, as in the Classical

view of psychoanalysis. Rather, repressive social conditions are traced to various pathologies that underlie human relationships, and of their impact on psychic life, selfhood and gender identity.

“Where Id was, there ego shall be” in this account, what used to be unconscious shall be reclaimed for individual control and rationality. With the emergence of object Relations Theory, the psychoanalytic notion of autonomy undergoes significant transformation. The autonomous self can no longer emerge against the backdrop of an internal alteration of the individual subject, but depends on the reconstruction of emotional links with others.

Luce Irigaray demonstrates that psychoanalysis privileges seeing, in other words, the visible. This relegates woman to absence in existing structures of psychoanalytical and philosophical discourse because what is visible is always positive. She says that in psychoanalysis woman is man's other and her function is to reflect back man's meaning to himself but by becoming the negative of this reflection. The male imaginary defines woman for itself, but there is something in her that escapes this sort of definition. The male subject prefers to see her as sinister, because of the fear of death and castration. The dominant fantasy of the mother is as a volume which reproduces sameness. Hence man vows to keep this container closed, so as to perpetuate his own superior position. Irigaray argues that it is essential to have another woman, a woman who cannot be volumized.

Imaginary, bears the morphological marks of the male body, whose cultural products are characterized by unity, linearity, self-identity and those of the female body by plurality, nonlinearity, fluid identity. Psychoanalysis says that the psychic health of an individual is characterized by the equal participation of both the parents. For

rationality to be fertile and creative, argues Irigaray, the feminine ought not to be repressed. There should be equality, not subordination-domination. For Irigaray, rationality cannot be differentiated from sexual difference.

Irigaray was interested to create a new language for women who will help them to express themselves. She just utilizes the existing systems of meanings or signification to exceed or overflow the oppositional structures and hierarchizing procedures of phallogocentric texts. Thus will be able to create a new form of expression which will be able to express the inexpressible and also to create a female subject with the potential to create its own meanings. Irigaray refuses to accept boundaries and borders. She believes that these borders and boundaries solidifies and makes immobile, that in language which is fluid and ambiguous. This rigid confinement of terms is an attempt to narrow down the meaning and also to organize singular hierarchical principles to master the wayward reliance of language on a constitutive ambiguity.

Carl Gustav Jung drew lines to join the dots between complex psychology and archetypes. Jung called the structure of a personality, Psyche. The Psyche comprises of differentiated but interacting systems. The most important ones are the Ego, the Personal Unconscious and its Complexes, and The Collective Unconsciousness with the Archetypes, The Persona, The Anima and Animus and The Shadow. These structures absorb and react to experiences within every individual differently. But the functions of these structures remain universal.

In The principle of psychic totality and the principle of psychic dynamic, Jung avoided and discarded all fragmentary analyses and considered human personality in its totality. The term comprises all that we mean by soul, mind, psyche, consciousness.

Consciousness and unconsciousness although opposed in their properties are considered supplementing, complementary as well as compensatory.

Jung said that Conscious floats like a little island on the boundless sea of the unconscious. Ego is surrounded by consciousness. It is the subject to all personal acts and the central field of consciousness. It has a somatic and a psychic basis, it consists of both the conscious and unconscious factors. Consciousness maintains the relation of the psychic contents with the Ego. Sphere of consciousness is surrounded by contents lying in the unconscious. At a time, consciousness can deal with a few contents, the rest lapse into the unconscious.

In conscious life, the disagreeable elements we intentionally repress and forget are deposited in the unconscious. The unconscious can be divided into personal unconscious and collective unconscious. The collective part of the unconscious is wider. The collective unconscious is the absolutely other of consciousness. The unconscious forms the basis of every individual psyche. The consciousness is thereby built upon the fundamental psychic activity, which consists in the functioning of the unconscious. We are acquainted with the notion that our consciousness guides all our actions and decisions in our psychic life, is shown baseless. Often our conscious decisions of important problems are found dominated by unconscious influences. Jung's personal experiences taught him that such contents are not dead, outmoded forms but belong to our living being. From this he developed the theory of Archetypes. Archetypes are universal images that have evolved from the beginning of time. These archetypes have its origin from our ancestors and linger on through centuries. They have existed from the dawn of creation through generations. Similarly, certain interpersonal relationships remain the same. Relationships in different scenario's account to emotional patterns, that enables rational humans to react in predictable ways

to familiar, recurring stimuli. An archetype is an inborn potential for a certain sort of image. What the actual mental image will look like will depend upon the collective unconscious. Archetypal images also reflect the conscious experiences of the person as a subject in history, culture and time.

There are four basic functions in every individual which forms the totality of the psyche. Four basic functions existing in all men - thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition. Although all the four functions operate, experience shows only one function adjusts itself to reality.

Complexes indicate something ununited or conflicting. The origin of the complex is frequently seen in a so-called trauma - an emotional shock or the like, by which a fragment of the psyche is shut or split off.

Collective unconscious is the region of our primitive drives over which we can sometimes exercise control and can somehow rationally order. About unconscious Jung said that everything of which I know, but of which I am not at this moment thinking, everything of which I was once conscious but have now forgotten everything perceived by my senses, but not noted by my conscious mind, everything which involuntarily and without paying attention to it, I feel think, remember, want and do all the future things that are taking shape in me and will sometime come to consciousness; all this is the content of the unconscious.

The Personal Unconscious is like a storehouse, and it is the second component of the mind. It stores the individual's thoughts and feelings that are not currently a part of conscious awareness. It includes unconscious influences from birth and all the rejected thoughts. It contains thoughts that are only irrelevant to the present scenario. The Collective Unconscious forms the third component of the human psyche. It is

inherited and comprises of a deeper layer of the unconscious that is made up of powerful symbols, the Archetypes.

There exist two different archetypes stand in for the outward self and the inward self of every individual. The Persona archetype is like a mask, which stands for the person, desired to be in front of others, it is a socially acceptable mask. Each modifies their persona according to their unique efforts to achieve their goal. In contrast to the Persona archetype is the Shadow Archetype. It is the dark and beyond the pale. The libidinal desires and motives of every individual are not explicitly evident, to comprehend the connection between the different levels of the psyche. It is composed primarily of negative elements that remain hidden. The Shadow is best described as the darker self in the unconsciousness that subtly invades the waking moments. Jung states that the realization of the Shadow enables an individual to find their Self. The most important archetype is The Self. It is the binding factor between The Unconscious and The Conscious. The Self is an inner urge to balance and reconcile the opposing aspects of our personalities. The Self archetype strives for wholeness.

Carl Jung believes that myth and dreams were expressions of the Collective Unconscious. Further Jung explains that sex is a pattern that is encoded within the human minds. And there are similar patterns found in mythology found all around the world. Mythical images comprise of archetypal forms which according to Jung is not just allegories in the processes of nature but it more symbolic "the myth may be an attempt to promote self-healing of an individual, or promote better adaption in the future". To Jung, myths are archaic truths that have streamed out from the Unconscious. Myths have taken shape over centuries. They are passed down through generations mostly in the form of stories. These stories have a strong emotional base,

with deeply hidden truth, evolved to inspire. Myths have been narrated and believed to sculpture a base for life.

In Castillejo's view, Jungian philosophy serves as a vital tool for studying both individuals and collective groups. Patriarchal repression, then, can be understood as a kind of collective shadow of patriarchal society, one it refuses to acknowledge or accept. Jung's notions of self actualization—specifically, allowing someone to access their heretofore hidden unconscious—can be utilized as a tool for expressing feminine (self)discovery on the individual level, and recovering feminism/feminist culture from the margins on the collective level.

Everyone is bi-sexual in nature; the predominating nature determines the sex. Carl Jung finds that there is a difference in the psychological structure between man and woman, resulting from differences in sex chromosomes. Jung states that both males and females have a conscious personality and an unconscious side. Jung formulates the terms Anima and Animus. A woman possesses a conscious feminine character and unconscious masculine sides known as Animus, likewise men have a conscious masculine personality as well as an unconscious feminine Anima. The anima and animus project both positive and negative characteristics. From childhood, gender identities evolve, along with suppressed emotion. The animus corresponds to the paternal logos - The anima corresponds to the maternal Eros. Women's consciousness is characterized by the connective quality of Eros, - discrimination and cognition associated with logos. If the woman happens to be pretty, this animus, opinions have for the man something rather touching and childlike about them, which makes him adopt a benevolent, fatherly, Professional manner. But if the woman does not stir his sentimental side and competence is expected of her rather than appealing helplessness and stupidity then her animus opinions irritate the man to death, chiefly because they

are based on nothing but opinion for opinion's sake. The animus in woman is the collective image of a man she inherits and her experience of man she comes in contact and the latest masculine principle in herself. It takes the father-image and might lead to destructive result. The anima and animus act as a mediating principle between the conscious and unconscious mind.

## Chapter Two

Gillian Schieber Flynn is an American writer who is widely acknowledged for her dark entertaining narrations on artifice and murder. Her novels generally carry the themes of dysfunctional families, violence and self-harm. She wrote four novels, *Sharp Objects*, *Dark Places*, *Gone Girl* and *The Grown Up*. She got awards like New York Times bestseller, New Yorker Reviewers' Favorite, Weekend Today Top Summer Read, and Chicago Tribune Favorite Fiction Choice.

Flynn graduated in English and Journalism from University of Kansas and did masters from Northwestern University. She worked as a stringer in *U.S. News and World Report* and then became staff writer for *Entertainment Weekly* before becoming a full time fiction writer in 2008. She presents women as offenders and sexual manipulators. Through anti-heroines Flynn subverts the assumption that the characters meant to play the lead roles would be good with the traits that we all want to reach. Her writing is unique with original characterization, problematic plot and dilemmatic moral value. It also questions the philosophy of love and discusses humans' depression versus demand of life.

On their fifth anniversary Nick Dunne found that his wife Amy is missing from their home in Missouri. It was only few years back they came from New York and settled in North Carthage. The couple moved to take care of his dying mother, who was struggling from cancer. Amy is a girl who was born and brought up in New York so, she was not aroused by the thought of settling in Missouri.

Cops and media arrived and started their work. Amy's parents also show up, weeping. Days passed without any clue of Amy, but only having the clues of treasure hunt, which was left by her to Nick. This resulted in a public outrage and caught

worldwide attention, which eventually pressurized the cop to find any suspect. All the eyes are on Nick who behaves carelessly even after the disappearance of his wife. The author put the arm on us to believe that Nick is behind the disappearance of his wife by revealing his affair with a young college girl and the things that he refrains from the cops.

Nick continues to play the treasure hunt and every time he read a note of Amy he felt like he is again falling in love with her despite of their differences. But the new found love for Amy lived only until obtaining the anniversary present.

The first part among the three parts of the novel also carries Amy's some diary excerpts from where one can read her version of story. Going through the diary one will know the rich, only child life of Amy along with the details of their marriage. She is the inspiration for a series of children's book named *Amazing Amy* written by Rand and Marybeth Elliot, her parents. Amy Elliot was also a magazine writer just like Nick Dunne and they fell in love and married. Both of them lost their job and Nick decided to leave to Missouri to accompany his twin sister Margo in taking care of their mother. In spite of Amy's objection they went to Missouri and even after his mother's death he was not interested to move back to New York. Nick and his sister set up a bar with the help of Amy. Amy was the one who is forced to look after his diseased mother and father. Meanwhile, Nick got a job in a community college. All these occupied their time and they started to move away. Violent behavior of Nick made Amy to live in terror. She became a woman who doesn't have any value in Nick's life. Frightened Amy bought a gun to protect her. Here, one can see a woman who is totally opposite to the one described by Nick during the opening of the novel.

When one look into the present, one can see that all the evidences are against Nick. When he continuously denied every evidence to prove that he had involvement in the disappearance of Amy, cops got traces of massive blood loss and they found that the discrepancies look staged. All these time he was cautious in hiding his affair with his student, Andie. The treasure hunt which was set up by his wife led him to his sister's woodshed, where he saw all the items present in the credit card bill. Thus he realized that he is trapped.

Amy is still alive and she is living at a cabin in Ozarks. She is the one who created the whole scene back at North Carthage, and also purchased and stored the items in the woodshed. She left blood stains in the kitchen and using her neighbor's urine she proved that she is pregnant and even manipulated her to believe that Amy is trapped in an abusive relationship. She planned to live in the cabin until she runs out of money and then drown herself and to let her body wash to the Gulf of Mexico to be discovered. But her plan was spoiled by the neighbors living in the cabin who robs her and left her penniless.

Nick hires a criminal lawyer named Tanner Bolt who generally take the cases of guilty men. They try hard to prove his innocence but media, cops even Amy's parents are now against him. Nick attempts to connect with the public and attends interviews for a prime time network news show. But it didn't help him as the news about the contents in the woodshed leaked.

Helpless Amy decided to call her old high school boyfriend Desi Collins, who happens to be obsessed with her. Amy convinced him about the abuses of Nick and he took her to his pool house. Amy dyed her hair and gained weight so that nobody would recognize her. But Desi want to make her perfect. One day she saw her husband's

interview in which he confesses his injustices towards her, his relationship with Andie and finally begs his wife to return to him. She decides to leave the grudges and to meet Nick, but for that she has to escape from Desi. Amy takes part in sex with him, kills him, make bruises in her own body and returns to North Carthage with a new story where she was held captive, raped and abused by Desi.

Nick is now free from the charges, but instead of a divorce they get into a cold war inside the house. Amy even planned that, if he didn't cooperate with the current kidnapping story, she will tell the press that he tried to poison her with antifreeze and for that she stored her vomit in the freezer. Frustrated Nick, who is aware that she is a murderer decides to shut his mouth and started to dwell into the past and write about their relationship. After he finishes his writing, Amy broke the news of her pregnancy, this time it's real. She put forward an ultimatum. If he wants his child he has to live according to her rules otherwise he will lose the child. Nick was not ready for that and he decides to destroy everything written against her and was ready to start a new life for their child.

Marriage, misogyny, secrets and lies are the main themes discussed in the story. The story talks about the life of a married couple, their circumstances, what is the role of partnership and commitment in a relationship and some uncontrollable aspects of life. Flynn proves that just like strengthening a relationship, a marriage can destabilize the life of couples. When they reached their fifth anniversary their relationship had become stale from a vibrant, passionate relationship and they made it worse by secrets and lies. The true Amy, who is a misogynist, picks out women whom she believes are dull and stupid and manipulate them for her gain. Nick is also a misogynist. His father was a cruel, physically abusive man and he also became like his father even after so

much effort not to be like that. He detests his wife Amy, mistress Andie, Detective Boney and news anchor Ellen Abbott.

From the beginning itself it is portrayed that Amy has been killed or kidnapped and only in the midway it is revealed that she is the one who planned her own disappearance. In the second half the writer reveals the secrets and lies on which their marriage is built upon. In the story it is these secrets and lies that is more relevant than the truth. At a point in the story, both of them confess that they have lied and kept secrets from each other and these for shadowed and dictated the necessity of other.

The structure of the novel itself is built upon lies. The readers are compelled to believe the diary entries of Amy where, she portrays her husband as abusive and cruel, at the same time she portrayed herself as an emotional, sympathetic and loving wife who lives under the terror of her husband. Even the detectives fall into the trap of Amy, so that when they wanted a reinvestigation the authority denied it. The foundation of lies upon which the investigation is built makes the truth irrelevant and undiscoverable. The authorities and media are not interested in even considering that the facts that they have considered as truth are actually lies.

Flynn used symbols to present her ideas more powerful. Amy's diary entry symbolizes both of their efforts in controlling each other's life and marriage. Diary is an imaginative work of Amy about which she is proud of. She constructed a new Amy who is loved by all. Her diary indicates her desperate need to control how other people see her and for becoming perfect and amazing in front of them.

The woodshed behind the house of Nick's sister symbolizes how lies and secrets are built in a romantic relationship until the time of its explosion. All of the three members ignore the woodshed as it is in a state of disuse. But at a point when

Nick completed his treasure hunt, the woodshed became a crucial point. It is the place where Nick escaped from his wife and where he had sex with his mistress and it made him confess all his infidelities towards his married life. From there Nick realized how lies, secrets and half-truths which he kept from his wife and she kept from him reached a point of hatred and vendetta. The woodshed contains their dark lies and it is the home they created for their worst thoughts, darkest fantasies, and cruelest suspicion about one another.

In the woodshed Amy kept an anniversary gift for Nick which he got at the end of the treasure hunt. It is a pair of puppets made up of wood. They are Punch and Judy who are the characters from puppet theatres. This pair of puppets symbolizes the violence in their marriage. Traditionally the fifth marriage anniversary is called as 'wood' and therefore he was expecting a cradle at the end of the treasure hunt. But he was gifted with the Punch and Judy puppets which are more sinister. The story of these two puppets is that, Punch kills Judy and their baby. The string which animates the puppets are missing and Go concludes that the lack of handle in Judy indicates her femaleness. This gift is conveying that Nick is a puppet in the hands of Amy and the entire current situation is created by her.

Nick Dunne is the male lead of the novel who is handsome and charismatic. He was a magazine writer in New York and after losing his job he returned to his hometown Missouri along with his wife Amy Elliot. In the first half after the disappearance of his wife, his behavior compels the readers to suspect him of kidnapping or murdering his wife. He confesses that he had lied to the cops and his visits and love making with his student who is much younger than him strengthens the suspicion. Only in the second half it is revealed that he is not the one who is behind Amy's disappearance, but Flynn never portrayed him as someone who deserves

sympathy. Nick is not a murderer but he is not at all a good guy. He married a city girl and brought her to North Carthage just to leave her for taking care of his diseased parents. As Amy continues to manipulate the circumstances he becomes a puppet in the hands of her. He is a self-centered man with low level cruelty.

According to Kate Rich, Amy Dunne is the most disturbing female villain of all time. Amy is a victim and tricky offender villain who framed her husband to give him a death penalty. For getting Nick's attention and love she is ready to be the 'Cool Girl' who never get angry, only smile in a loving manner and let their men do whatever they want to. Even after her continuous disapproval to move to Missouri, Nick decides to go and she also accompanied him. There she was compelled to look after his diseased parents and her husband never cared for her. During the first half of the plot the readers are sympathetic towards Amy but only in the second half it is revealed that she is behind her own disappearance. Diary Amy states only the half-truth; it creates another Amy who is totally opposite to the real Amy. Through her diary she creates a Nick who is physically, psychologically and emotionally abusive and these entries are supported by his half-hearted involvement in the investigation. Johanson states that it is Amy's strict adherence to the neoliberal values is the source of her terror image. Her terror lies in her ability to manipulate and make everything in her favor. She can be considered as modern day 'femme fatale' whose violent nature is tied to her intelligence rather than her sexuality.

Amy reflects some post-feminist values. She is a wealthy, well educated, only child of Rand and Marybeth Elliot. A post feminist woman has the right to decide whether to marry or not. Here, her family and friends pushes her into a relationship with Nick because her relationship status has always been a source of anxiety for them. She is having a career in writing for a women's magazine before losing it and she is not

interested in a marriage because she doesn't want to lose her autonomy. But after her marriage she tries to be the girl that her husband wants to be with. She repeats that marriage is a compromise but here she is the only one who has to compromise while Nick controls her life by handing over the responsibility of his parents to her.

Amy can be compared with Margaret Atwood's Zenia from the novel *The Robber Bride*. Like Amy she is also a 'femme fatale'. According to Merriam Webster 'femme fatale' is a seductive woman who lures men into dangerous or compromising situations. She possesses that manipulative power which men find irresistible. Both are very good at fooling and manipulating people for their benefit. They are ambitious, independent and possess autonomy. Just like Amy, Zenia also adopt different personas which make women to empathize with her and desire to obtain her friendship. At the same time there are so many differences between them even though they both are evil. Zenia is a traditional noir 'femme fatale' while Amy is a neo noir 'femme fatale'. She manipulates her husband with pregnancy. Amy is more violent than Zenia. Zenia didn't possess a narrative voice but Amy possesses first person narration along with Nick. She doesn't have the complete narrative control but her ability to manipulate the readers gives her the narrative power more than Nick. Amy speaks about her female friends to show her resentment towards them who pretend to be the 'Cool Girl' or someone who they are not.

*Medea* of Euripides is a tragedy based on the myth of Jason and Medea where she took revenge from her husband Jason for breaking their marriage oath and betraying her with another woman. When Nick lost his job and they came to Missouri, it was Amy who supported him. She protected him and looks after his family, gave financial support etc. But he never showed any type of gratitude towards her and she

never expected. When he didn't get what he wanted from Amy, he started to betray her at the same time continued their relationship.

The experience of Amy is same as that of Medea. Their husband exploited them and cheated them when their wives protected them. Both the women were not ready to accept the betrayal and consider it as their fate. They lived according to their husband's wish, they left their family and native land in order to live with their husband and to face problems together but what they received in return was the betrayal. They planned revenge and husbands never expected this from them. They know that the patriarchal society will never support them; therefore they passed the punishment for them and worked for it. For taking revenge they were ready to destroy themselves. Both of them used their child as a weapon. When Medea killed her children, Amy impregnated her and used pregnancy/child to control her husband.

Margo Dunne is the twin sister of Nick who owns the bar along with him. She is independent and has few relationships. She is not close to Amy so she is also behaving like Nick but she is sympathetic towards her. Due to her close relationship with Nick there are rumors of them having 'twincest'. She even suspects Nick of his wife's murder until he shows the anniversary gift. She discourages Nick in having relationship with Andie. She is not a good manipulator therefore she is unable to control Nick. She wants her brother to be happy and helps him to get rid of Amy's grip.

Desi Collins is Amy's high school boyfriend who loves and helps Amy when she was robbed by her neighbors of the cabin in Ozarks. He is obsessed with her beauty and is dangerous just like she described to everyone. He tries to make her old Amy when she gained weight and made her prisoner in his lake house in the name of protecting her.

Andie is the student of Nick in the Community College and they began an affair lasted for a year. Their relationship entered into a stressed stage when Amy disappeared suddenly. Andie respect him and love him. But Nick cut off their relationship due to his lawyer's advice.

Rhonda Boney is the detective officer appointed for the investigation of disappearance of Amy. From the beginning itself Boney is suspicious of Nick's behavior but is unable to believe that Nick is guilty. After Amy's return she helps to uncover the mask of Amy along with Go, Nick and Tanner Bolt.

Tanner bolt is a criminal lawyer hired by Nick. He is aware of how strange and psychotic is his case. He helps him to find evidence against Amy and to build a public image.

Rand and Marybeth Elliot are the parents of Amy and writers of *Amazing Amy*. They cherish their only daughter but they put lot of pressure upon her. They spend the money and borrow back the money given to their child by pushing them into a financial crisis. They are warm and kind but they have selfish motives under it.

Other characters are Tommy O'Hara, Amy's old boyfriend, Hilary Handy her school friend, Greta who was the neighbor of Amy along with Jeff who is a fisherman lived in the cabin in Ozarks they together robbed her money. Jim Gilpin is another detective along with Boney who investigates the disappearance of Amy. Ellen Abbott is a white woman reporter who has large followers. Sharon Schieber is the news woman who interviews Nick for creating the public opinion in favor of him. Bill Dunne is the misogynist father of Nick and Go who is suffering from dementia and used to be an abusive husband. Maureen Dunne is their mother and it is because of her cancer Nick decides to come back to Missouri.

## Chapter Three

I am supposed to love Nick despite all his shortcomings. And Nick is supposed to love me despite my quirks. But clearly, neither of us does. It makes me think that everyone is very wrong, that love should have many conditions. Love should require both partners to be their very best at all times. Unconditional love is an undisciplined love, as we all have seen, undisciplined love is disastrous. (462)

Family had always been a patriarchal institution which helped men to enslave women and prevented her from entering into the mainstream. This ritual continued for several centuries. In every part of the world women's role was limited inside the four walls of a house. Men made them believe that only they are intelligent and therefore they are made to rule the society. They made women anti-narcissist and misogynists like them. Gradually, women internalized this notion of patriarchy. They became 'Angel in the House', who never uttered a word against men and never questioned them. Men formulated law and order in favor of them and this privilege provided them with more power to enslave women. At the same time they made women believe that they are fragile and sensitive therefore they should be protected. From childhood itself society started to treat children according to their gender and trained a girl to be a woman who can manage the household chores and also she should be a perfect girl who possessed all the characteristics which attracted a man.

After several centuries of suppression/oppression, women decided to fight for their rights and began to break the walls built by patriarchy. Through several protests they started to achieve basic rights. They even proved men that they alone can feed and protect themselves and no men are needed for that. Even though they achieved what

they wanted and freed themselves from the clutches of men the traces of the past never left them completely. Even the post-feminists carried the patriarchal notions which were once believed by women. Even though women tried to free them from the patriarchal notions, the society always was an obstacle which prevented women to reach their goal.

Most of the men are not interested in women who are powerful and has the courage to speak. They want a wife who will blindly believe and obey them and will remain inside the house by spending their life for the benefit of the family. They feel irritated when women demand for justification. This is happening in a post-feminist world, where all are claiming that women had empowered; they had already achieved their aim. But still men and women are living with the patriarchal notions. Women want a family where she is not restricted by the male members. But post-feminists are afraid to be in a family where she will lose the freedom and will be compelled to take care of the family and work for their well being.

Gillian Flynn, a contemporary American feminist writer wrote *Gone Girl* from the point of view of a man as well as a woman. The influence of the patriarchal society upon a woman and how conflicted her life became after marriage is narrated. In the previous novels also she talked about family and its functions from the point of view of both men and women.

In the novel *Gone Girl* the married life of Nick and Amy is described from the point of view of both husband and wife. The novel opens with the description of Amy by husband Nick. They are married for the last five years still he don't know what is going on in her mind, all the time he wonders about it. The plot is full of secret and lies and towards the end it becomes a catastrophically romantic one.

Marriage is a compromise, where both the partners have to compromise in order to live in happiness with the partner. But men are expecting compromises from women. If she showed some disapproval in accepting something he thinks that she is considering this as a punishment rather than a compromise. That is what happening with Amy. She is a woman who is born and brought up in a city, therefore she is reluctant to settle in Missouri and she asked Nick to rent a nice house. Amy didn't liked the ambience of their rented house but that was the only one they could get and they stayed there for two years and then Nick thinks that for her compromises are punishments. "To Amy, it was a punishing whim on my part, a nasty, selfish twist of the knife." (4)

She believes in compromises, even though she is little bit reluctant to do it she is ready to do for her husband. Once, after their treasure hunt she preferred burger but she compromises and eats lobster.

I had suggested we get burgers. Nick wanted us to go out – five star, fancy – somewhere with clockwork of courses and name- dropping waiters. So the lobsters are a perfect in-between, the lobsters are what everyone tells us that marriage is about: compromise! (46)

After her marriage she was not the woman she used to be. She changed her to fit in with Nick. The new persona is totally strange; she never understood what she had become after marriage.

I have become a strange thing. I have become a wife. I find myself steering the ship of conversations – bulkily, unnaturally – just so I can say his name aloud. I have become a wife, I have become a bore, I have been asked to forfeit my Independent Young Feminist card. I don't care. I balance his checkbook, I trim his hair. I have

gotten so retro, at one point I will probably use the word ‘pocketbook’, shuffling out the door in my swingy tweed coat, my lips painted red, on the way to the ‘beauty parlor’. (43)

Post marriage Amy changed herself to a woman that Nick wants. She removed the feminist tag that she carried. She is living in a post feminist world where a woman can decide whether she have to marry or not. Amy was not interested in marriage because a marriage will cost her freedom and independence. But her family and society who carried patriarchal notions pressurized her to find a perfect man for her. That time she met Nick and instantly fell for him. He was like all other man who loves to be with a ‘Cool Girl’. Amy was not that type of a girl; actually she hated those ‘Cool Girls’ and those who loved them. She even criticized the Cool Girls because what they are doing is for men not for themselves. “Cool Girls are even more pathetic: They’re not even pretending to be the woman they want to be, they’re pretending to be the woman a man wants them to be.” (251)

She is a feminist who don’t want to be a typical woman who live according to a man and is not interested to please anyone. But she was ready to be that type of girl for Nick. “When I met Nick, I knew immediately that was what he wanted, and for him, I guess I was willing to try. I will accept my portion of blame. The thing is, I was crazy about him at first.” (252)

Amy’s conscious mind is not willing to be a ‘Cool Girl’ but her unconscious mind dominates her and she decides to be a girl that a man wishes her to be. She became that girl who will live according to her man. The society and her family made her like this. Her mother whom she addresses as a feminist mother also wanted her to marry a man, because a perfect girl will have a nice man beside her.

The concept of perfect was ingrained in her mind from her childhood itself and it was her parents who have it. Amy is the eighth child of her parents and all the seven children died just after their birth. Her parents loved them and considered them as perfect and in order to achieve that love and care from them she started to be a perfectionist. This led her to believe that only perfect and flawless persons are accepted by the society.

I have always been better than the Hopes, I was the one who made it. But I have always been jealous too, always – seven dead dancing princesses. They get to be perfect without even trying, without even facing one moment of existence, while I am stuck here on earth, and every day I must try, and every day is a chance to be less perfect. (250)

She was irritated by the concept of perfect. That's why she hated 'Cool Girls'. They like what men like and will never ever complain. This concept of ideal women who is ready to be like someone else for men was considered as absurdity. Amy wants to reveal to men that these type of women didn't exist but it is a mere creation of art. She knows that even though she reveals it she will not be accepted because women are trying to be like that in order to attract men. "You are not dating a woman, you are dating a woman has watched too many movies written by socially awkward men who'd like to believe that this kind of woman exists and might kiss them." (251)

She also criticizes the art for being a medium which carries false concepts and compelling women to be like that in order to be with a man. Even after several feminist movements still the society which includes the women believes that women get recognition only when a man is with them. Gradually the society changed Amy, she became one among them. She started to pretend to be a woman she is not and it was not

difficult for her. “I was pretending the way I often did, pretending to have a personality, I can’t help it, and it’s what I have always done: The way some women change fashion regularly, I change personalities.” (250)

Amy changed her personality in order to fit in the society. Her parents never accepted the real Amy because she is not up to their imagination. So that she tried to achieve love by hiding the real Amy and wore a mask demanded by the situation. Until the arrival of Nick in her life, she was not aware about the real Amy. “He teased things out in me that I didn’t know existed: a lightness, a humor, an ease. It was as if he hollowed me out and filled me with feathers.” (252) “Committing to Nick, feeling safe with Nick, being happy with Nick, made me realize that there was a Real Amy in there, and she was so much better, more interesting and complicated and challenging, than Cool Amy.” (254)

Amy decides to be real, because she knows that Nick was also pretending to be someone else and he is facing difficulty in continuing the act. She was ready to accept the real Nick because she loves him but Nick was surprised to see the real Amy.

“It turned out he couldn’t sustain his side either: the witty banter, the clever games, the romance and the wooing. It all started collapsing on itself. I hated Nick for being surprised when I became me. I hated him for not knowing it had to end, for truly believing he had married this creature.” (253)

Nick’s surprised face made her realize her mistake. Once feminist girl became a Cool Girl not for herself but for the man she loves and it made her a fool. When she was a Cool Girl she was praised by Nick but when she became real she was ignored by him.

“If you let a man cancel plans or decline to do things for you, you *lose*. You don’t get what you want. It’s pretty clear. Sure he may be happy, he may say you’re ‘the coolest girl ever’, but he is saying it because he got his way. He’s calling you a Cool Girl to fool you! That’s what men do: They try to make it sound like you are the cool girl so you will bow to their wishes.”(254)

She lost Nick; he started to ignore her when she began to be the real Amy. She was busy in looking after his family: she gave money to his twin sister to start a bar, took care of his diseased father and mother. She became busy doing things to ease his burden not because she likes to do that. He never appreciated her efforts and she never complained, she just expected love in return. She blindly believed him and never questioned him. “I like to think I am confident and secure and mature enough to know Nick loves me without him constantly proving it.” (62) She compelled herself to believe that she is giving him his space; actually she was becoming more like a woman whom she despised. Her love for Nick made her dump and blocked her conscious psyche from interrupting in the daily matters and unconscious psyche dominated her and influenced all his actions and decisions.

Her blind belief upon her husband made him fall for another one. The Real Amy was getting into his nerves and he found relief in his student Andie. He went to her because Amy was not interested in sex not even in physical contact. She was exhausted after taking care of his family and he never asked about her condition or her feelings. Instead he gets into a relationship, an extramarital relationship with a girl much younger than him.

Amy was aware that they are becoming distant and she decides to be the Amy loved by Nick and she expected love from him also.

I wanted him so badly that I was willing to re-create that moment. I was willing to pretend to be someone else again. I remember thinking: ‘We can still find a way to make this work. Faith!’ I followed him all the way to Missouri, because I still believed he’d love me again somehow, love me that intense, thick way he did the way that made everything good. Faith! (262)

There she witnessed her husband’s betrayal. For over a year she tolerated his betrayal by pretending that she is not aware about his relationship with Andie. But all that time she planned his destruction just like how Medea took revenge for Jaison’s betrayal. (Chapter 2) It shows that there is no change in the sufferings of women even in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Like Jaison, Nick used Amy for his benefit and left her by taking everything from her. “He took away chunks of me with blasé swipes: my independence, my pride my esteem. I gave, and he took and took. He Giving treed me out of existence.” (268) he exploited her in every possible way except physically.

Amy is an intelligent woman whose psyche will work all the time. She is smarter and stronger than Nick and he really didn’t like this.

She is fucking brilliant. Her brain is so busy, it never works on just one level. She’s like this endless archeological dig: You think you’ve reached the final layer, and then you bring down your pick one more time, and you break through to a whole new mine shaft beneath. With a maze of tunnels and bottomless pits. (285)

In a way Nick viewed Amy as ‘femme fatale’ and he was castrated by her intelligence. He saw many things that he hated in a woman in the Real Amy: Strong, smart, powerful, independent. She became a revenge thirsty wife who is ready to

destroy herself in order to punish her husband. Because she was not ready to be that Cool Girl anymore and she is determined to destroy the man who exploited and cheated her even after living according to him for the past four years.

Amy planned her disappearance on their fifth anniversary and she left several hints to the detectives which were pointing towards Nick. She also planned treasure hunt like every year and informed him that she was aware of his relationship with Andie from the beginning itself and anniversary present will be his punishment. She changes her appearance and hides in a cabin until her neighbors robbed her. Then she approached her ex-boyfriend for whom Amy is an obsession. He also loved the beauty of Amy rather than her character. He made her a prisoner and convinced her that it's for safety.

Nick, who is aware of her trap, understood that he will be sealed as her culprit. For escaping from the arrest Amy is necessary and he was ready to be the husband that Amy wanted. Only at this moment he was ready to be the man she wanted just to protect himself from cops. There she saw a hope for continuing the relationship and in order to approach Nick, she killed Desi and blamed him for kidnapping her.

Her arrival and her words protected him from death row. And he thanked her and asked her for divorce. Because he can't live with a murderer. But she trapped him and he never leaves her because it will cause another problem. He repeatedly calls her a "psycho bitch" because all what she did is absurd and the one who will not follow the socially constructed patriarchal norms will be addressed as psychos.

Nick decides to write about Amy's violence and crookedness in trapping him. Thus Amy impregnates her and he is not ready to believe that the he is child's father. She confesses that it is for her security. "I'll need to do a few things for my security,

Nick. Just because, I have to say, it's almost impossible to trust you. To start you will have to delete your book, obviously.” (459) She orders him to destroy the writings and to stop investigation. Thus she stopped man from writing about woman. He doesn't know about anything that she suffered and he will never understand that. He believes that both partners should compromise: “I suppose it's not a compromise if only one of you considers it such, but that was what our compromises tended to look like. One of us was always angry. Amy usually.” (4) But he complains that she never compromise and the reality was different.

Once he asked for a child but she refused because she knows that the motherhood will take woman's freedom. But to control him and to protect herself she is ready to be a mother. But different from the tradition that men controlled women through child, here she controls the man through their child.

She once was a feminist and her love for Nick made her a Cool Girl. She unconsciously became the woman she never wanted her to be. When she realized that she is becoming like them she didn't stop herself but defined her actions in a different way. Amy was in an internal conflict throughout the story. She lives in a post- feminist world and among her parents her mother was strong and she is the decision maker in the family. Thus Amy also became independent and strong but the difference between her feminist mother and Amy is that her mother has internalized the patriarchal norms, but Amy didn't. She strongly criticized those women who are ready to dance according to the wishes of men. Even though she lives in a post-feminist world, the society never detached from the norms created by men several ages ago.

Her parents want a perfect child to use as a financial source. Through her parents she understood that only perfect persons are accepted and loved by the people.

It was impossible for her to be perfect and therefore she covered her flaws. There was a fear in her that her real character which is not a flawless one will make others hate her. She believed that didn't possess a personality because she always changed persona according to the circumstances. She came to know the Real Amy when she fell in love with Nick.

During the initial stages of love and marriage it was her collective unconscious psyche which dominated and influenced most of her decision. It made her the woman she never met with. Because in her conscious psyche she was a feminist who is not ready to live according to the patriarchal norms and is not ready to be an ideal woman. She knows that no one will accept that her husband has used her and abused her without any evidence. All those years she was suffering from mental and emotional abuses and the law and order only punishes when there is solid evidence against the culprit. If she talked about her sufferings no one, not even women will support her. Because all those sufferings are meant to be tolerated by women. Amy is not ready to follow this concept, she has understood that following the existing norms will let the women suffer and the men will enjoy. It will only strengthen the notion that women are weak and therefore they will not retaliate.

Amy can be termed as a 'femme fatale', who manipulate men and destroy them. But she only destroys those who tried to change and exploit the Real Amy. The patriarchal society will never accept a revenge thirsty woman who is ready to stand and demolish anything which tries to destroy her. A woman is able to be an 'Angel in the House' for the one who loves her and accept the real person and she is efficient to be a 'femme fatale' for those who tries to tear down her.

Flynn didn't let Amy to be punished because she is a victim of domestic abuse. Through Amy, she says that there are women in this post-feminist era who claim themselves as feminists but is not free from the clutches of both the society who had internalized the patriarchal norms and the collective unconscious.

## Conclusion

Collective unconsciousness always played a major role in creating a position for women in the society. Men molded her and made her into a being that will take the role of everyone without any questions and skepticism and will remain loyal until her last breath. Even if she is subjected to any kind of abuses, she will stick on to him. The society ruled by men created this image of women for their benefit. This centuries long subjugation made her believe that these are the characteristics of a women and every women should be like this. Not only men but also women started to incept these thoughts in the psyche of their children from a young age itself.

Knowledge and education made women capable enough to stand for her and fight for their needs and wants. But they never gained more than what men decided to give. Even after several fights for gaining rights, women still didn't get what they deserved. She proudly says that she is independent and no longer remains as a slave but the truth is concealed by the word 'independent women'. The only difference is that, during ancient periods women were compelled to follow the rules and regulations put forward by men but in this 21<sup>st</sup> century where the world is mainly controlled by technologies, women became robots. A robot needs a chip to work which will be inserted by scientist but after that it will work automatically, like that women continued to obey men for several centuries and now she is working automatically without any external pressure.

In the novel *Gone Girl* the central character Amy who lives in a post feminist world sacrifices and reduced her into nothing in order to fit with the man with whom she is married to. But once he gained her and her wealth his interest in her is longer exists, he started to cheat on her. Despite of her several efforts to please him and to be a

woman whom he likes he didn't come back. This transformed her into a 'femme fatale' from an 'angel' because that was the only means through which she can gain him back.

From this novel one could understand that still in this post feminist world women are living under the shadow of her terrible past where she had to face abuses from both men and women.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**TEXTUAL WEAVINGS IN MURAKAMI'S *KAFKA ON THE SHORE***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
for the Award of the Bachelor of Degree

**DEVIKA RAVINDRAN**

**Register No.: DB18AEGR004**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

June 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “Textual Weavings in Murakami’s *Kafka on the Shore*” is an authentic record of bona fide work carried out by Devika Ravindran under my supervision and guidance at the Department of Studies in English, Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian, Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Angadikadavu, Kannur University.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Devika Ravindran, hereby declare that the project entitled “Textual Weavings in Murakami’s *Kafka on the Shore*” is an authentic record of bona fide work carried out by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English. I further declare that this project work has not been submitted by fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Devika Ravindran

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR004

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Devika Ravindran

## Table of Contents

	Page no.
Introduction	1
Chapter 1	4
Intertextuality: An Evolution of Texts	
Chapter 2	13
A Terse Study of Murakami's <i>Kafka on the Shore</i>	
Chapter 3	19
<i>Kafka on the Shore: A Riddle of Texts</i>	
Conclusion	30
Works Consulted	31

## Introduction

In the contemporary literary studies, intertextuality is an important concept. It is the idea that the meaning of a text is shaped by other texts. As a phenomenon, intertextuality has been sometimes defined as a set of relations which a text has with other texts and discourses belonging to various fields and cultural domains. The commencement of intertextuality as a critical theory and an approach to texts in 20th century was provided by the formulations of such theorists as Ferdinand de Saussure, Mikhail M. Bakhtin and Roland Barthes, even before the term “intertextuality” was coined by Julia Kristeva in 1966.

The notion of intertextuality dates back to the ancient times when the first human history and the discourses about texts began to exist. Today, intertextuality can be considered as a literary device as well as a critical theory. As a literary device, it creates an interrelationship between texts and provides related understanding in separate works. These references influence the reader and also add layers of depth to a text, based on the reader’s prior knowledge and understanding. Intertextuality is also known to be a literary discourse strategy used by the writers in novels, poetry, theatre and even in non-written texts. Examples of intertextualities can be author’s borrowing and transformation of a prior text, and a reader’s referencing of a text in reading another.

This study aims to analyze the title of the selected novel *Kafka on the Shore* as an intertext to identify the various meanings found in it and to prove that it represents the whole essence of the novel. The main objective of this thesis is to identify the title as an intertext in various possible ways using Kristeva’s theory of intertextuality. The paper begins by discussing the whole idea of intertextuality, and will address the

importance of how a text raises the narrative of specific discourse to a replacement level and to reveal their suggestions on how the primary text should be read. The thesis is based on textual analysis, by making use of the postmodern novel *Kafka on the Shore* by the famous Japanese author, Haruki Murakami.

Haruki Murakami is an iconic figure of twentieth century literature known mostly for his unreal, humorous work focusing on the loneliness and empty mindedness of Japan's work dominated generation. He has achieved several noted awards for his fiction and non-fiction works. He was referred to as one of the world's greatest living novelists by *The Guardian*. His most notable works are *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *Norwegian Wood*, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, *Kafka on the Shore*, *1Q84*.

The work used in this thesis, Murakami's *Kafka on the Shore* uses a number of intertextual elements, shifting structures, a succession of tales and different points of view; it also probes nature of change, coincidence and chance. The author tries to convey the chaos and confusions that perceive in a reality where worlds are rapidly being displaced by other worlds. In the text, the emphasis is on synchronicity, multiple meanings and they give an idea of how rhythmic time in narrative differs from the traditional linear and historical plot. The work is a conscious textual play with various techniques such as authorial interruption, reader's participation, open-structure, non-linearity, fragmentation, multiplicity, and intertextuality. The novel tells two parallel tales in alternate chapters; the odd numbered chapters tell the story of Kafka, a fifteen year old boy who runs away from his home; and the even numbered chapters tell the story of Nakata, an old man who has lost his cognitive abilities in an incident. These two tales get interconnected in the end. Although this novel consists of a number of intertextualities, this thesis aims to explore the numerous intertextualities in the title of the novel *Kafka on the Shore* in depth. Often, the title of

the work signifies the whole work. Thus, it's essential to be able to interpret the title of the work with regard to the whole work.

This thesis is divided into three chapters along with an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction part introduces the relevance of the topic. It explains the main objective of the thesis and gives background information about the same. It also introduces the writer Haruki Murakami and his work *Kafka on the Shore*, based on which the thesis is carried out. The first chapter aims at providing an overall view related to the study to be used as a contextualized reference. It traces the evolution and concept of intertextuality. The second chapter introduces Murakami and his book *Kafka on the Shore*, based on which the thesis is carried out. The third chapter gives an intertextual approach to the selected work and analyze the texts. The final part is the conclusion in which a conclusion is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out.

## Chapter 1

### Intertextuality: An Evolution of Texts

Intertextuality is a concept, according to which, the meaning of a text is sculpted on the basis of other texts. It is one of the important concepts in modern literary criticism. Intertextuality can also be defined as a way of shaping the meaning of a text by memory. By the term “memory”, it means that the experiences of the author who wrote the text and the experiences of the reader who decodes it. In other words, the meaning of a text is the result of the writer’s experience as much as it is the product of the reader’s prior knowledge and understanding of it.

The relationship between texts, especially literary texts is intertextuality; any form of written material being a text. No text is complete, original and unique in itself. It is rather, a substance of predestined, to some extent unwitting references to and quotations from other texts. The modern theorists view the texts, whether literary or non-literary as lacking of any independent meaning. These are what they call intertextual today. The theorists claim that the act of reading plunges us into a network of textual relations. Interpreting a text, to dissect its meaning or meanings require tracing those relations. Reading is a method for tracing those textual relations. At last, the meaning evolves to be something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates in moving out from the independent text into a network of textual relations. Thus, the text becomes the intertext.

Intertextuality, in its broadest sense, is a poststructuralist, deconstructionist and postmodernist theory which changed the concept of text. It recognizes an independent text as an intertext owing to the interrelations between texts and texts’ absorptions of other texts. Another versatility of intertextuality is the distinction

between work and text. Intertextuality regards a literary work as an open artefact holding hints of other texts. It provides the reader with many fascinating ways to decipher and appreciate a work of art. In this present world where people are sadly retreating into their own versions of reality, knowledge of how intertextuality operates may hopefully serve as a bridge to better understanding and empathy between human beings. It has also paved the way for dislodging works of literature from the traditional ways of interpretation and analysis relying on the authorial intention foregrounding the logocentric vision.

The term intertextuality was coined by Julia Kristeva in the school of poststructuralism in her essay "Word, Dialogue and Novel" as part of her groundbreaking study of Mikhail Bakhtin, who was almost unknown to the Western audience back then. She argues that a literary text is "a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality is replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as atleast double."(66) Kristeva considers Bakhtin as one of the first critic to replace the static form out of texts with a model where literary structure does not simply but is generated in relation to another structure. She maintains that Bakhtin's emphasis on dialogue changes the view that every text has a fixed meaning. Kristeva's work on Bakhtin occurred during a transitional period in modern literary and cultural theory, that is, during the transformation from structuralism to poststructuralism. She then used the term "intertextuality" in her critically acclaimed essay "The Bounded Text", where she provides a definition for the term to denote the interdependence of literary texts.

Kristeva's term has taken on a variety of meanings inspired by models and theories of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the Russian literary theorist M. M. Bakhtin. She attempted to synthesize Saussure's structuralist semiotics, study of

how signs derive their meaning within the structure of a text, with Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism, and his examination of the multiple meanings in each text. Saussure emphasizes that relational nature of a meaning and text is established from the systematic features of language. He speaks of linguistics signs, signified referring to the concept and signifier which suggests the sound concept to emphasize the non-referential nature of its meaning. This structuralist semiotics considered the objectivity of language, stating that myths, oral cultural traditions, literary texts, or any cultural text can be scientifically analyzed. However, this approach didn't put human subject who performs the utterance under consideration. Bakhtin's work centers on human subjects using language in specific social situations satisfy that need. For Saussure, the relational nature of the word originates from a vision of language which is seen as a generalized and abstract system. On the other hand, for Bakhtin it originates from the word's existence within specific social sites, specific social registers and specific moments of utterance and reception. By combining these insights and theories, Kristeva invents the term and notion of "intertextuality". Kristeva evades human subjects in favour of the more abstract terms, text and textuality, for expression.

The beginnings of intertextuality are often traced back to Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of "dialogism". In the 1960s, when Julia Kristeva introduced the term intertextuality, Bakhtin's work was unknown and much of it was not published. One can say that Kristeva's concept of intertextuality and the work of Bakhtin cannot be separated and, a detailed look at Bakhtin's theory is required to understand intertextuality. He developed the notion of intertextuality to consider the social contexts. He also gave terms like dialogism, heteroglossia, polyphony and carnivalesque that are deemed important for Kristeva's development of the concept of

intertextuality. In 1929, he produced his first important work, *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, which explored the structures of novelistic prose and introduced the concept of dialogism. He then, develops his idea of dialogism and others which can also be related to intertextuality like polyphony and heteroglossia in his work *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* and in his collection of essays *The Dialogic Imagination*.

Bakhtin's theories are closely associated with Kristeva's concept of intertextuality, since they lay the framework within which Kristeva works. It becomes clear from Bakhtin's theory that no utterance or text can stand in isolation, and invariably depends on its predecessors and successors. Dialogism itself includes a wide range of Bakhtinian thoughts and concepts, including heteroglossia, polyphony, chronotope, and unfinalizability. What all these dialogic elements have in common is their emphasis on the constant interaction between various texts as autonomous discourses. In other words, every text is situated in a network of discursive powers that shape its whole essence and understanding. Dialogism is one of Bakhtin's main concerns and an obvious master key to the inferences that guided his works throughout his whole career. Bakhtin scholar Michael Holquist states "Dialogue is present in one way or another throughout the notebooks he kept from his youth to his death at the age of 80." (Holquist, 4) All his writings, regardless of the names Bakhtin gave to his writings on dialogue "are animated and controlled by the principle of dialogue." (14)

Roland Barthes is also an important figure in the intertextual theory. He has a major role in making the transition from structuralism to poststructuralism possible. His theory of text includes the theory of intertextuality because a text offers a wide range of meanings and an individual text is woven out of already existing texts. In his

concept of 'death of the author', intertextuality is the reason why a text comes into being. Barthes states: "Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of code, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc., pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text. Intertextuality, the condition of any text whatsoever, cannot, of course, be reduced to a problem of sources or influences; the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located; of unconscious or automatic quotations, given without quotation marks." ("Theory of the Text", 39)

As a post-structuralist theory, intertextuality disrupted the notions of a fixed meaning being present in the text and of the possibility of objective interpretation, and also challenged the traditional approaches to text considering it as an object to be deciphered and decoded. When intertextuality is considered as a postmodern narrative device, it focuses on the interrelation and interplay of works. In an interview, Julia Kristeva herself states the significance of formation of intertextuality in the postmodern era: "In postmodernism, the question of intertextuality is perhaps even more important in certain ways, because it assumes interplay of contents and not of forms alone". Graham Allen on his own view on intertextuality says, "It is a postmodern concept that involves interplay of contents." (Allen 5) Ever since intertextuality has become a postmodern practice, it is not possible to "speak of originality or the uniqueness of the artistic object, be it a painting or a novel." (Allen 5) Upon focusing the contextualization of text, poststructuralist and postmodern disciplines claim that no work of art is original and no work of art emerges from nothingness. In this respect, the notion that all verbal or non-verbal texts interact with one another, no text is independent from the other texts and the meaning is thus a floating one are all poststructuralist and postmodernist attitudes.

The phenomenon of intertextuality, in one form or the other, is at least as old as the first recorded human history or the period when discourses about texts began to exist. Unsurprisingly, therefore, we can find theories of intertextuality wherever there has been discourse about texts, from the classics of the writers of Graeco-Roman antiquity, such as Plato, Aristotle, Longinus, and Horace, to the theorists of the twentieth-century, including Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, Gerard Genette, Roland Barthes, Michael Riffaterre, and Jacques Derrida, among others. However, intertextuality as a modern literary conception has its origins in twentieth-century linguistics. When considering intertextuality as a modern critical theory and a method of interpretation, its origin lies in the theories and philosophies of Saussure, Bakhtin, Kristeva and Barthes. As aforesaid, intertextuality is a critical theory which has its origin in Saussure's influential theory of language seeing language as systematic, Bakhtin's theory of dialogism, Kristeva's blend of Bakhtin's ideas on the social context of language with Saussurian approach to language as a sign system; and Barthes' proclamation of liberation of the reader and seeing the text as a structure requiring reader's participation in the process of deciphering the texts. These are not only the origins, but also the reason why intertextuality is considered as a critical theory.

Kristeva claims that almost all works contain some intertexts. She puts the intertextual analysis into a triangular relationship of writer, text and reader. She rejects the autonomy of text. According to her, intertextual analysis complies on the interpretation of a text's intertextual connections, through which the text is created. Intertextuality not only refers to the interconnection between written texts, but also the dialogue between all kinds of artistic and cultural artifacts or any phenomena in a larger network. The theory offers numerous ways to interpret all kinds of texts,

without the limit to just literary texts. Thus, intertextuality can also be considered as a multidisciplinary theory. The emphasis on the interrelatedness of texts of intertextuality constitutes the poststructuralist and postmodernist layers of it. So, although, intertextuality can be examined as a separate literary theory, it can also be oriented with other theories like feminism, reader- response, deconstruction, postcolonialism, new historicism and cultural materialism.

Kristeva set the intertextual analysis into a triangular relationship of writer, text and reader. This cause rejection of the autonomy of text, which is intertextuality's main assumption. Intertextuality neither searches for a fixed meaning lying outside the text, nor behind the structure of the text. It rather accepts that text and reader interact to produce an infinite flow of meanings. Kristeva also focus on the concept of influence and intertextual analysis to stress the intertextual connections and the transformational nature of the text. For her, intertextual analysis depends on the interpretation of a text's intertextual connections, through which the text is constructed. It is also an analysis of how the intertextual material is transformed into the other text as well as its functional integration in the later text. She also envisages texts as functioning along two axes. She states, "The word's status is thus defined horizontally (the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee) as well as vertically (the word in the text is oriented towards an anterior or synchronic literary corpus)." (66) While the horizontal axis contains the link between the text and the reader, the vertical axis determines a host of complex relations of the text with the other texts.

The word 'intertextuality' is derived from the Latin word *intertexto*, which means 'to intermingle while weaving'. Just like the meaning of the word, the theory of intertextuality conveys that the texts get intermingled in, while creating an individual

text. It suggests a wide range of links between a text and other texts emerging in different forms as direct quotation, citation, allusion, echo, reference, imitation, collage, parody, pastiche, structural parallelism, literary conventions and other kinds of sources either consciously exploited or unconsciously reflected. By doing so, an intertext transforms or reproduces the texts preceding it.

To understand intertextuality, one needs to understand the overall concept of text, which will have numerous interconnections. Any kind of events, ideas, time, actions, reactions, coincidences, similarities, differences, contrasts, comparisons rhetorical things of past, ideologies, cultures, connotations, styles, idioms, symbols, appreciations, interpretations in the universe form a complex web of connections and cross connections. These connections may be generic or specific; abstract or concrete; differential or historical; and explicit or implicit. Although intertextuality is an act of dynamic interpretation of texts in contexts, the contexts can be of different types and different manners. And thereby, it can uplift the value of a work of art.

Often there's a misinterpretation between plagiarism and intertextuality. Plagiarism is the attempt of representing someone else's work as once own without acknowledging or crediting the person. On the other side, intertextuality is about borrowing or referencing, without the motive of crediting it as one's own. It's produced in texts using variety of forms including allusion, quotation and references. The purpose of intertextual analysis is to explain the approach of reading one text as a reaction to another text or as a parody, irony or subversion of the other texts.

“The other that will guide you and itself through this dissolution is a rhythm, text, music, and within language, a text. But what is the connection that holds you both together? Counter-desire, the negative of desire, inside-out desire, capable of

questioning (or provoking) its own infinite quest. Romantic, filial, adolescent, exclusive, blind and Oedipal: it is all that, but for others. It returns to where you are, both of you, disappointed, irritated, ambitious, in love with history, critical, on the edge and even in the midst of its own identity crisis; a crisis of enunciation and of the interdependence of its movements, an instinctual drive that descends in waves, tearing apart the symbolic thesis.” (Kristeva, *Desire in Language*, 165)

## Chapter 2

### A Terse Study of Murakami's *Kafka on the Shore*

Haruki Murakami is one of the most prestigious Japanese novelists alive. He has gained a phenomenal readership around the world. Born in Kyoto in 1946 to the parents who were teachers of Japanese literature, Murakami, however, was never a big fan of Japanese literature. He was heavily influenced by the Western culture which can be clearly noted in his works, which is also the reason why his works has been often criticized by the Japanese peers. Murakami believed in individualism and rejected the homogeneity.

In the world of literature, Murakami is an iconic figure, known mostly for his unreal, humorous work focusing on the loneliness and empty mindedness of Japan's work dominated generation. Murakami was interested in Western culture, even as a child and teenager; and immersed himself in the works of writers like Charles Dickens, Franz Kafka and Kurt Vonnegut. Murakami worked in a record store after graduating from Waseda University in 1973; and later opened a small jazz bar named Peter Cat bar with his wife. Murakami began writing on the night of the day, on which he had a sudden conviction that he could become a novelist, while attending a baseball game. His first fiction *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979) received Gunzou Literature Prize. Thus his trajectory of career totally changed its direction. The sequels *Pinball, 1973* (1980) and *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982) followed his debut novel and formed the *Trilogy of Rat*. The publication of *Dance Dance Dance* (1988), a sequel of this first trilogy, has drawn a closure to the Rat series.

Murakami's other works include *Hard-Boiled Wonderland* and the *End of the World* (1985), *Norwegian Wood* (1987), *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1994), *Sputnik*

*Sweetheart* (1999), *Kafka on the Shore* (2002), *After Dark* (2004), *1Q84* (2009), *After the Quake* (2000), *Men Without Women* (2014), his non-fiction *Underground* (1997) and so on. *What I Talk About When I Start Running* (2007) is a series of personal essays of running by him. Today, his works has been translated into over 50 languages. He has received several international literary honors like Jerusalem Prize, Tanizaki Prize, Franz Kafka Prize and Asahi Prize.

Murakami's surreal novels and short stories have gained him international acclaim. He writes stories that could take place anywhere in the world; they would not have to take place in Japan for the story to make sense. It is, in fact, his strength and ability to focus his attention on domestic contemporary issues of Japan in a way that reaches ordinary readers. And most of his works intermix elements of magical realism or absurdity with the mundane, creating fictional worlds that are variously unsettling and humorous. He has said that "writing a novel is like having a dream." His writings are characterized by images and events that the author himself found difficult to explain but which seemed to come from the inner recesses of his memory. Most of his works have themes and titles that elicit classical music. His stories give the readers a chance to interpret it on their own, also in many ways, that is, the same story can be perceived in a different way, by a same reader upon re-reading or thinking. Also, his works are often written in first-person narrative, which helps the reader to deeply delve into the narrator's mind.

*Kafka on the Shore*, originally titled as *Umibe no Kafuka* is Murakami's novel that received the World Fantasy Award of 2006. It was translated to English by Philip Gabriel. The novel is increasingly complex and questions human consciousness; shifting from consciousness or 'this side' to unconsciousness or 'the other side'. It also uses numerous allusions, which enhances and also makes the novel more complex.

The novel is divided into forty nine chapters, alternate chapters unfolding parallel tales, which differ apart in time and space and finally get intertwined. The odd numbered chapters, which is written in first-person narrative tells the story of a fifteen year old, Kafka Tamura, who runs away from his home in Tokyo to escape the “omen” or an Oedipal prophecy destined by his father Koitchi Tamura, a famous sculptor. According to the prophecy, Kafka would murder his father, and sleep with his mother and sister. His mother left home with his sister, when he was four. Kafka is a loner, with only his interior voice, whom he calls Crow as his friend. On his way to Takamatsu, he meets Sakura, whom he assumes to be his sister. At Takamatsu, he finds shelter in a famous library named the Komura Library, by the generosity of the well-educated Oshima, a transgender. There, he is also met with the library manager, a middle aged woman named Miss Saeki, who lost her lover at fifteen year old.

The even numbered chapters, written in omniscient narrative unfold the other tale, which is about a sixty year old man named Saturo Nakata. He is illiterate and has no memory of the past, ever since he woke up after being comatose in a mysterious incident during the Second World War, as a young boy. Although he became illiterate after the incident, he also got the ability to communicate with the cats. Nakata’s shadow has also become faint with just half the shadow, since the incident. He lives with the money from the government welfare and by helping cat owners to find their lost cats. On his search for a lost cat, Nakata meets a mysterious serial killer of cats, named Johnnie Walker, where the circumstances lead him to kill Walker. The tales of Kafka and Nakata gets interconnected when Kafka wakes up baffled at a park with fresh blood on his shirt at the same time. Kafka's father is found murdered two days later, which suggests that he killed his own father in his dreams through Nakata. When he moves into the library, he sees the living ghost of Saeki in the form of her

fifteen-year-old self and engages in an Oedipus relationship with her. Meanwhile the police trace Kafka's movements in order to question him about the death of his father Koichi. Prompted by the kind librarian, Oshima, Kafka visits a house on the edge of the woods. There, he makes an exploration into the ambiguous, surreal environs of the woods, the 'other side' or the unconsciousness, where he meets the ghost of two dead soldiers and stays in a cabin where young Saeki makes a daily visit to look after him. When Saeki dies in the real world, the adult Saeki visits Kafka in the woods and assures him of a special bond that they share. Kafka tears himself away from the woods to return to 'consciousness'. After that, he goes back to Tokyo alone, with a better sense of who he is and with a commitment to beginning a new life.

Nakata's story is filled with unexplainable elements. He is able to cause mackerel, sardines and leeches to fall from the sky. In his magical world, 'a metaphysical, conceptual object' appears as a guide for Nakata-san in the shape of the fast-food icon Colonel Sanders, the symbol of the fast-food chain Kentucky Fried Chicken. Although Nakata and Kafka never physically meet, and despite their age gap and difference in cognitive ability, Nakata is an important and integral part of Kafka's present being. Kafka and Nakata are intimately connected by Tamura Koichi (or by Johnnie Walker as Nakata sees him) and Saeki. After killing Walker, Nakata meets a long-distance truck driver, Hoshino, who becomes Nakata traveling companion to Takamastu. They make an adventurous trip guided by Nakata's intuition to Saeki's private library in Takamatsu. Their trip has the significant purpose in the novel of opening a passage for Saeki to move to the 'other side' or the unconsciousness and of closing the passage after her death. Also, it's revealed that Saeki is the other half of the shadow of Nakata. Having succeeded in their task of finding the passage, guiding

Saeki to the 'other side' and burning her memoirs, Nakata dies, leaving Hoshino to close the passage. Kafka, on the other side, returns back to Tokyo.

The novel, with its complex plot and narration has been reviewed and analyzed with various outlooks by several critics and researchers. From the perspective of Murakami's part in globalization of Western culture, by usage of Western writing style, western iconography and brand names in the novel to the contrary that his focus is not on global issues, but a narrower one that is specific to a Japanese generation without an identity, an identity that was lay down by commercialism and affluence; Murakami and his works has undergone a lot of criticism.

*Kafka on the Shore* is a perfect example of Murakami's ability to interweave complex stories together for an entertaining plot. The whole story shifts back and forth between the actual reality and the alternate reality where time is just a mere concept and memories are extinct, by including the themes of the existence of a parallel world, subconscious desires, and the power of dreams. Murakami expertly blends the popular culture, magic realism, mundane events and potent sexuality to build a fantastical world where his characters experience love, loss, melancholy and joy all in the novel. He has created some paradoxical commentary in subplot which appears to be trivial and nonsensical, but rather is deeply thought-provoking.

In Murakami's writings, the words get condensed and distilled to give an uncanny effect. When Murakami's writings are discussed, it's also essential to note the significance of the titles. Just like his works, the titles of the work also have its own essence. It can be noted that many of the titles of his work are titled on the basis

of his musical preferences, which in turn helps to make the work more meaningful and interpretable.

To say the least, Murakami has enthralled the readers of *Kafka on the Shore* with its loose ends and complex portrayals. The events, images, and symbols present in the novel cannot be understood through unitary definition. It is rather achieves meaning by gathering all the associative links. The novel is abundant with references to contemporary western culture, especially the music. The journey of Kafka, the protagonist itself is filled with books, vivid interpretations of music sounds, and the sounds of nature. It contains many literary concepts and elements. Thus, the novel has acquired various and multiple interpretations.

*“Kafka on the Shore* contains several riddles, but there aren't any solutions provided. Instead, several of these riddles combine, and through their interaction the possibility of a solution takes shape. And the form this solution takes will be different for each reader. To put it another way, the riddles function as part of the solution. It's hard to explain, but that's the kind of novel I set out to write.” (Murakami)

## Chapter 3

### ***Kafka on the Shore: A Riddle of Texts***

*Kafka on the Shore* is one of the best literary work by Haruki Murakami, which can be interpreted in various ways. The novel is filled with references to music and Western culture, dreamy scenarios that expose the apprehensiveness of ordinary life, utterly unadorned language, and elements of magical realism that challenge the reader's grasp of reality. Even the descriptive words in Murakami's writings contain hidden meanings. In overall, it's a complex novel with alternative chapters telling parallel tales, shifting back and forth within real and unreal world, and getting intertwined in the end.

This novel reflect the structure of one's own mind, where ideas ripple across interconnected axons and every remembered thought contains the essence of the moment of its creation, being embodied with numerous intertextualities in the form of allusions, quotations, translations, pastiche, homages and so on. Murakami has woven the title "Kafka on the Shore" with the same excellence with which he has created the whole novel. The title of the work aims to represent the whole essence of the work and convey author's purpose. A literary title has its own poetry, even as it suggest something the work is supposed to fulfill. Murakami has totally met the aim with the title text "Kafka on the Shore". So, this chapter will analyze the novel through an intertextual study of the title text to better understand this complex novel. The miscellaneous meanings conveyed by a four word text title clearly represent Murakami's excellence with words and the significance he has given to the title.

The miscellaneous meanings hidden inside this four word text title "Kafka on the Shore" can be exposed by using the theory of intertextuality. Intertextuality is a

theory popularized especially by the literary critic, Julia Kristeva. The theory is used to signify the multiple ways in which any one literary text is made up of other texts, by identifying its open or covert citations and allusions, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earlier texts, or simply its unavoidable participation in the common collection of linguistic and literary conventions and procedures that was already in place. According to Kristeva's formulation, any text is in an "intertext", the setting of an intersection of numerous other texts, and existing only through its relations to other texts. Her concept of intertextuality comprehends references to other texts which can be perceived within the internal composition of the individual text. Kristeva also believes that the individual text and the cultural text are made from the same textual material and cannot be separated. According to her, texts do not have a fixed meaning and the meaning of the text is just a temporary re-arrangement of elements with socially pre-existent meaning.

The text "Kafka on the Shore" contains numerous literary echoes and allusions, which makes it an intertext. By understanding the intertextualities in the title of a work, one can understand the work and author's purpose more clearly. To trace those textual relations or intertexts, every possible aspect of Murakami's culture and the novel should be considered. Since *Kafka on the Shore* is a novel telling two parallel tales, the textual relations in both the tales with the title should be considered while applying the theory of intertextuality to the title text "Kafka on the Shore". It's obvious from Murakami's words when he was interviewed on the publication of *Kafka on the Shore* that this text will contain numerous intertexts. He states: "When I write a novel I put into play all the information inside me. It might be Japanese information or it might be Western; I don't draw a distinction between the two."

The apparent intertext in “Kafka on the Shore” is the reference to the Czech novelist and short story writer, Franz Kafka and his literary works. References are intertextual devices that writers use to provide information, to pay homage to the original work or its author, to enhance characterizations, or to stimulate philosophical thoughts from the readers. This titular text “Kafka on the Shore” can be considered as homage to Franz Kafka. The titular character or the protagonist Kafka in this Murakami novel, names himself so, being influenced by Franz Kafka. He doesn’t mention his real name in the whole novel. This name also carried a specific meaning within his family in this novel. Both Franz Kafka and the protagonist Kafka Tamura maintained their family name. Franz Kafka's life was marked by loneliness and self-doubt, which he ascribed in particular to his father’s overbearing nature, just like the character Kafka in this novel who also is a loner, without having received his father's affection.

“Kafka” in the text “Kafka on the Shore” can also be considered as the metonymy for Franz Kafka's literary depictions, since his literary works often focus on the themes of alienation, memory and time. This novel also depicts similar themes of isolation, mind versus body and the connection between past and present. In fact, in addition to the protagonist Kafka, other characters Oshima, Miss Saeki and Nakata are also isolated in one form or the other. So, indirectly the text “Kafka” in the title refers to all those isolated characters. But it’s important to note that while this novel Kafka on the Shore does contain similarities with Franz Kafka’s themes, it is a totally different work and develops its theme in its own unique way, as in an interview Murakami has said, “Kafka’s fictional world is already so complete that trying to follow in his steps is not just pointless, but quite risky, too. What I see myself doing,

rather, is writing novels where, in my own way, I dismantle the fictional world of Kafka that itself dismantled the existing novelistic system.”

One of the features in Franz Kafka's writings is polyglottism, that is, intersection of multiple languages in the writings, which is mainly because of his origins in German, Czech and Yiddish, which made the translations of his works difficult. Also, names in Franz Kafka's texts are cryptograms, alluding to other names. It is only in their reflexivity, that they become meaningful, as they generate semantic configurations. So, it's interesting to note that in Czech, “kafka” means crow. In this Murakami novel, Crow is the name of the alter ego of the character Kafka, who appears when Kafka is in contemplation and encourages him by giving advice. So, the Crow can also be considered as a savior of Kafka. In Murakami's native, a crow is a good omen, standing for the evidence of the will of Heaven or divine intervention in human affairs, which can be interpreted in the novel by the existing of Kafka in multiple worlds because of his spirit. However, on the contrary, in many other cultures, crow represents death and bad omens, which is also true in this novel. For instance, when the protagonist sees the crows in the woods, he is connected with a bad omen and murder.

While considering the odd-numbered chapters telling the tale of Nakata, who grows with the violence of World War II, and has a lasting impact of it, the text “Kafka”, which means “crow” can also be a reference to Jim Crow. Nakata's tale clearly refers to the lingering memory of World War II and the subsequent American occupation serve as one of the important motifs in it. Jim Crow was at first a theatrical character, introduced by Thomas D Rice, an American performer and playwright, who performed as a popular song-and-dance act supposedly modeled after a slave. But after the American Civil War of early 1860s, when most southern states and, later,

border states passed laws that denied blacks basic human rights, the name Jim Crow became a name used to describe the segregation laws, rules, and customs which arose after Reconstruction ended in 1877 and continued until the mid-1960s. The theatrical character Jim Crow was merely a black character played by the white man, Thomas Rice who undermined both racism and slavery, and meant no harm, but unfortunately he was misinterpreted and indirectly became a victim of the war and lost the post essence of the character Jim Crow. It can be interpreted that, just like this character, Nakata in the novel was also a character, who didn't do any harm, but still became a victim in the mysterious incident of war which struck all his classmates too, but only he had a long lasting effect of it, which is believed to have been because of the beatings by his teacher, by misinterpreting him. It is also interesting to note that Rice Bowl Hill, the place where the war effect on Nakata occurred and the creator of Jim Crow who is Thomas D Rice, both have the word "Rice". Also, the Japanese name "Nakata" means rice field. Thus, the text "Kafka" in "Kafka on the Shore" can be considered as a perfect illustration of paradox and passive resistance.

In the text "Kafka on the Shore", the "Shore" alludes with the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung's "shore" from his quote: If you want to understand the jungle, you can't be content just to sail back and forth near the shore, you have got to get into it no matter how much strange and frightening it might seem. Here, Jung is referring shore to "collective unconscious", the idea that a segment of the deepest unconscious mind is genetically inherited and is not shaped by personal experiences. The intertextual relationship between Murakami's "shore" with that of Jung's is clear from his words "I don't read much Jung, but what he writes has some similarity with my writing." The images and themes that derive from the collective unconscious are known as archetypes. According to Jung's teachings, the collective unconscious is

common to all human beings and is responsible for a number of deep-seated beliefs and instincts, such as spirituality, sexual behavior, and life and death instincts. In the novel, each character possesses collective unconscious, which is clear with the archetypes they represent. Although Jung introduced many archetypes, the major ones were the 'persona', 'shadow', 'anima/animus' and 'self'. Murakami has mainly used the archetype 'self' in both the main characters in the novel. The self refers to the unified unconsciousness and consciousness of an individual. Kafka's journey of travel to Shikoku, to the library, to the woods which although in one sense is physical, but in a deeper sense, it's an exploration of self. Also, Nakata's journey to the entrance stone is similar to it too. Murakami himself describes the "shore" in *Kafka on the Shore* as the border between the conscious and the unconscious minds. He says that it's "a story of two different worlds, consciousness and unconsciousness. Most of us are living in those two worlds, one foot in one or the other, and all of us are living on the borderline. That's my definition of human life."

While speaking to Treisman, Murakami has said, "In Japan, I think that the other world (unreal world) is very close to our life, and if we decide to go to the other side it's not so difficult. I get the impression that in the Western world it isn't so easy to go to the other side; you have to go through some trials to get to the other world. But, in Japan if you want to go there, you go there. So, in my stories, if you go down to the bottom of a well, there's another world. And you can't necessary tell the difference between this side and the other side." These words suggest that "Shore" in "*Kafka on the Shore*" can also be a reference to Takamatsu, where majority of the setting is laid in the novel. Takamatsu is a port city located in the island of Shikoku in Japan, which means that it's located near the seashore.

The text “Kafka on the Shore” is an intertext in itself from the novel since Murakami has used the text in the novel in multiple scenes throughout the narrative. "Kafka on the Shore" is the name of a song that is critical to the plot and of a painting of a young man on the seashore that also has meaning in the narrative. These song and painting are two strongest leitmotifs of the novel. It works as both the pivot and frame of the novel.

It is undeniably noted that being a music lover, Murakami has titled many of his works on the basis of some songs. Murakami has admitted that his writing style stems from his love for music. This novel *Kafka on the Shore* is also titled under a song, but unlike other novels based on popular songs, this song is from the novel itself. In an interview, he has said, “Music is an indispensable part of my life. Whenever I write a novel, music just sort of naturally slips in.” The song in this novel is composed by Miss Saeki when she was nineteen as an embodiment of her young love for her boyfriend, whom she lost. The lyric of the song is:

You sit at the edge of the world,

I am in a crater that's no more.

Words without letters

Standing in the shadow of the door.

The moon shines down on a sleeping lizard,

Little fish rain down from the sky.

Outside the window there are soldiers,

Steeling themselves to die.

(Refrain)

Kafka sits in a chair by the shore,

Thinking of the pendulum that moves the world, it seems.

When your heart is closed,

The shadow of the unmoving Sphinx,

Becomes a knife that pierces your dreams.

The drowning girl's fingers

Search for the entrance stone, and more.

Lifting the hem of her azure dress,

She gazes-

At Kafka on the shore. (210)

This song is, in fact, a summary of the whole novel. It is abstract and surreal, just like the novel. Kafka contemplates on the song, “I suspect Miss Saeki used it since in her mind the mysterious solitude of the boy in the picture overlapped with Kafka’s fictional world. That would explain the title: a solitary soul straying by an absurd shore. Other lines overlap with things that happened to me. The part about “little fish rain from the sky”—isn’t that exactly what happened in that shopping area back home, when hundreds of sardines and mackerel rained down? The part about how the shadow “becomes a knife that pierces your dreams”—that could be my father’s stabbing. I copy down all the lines of the song in my notebook and study them, underlining parts that particularly interest me. But in the end it’s all too suggestive, and I don’t know what to make of it.” (212) strikingly, in the very last two

lines of the song, there is a doubling of contemplation, as Kafka is both contemplating and being contemplated at the same time. Also interestingly, Nakata, although not explicitly referred to as “Kafka” suggests the eponymous “Kafka” “on the Shore”, for at a point, he is depicted as someone who sits upon the beach and contemplates. (199-200)

This song was played in piano as a sonata by Miss Saeki; the melody of it is at beautiful and different at first, but then two unusual chords in the refrain, which is unsettling, but once the refrain is over, the beautiful melody returns. In this novel, Murakami's writing style is just like listening to a musical sonata, where the sounds of musical instruments bind together at a point and all of sudden it alter, break apart into a single peak and the process itself goes on and on. The very scale of going up and down with each passing moment never ceases to amaze. Here, instead of musical instruments the complex yet simplicity of each and every character is what makes the whole composition exotically attractive. The whole story swings back and forth between the actual reality and the alternate reality where time is just a mere concept and memories are just a bunch of obsolete things. The different temporal stances and patterns emerge across also create a sense of the complex, multilayered temporal patterning which structures and over determines the narrative. Murakami has used the device of alternating chapters to tell the coinciding, though never colliding, stories of Kafka Tamura and Satoru Nakata. All in all, Miss Saeki's song, "Kafka on the Shore" is a divide between modern and classical music.

Murakami may have also used the song “Kafka on the Shore” as an intertext to the title to allude to all the other musical allusions within the novel. The novel includes many references to both classical and modern music that reveal characteristics of characters in the novel, and also allude to several different themes.

The classical music in the novel refers to one's subconscious mind. Both Hoshino and Oshima experiences mental shifts when these classical pieces play. Through this, one can see how classical music can affect one's thoughts and actions. Hoshino is particularly interested in Beethoven's Archduke Trio, since it reaches a part of him he has never explored. Oshima also is very interested in classical music, but his major interest is in Schubert's Sonata in D Major, since he believes that the piece's imperfection is what makes it sound so good, and believes that imperfections are a part of life.

Murakami makes several references to modern artists too, such as Prince and Maria Callas. Murakami's purpose with these references is to remind readers of Kafka's relatively young age, despite how mentally mature he may be. It also keeps the novel modern, contrasting the old setting and serving as a difference to the surrealist, out of reality elements of the book. Kafka listens to Prince when he's exercising or trying to overcome fear, and Murakami makes specific references to two songs: "Little Red Corvette" and "Sexy M.F.". This suggests that Prince is Kafka's defensive music, because he listens to it when he's trying to toughen himself up. Murakami also references Maria Callas's song from La Boheme, "Si, Mi Chiamano Mimi" when Nakata talks to the cat named Mimi. In the song, Maria sings about how the simple things in life, like nature and being by herself satisfy her, the same way Nakata is satisfied to live by himself and occasionally look for missing cats. Through these musical allusions, Murakami has tried to express a variety of themes such as music changing how one sees the world, and music making one stronger. It also gives ideas about plot and relate to character's lives.

The song "Kafka on the Shore" is further an allusion to the painting named the same, which is referred in the last line. This painting is a realistic portrait of a young

boy wearing a white sunhat and sitting on a small deck chair, by the shore. His elbow is on one of the arms of the chair, his chin resting in his hand. His posture signifies that he is contemplating. It was painted by a traveling artist that visited the Komura library when Miss Saeki and her lover were very young, and it is also the subject of Miss Saeki's song "Kafka on the Shore". The protagonist Kafka also contemplates by gazing at this painting. In the novel, Kafka has claimed himself to be "Kafka on the Shore" because he thinks he has found his life's purpose and meaning with his union with Miss Saeki. However, Miss Saeki has labelled Nakata when he met her as the Kafka on the Shore since he has truly managed to find his purpose, and the other half of his shadow through his gut feelings and impulses. This painting is thus representation of the search of one's lost spirit and one's own meaning. In the end, Miss Saeki gives the painting to Kafka and instructs him to look at the painting in order to remind him to constantly search for his true purpose, as being with her was definitely not what it was. The painting is thus overall, an object of contemplation, just like the novel.

The title of the text *Kafka on the Shore* may seem to be a simple title at a glance, but it is, in fact, an intertext which has interconnections with many other texts and contains various deeper meanings. The authenticity of the text lies in its construction of indelible familiar relations. The text can have numerous interpretations by connecting all these textual relations. It's impossible to have a fixed meaning. This title lives a triple existence, which enables a triple encounter, one within the fictional world, the second within the non-fictional world and finally, a third encounter emerging from the space where the two realities meet.

"Things are not what they seem. What's the point in writing what readers already know about?" (Murakami).

## Conclusion

This thesis shows that Haruki Murakami's novel *Kafka on the Shore* and the text "Kafka on the Shore" is indeed a riddle of texts. It proves that the title "Kafka on the Shore" is a textual arrangement of various elements which possess multiple meanings. To understand a literary work clearly, it's necessary to understand the title, as it represents the whole essence of the work. The title of the novel cannot be understood through unitary definition. It rather achieves meaning through a cluster of adjoining links. When a literary text is read with reflection on other texts, all related assumptions, effects and ideas of the other text provide them a different meaning, and changes the way of interpretation of the particular text.

The theory of intertextuality has proved to be a powerful force in viewing this text innovatively, with its approach to text and its meaning as a poststructuralist and postmodernist one with emphasis on the interdependence of texts and on the unstable sliding meaning of the text changing through reworking of earlier texts. Intertextuality enlarges and uplifts the value of a work of art. It has helped to identify deeper and various meanings and interpretations of the text "Kafka on the Shore". Murakami's "Kafka on the Shore" is paradigmatic. Names, which are already overdetermined through their oscillation between proper and common nouns, undo denomination and anonymize, accruing even more meanings. Although, the various meanings found through this intertextual study shows that a text has no fixed meaning, it has opened new perspectives and possibilities of a text. Murakami's excellence with interweaving texts in texts can be examined through intertextual study.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**REVAMPING THE PSYCHE OF KAMBILI IN *PURPLE***

***HIBISCUS: AN EXEGESIS***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**GOPIKA A S**

**Register No: DB18AEGR005**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

June 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Revamping the Psyche of Kambili in Purple Hibiscus: An Exegesis” is a bonafide work of Gopika A S, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Gopika A S, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Revamping the Psyche of Kambili in Purple Hibiscus: An Exegesis” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian in the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

GOPIKA A S

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR005

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## Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One:	4
Psychoanalytic Theory and its Role in Literature	
Chapter Two:	12
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Her Novel <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>	
Chapter Three:	18
Psychoanalytic Elements in <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>	
Conclusion	26
Works Consulted	28

## Introduction

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a Nigerian writer whose work examines the postcolonial experience of Nigerians, tackling questions of identity, ethnicity, and power through the lives of vivid, unforgettable characters contending with changing political and economic landscapes. The project deals with elements of psychoanalysis in the novel *Purple Hibiscus* and its various aspects.

The project is, therefore, intended to find out how Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, especially in *Purple Hibiscus*, construct a psychoanalytic approach in the novel. The project contains three chapters, in which first chapter traces the history of psychoanalysis and it establishes the psychoanalytic theory. This chapter states that psychoanalysis is not only a literary theory but beyond that it is related to our lives. This research paper focuses mainly on id, ego and super ego by Freud. Sigmund Freud suggested tripartite model of the psyche, dividing it into id, ego and super ego. The id, being entirely in the unconscious is the most inaccessible and obscure part of our personality. It is the spectacle of our libido, the primary source of our psychic energy. Its function is to fulfil the primordial life principle, which is the pleasure principle. It is entirely without rationality and has a tremendous amorphous kind of vitality. Ego, governed by the reality principle is defined as the rational governing force of the psychic. It is mostly conscious and protects the individual from the id. It is the site of reason and introspection. It is the intermediate between the world within and the world outside. The superego, which is another regulatory agent, protect the society from id. It is conscious and in moral parlance, can be called as the conscience of the individual. It is governed by the morality principle and represses the incestual sexual passions, aggressiveness etc. Being a repository of pride, self-esteem etc. it compels the individual to move towards perfection.

The second chapter is a journey into the life of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and her world of fiction. This chapter has analysed the novel *Purple Hibiscus*. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an award-winning novelist and social commentator, representative of the black literary writers with African roots and young female cosmopolitan, who write in English. In all her works Adichie is able to maintain a consistent and well fleshed voice. Adichie tries her best to write out multiple “stories” using different voices. *Purple Hibiscus* garnered the Commonwealth Writer’s Prize in 2005 for Best First Book (Africa) and that year’s Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for Best First Book (overall). It was also short-listed for the 2004 Orange Prize. *Purple Hibiscus* is set in the Nigeria. The central character is a fifteen-year old young Nigerian girl who belongs to a wealthy family dominated by her Father, Eugene. Their house is marked by domestic violence. He punishes the family members in a severe manner. He controls and subjugate the family members. He wants other to behave as per his wish. They have no freedom at all. The story is told through Kambili’s perspective. Kambili and her brother’s visit to their aunt Ifeoma’s house made a greater change in their life. This made them to form their own opinions and speak their minds. This made them to form their own opinions and raise their voice. Kambili slowly grow mature. From there, she falls in love with a young priest named Father Amadi. Th association with Father Amadi resulted sexual awakening in kambili. Unable to cope with Eugene’s continual violence any longer, Beatrice poisons him. Jaja takes the blame for the crime and ends up in prison. The novel ends almost three years after these events. Kambili has become a young confident girl of eighteen and Jaja is about to be released from prison. Mother Beatrice has grown old and rarely speaks.

Third chapter studies the book *Purple Hibiscus* a psychoanalytic perspective, and applies the psychoanalytic theory to this novel. This novel focuses on the psychoanalytic elements which can be found in the novel *Purple Hibiscus* and it does a critical analysis. By applying Freudian psychoanalytic theory, Kambili is controlled by her father. Her life is in a structured manner. She has timetable for everything such as eating, praying, studying, sitting with family etc. She has no voice in her house and she live as per the likings of Eugene. Her father force to obey him and punishes them brutally. Her complete freedom is denied in her house. The ego compels her to flee from the initial relationship between with her father that threatened to overwhelm her fragile self-boundaries. Kambili is controlled by the id as they yearn for fusion with objects that never fully satisfied their cravings. Kambili's aspiration to covet dominates. But for his priesthood, wrecks her emotionally. Finally, Kambili is ruled by superego guided by Aunt Ifeoma and enter their symbolic orders and pass into adult gender identities to take responsibilities for themselves and within her society.

## Chapter One

### Psychoanalytic Theory and its Role in Literature

Psychoanalytic criticism is a form of literary criticism which uses some of the techniques of the techniques of psychoanalysis in the interpretation of literature.

Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders 'by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind'. The classic method of doing this is to get the patient to talk freely, in such a way that the repressed fears and conflicts which are causing the problems are brought into the conscious mind and openly faced, rather than remaining 'buried' in the unconscious. This practice is based upon specific theories of how the mind, the instincts, and sexuality work. These theories were developed by the Austrian Sigmund Freud. There is a growing consensus today that the therapeutic value of the method is limited, and that Freud's life-work is seriously flawed by methodological irregularities. All the same, Freud remains a major cultural force, and his impact on how we think about ourselves has been incalculable.

Sigmund Freud's theories are directly and indirectly concerned with the nature of the unconscious, which is the part of the mind beyond consciousness that has a strong influence upon human actions. He determined that the personality consists of three different elements, the *id*, the *ego* and the *superego*. The dynamics of interplay between these functions determines one's actions and overt behaviours. These principles of psychic dynamism are central to the interpretation of abnormal behaviour in psychoanalysis. These three 'levels' of personality roughly corresponding to, respectively, the consciousness, the conscience and the unconscious. They interact with each other even though they all maintain their unique characteristics.

The id which is irrational, instinctual, vital, unconscious (contains our secret desires, darkest wishes, intense fears) and is driven to fulfil wishes of pleasure principle. The id is situated within the unconscious and is said to be the core of personality and is present at birth. It is also perceived to be the source of psychic energy of the unconscious. It has no contact with reality and operates in an irrational manner. It operates within the pleasure principle. It consists of both life instincts like hunger, sex, thirst and also death instinct, which is associated with man's aggressiveness and destructiveness. It seeks immediate gratification irrespective of the environmental realities. It is believed that the id has no contact with the outside world and cannot satisfy itself directly. Therefore, another part which is ego develops to check the excesses of the id.

Id is the prime-mover; it is the source of all psychic energy. It is the matrix within which the ego and the superego become differentiated. The id consists of everything psychological that is inherited and that is present at birth, including the instincts. It is the reservoir of psychic energy and furnishes all the power for the operation of the other two systems. It is in close touch with the bodily processes from which it derives its energy. Freud called the id the "true psychic reality" because it represents the inner world of subjective experience and has no knowledge of objective reality. The id cannot tolerate increases of energy that are experienced as uncomfortable state of tension. Consequently, when the tension level of the organism is raised, as a result of either external stimulation or internally produced excitations, the id functions in such a manner as to discharge the tension immediately and return the organism to a comfortably constant and low energy level. This principle of tension reduction by which the id operate is called the pleasure principle. To accomplish its aim of avoiding pain and obtaining pleasure, the id has at its command two processes.

These are reflex actions and the primary process. Reflex actions are inborn and automatic reactions like sneezing and blinking; they usually reduce the tension immediately. The organism is equipped with a number of such reflexes for dealing with relatively simple forms of excitation. The primary process involves a somewhat more complicated psychological reaction. It attempts to discharge tension by forming an image of an object that will remove the tension. This hallucinatory experience in which the desired object is present in the form of a memory imagery is called wish-fulfilment.

The id is the only component of personality that is present from birth. The aspect of personality is entirely unconscious and includes of the instinctive and primitive behaviours. According to Freud, the id is the source of all psychic energy, making it the primary component of personality.

The id is driven by the pleasure principle, which strives for immediate gratification of all desires, wants and needs. If these needs are not satisfied immediately, the result is a state anxiety or tension. For example, an increase in hunger or thirst should produce an immediate attempt to eat or drink. The id is very important early in life, because it ensures that the infant's needs are met.

However immediately satisfying these needs is not always realistic or even possible. If we were ruled entirely by the pleasure principle, we might find ourselves grabbing things we want out of other people's hands to satisfy our own cravings. This sought of behaviour would be both disruptive and socially unacceptable. According to Freud, the id tries to resolve the tension created by the pleasure principle through the primary process, which involves forming a mental image of the desired object as a way of satisfying the need.

The ego forms the second part of personality, which is partially conscious and partially unconscious. Freud explains, this system is turned towards the external world, it is the medium for the perceptions arising thence, and during its functioning the phenomenon of consciousness arises in it. It is the sense organ of the entire apparatus; moreover it is the receptive not only to excitations from outside but also to those arising from the interior of the mind. The ego controls the approaches to motility under the id's orders; but between a need and an action it has interposed a postponement in the form of the activity of thought. In that way it has dethroned the pleasure principle which dominates the course of events in the id without any restriction and has replaced it by reality principle, which promises more certainty and greater success.

The ego is governed by reality principle instead of pleasure principle that governs the id. The information processing or thinking of ego is characterised by logic and reason and is referred to as the secondary process. Ego is drawing power from the id while controlling it as a rider on a horse. The horse in this metaphor is id; the primitive and animal like source of energy. This rider is the ego which may be weak or strong, clumsy or skilful. The rider can direct the energy towards positive aims.

The ego which is rational, logical, mostly conscious part of mind, regulates id and comes to terms with super ego and is driven by reality principle. The ego is the component of personality that is responsible for dealing with reality. According to Freud, the ego develops from the id and ensures that the impulses of the id can be expressed in a manner acceptable in the real world. The ego functions in both the conscious, preconscious and unconscious mind.

The ego operates based on the reality principle, which strives to satisfy the id's desires in realistic and socially appropriate ways. The reality principle weighs the costs and benefits of an action before deciding to act upon or abandon impulses. In many cases, the id's impulses can be satisfied through a process of delayed gratification; the ego will eventually allow the behaviour, but only in the appropriate time and place. The ego also discharges tension created by unmet impulses through the secondary process, in which the ego tries to find an object in the real world that matches the mental image created by the id's primary process.

The ego is described as the part of human personality that take care of consciousness within the individual; therefore, it is in direct contact with reality and it works assiduously to satisfy the overwhelming and irrational demands of the id without jeopardizing the individual's survival. The ego is described by Freud as controlling "The approaches to motility ...It is the mental agency which supervises all its own processes, and which goes to sleep at night, though even then it exercises the censorship in dreams. From this ego proceeds repression" Easthope 54.

Third part of personality called the superego is the moral censor, which is identified with the voice of conscience. This is the moral arm of personality, which the individual imbibes from childhood through his parents and other adults around him. The child takes on these values as his own through the process of internalization. The superego is partially unconscious. The superego is the component of personality composed of our internalized deals that we have acquired from our parents and society. The superego works to suppress the urges of the id and takes to make the ego behave morally, rather than realistically. The superego which is an internal censor but it is derived from societal control and driven to fulfil demands of morality principle.

The superego provides guidelines for making judgements. According to Freud, the superego begins to emerge at around five.

The superego can be further divided into two components: the ego ideal and the conscience. The ego ideal is the part of the superego that includes the rules and standards for good behaviours. These behaviours include those that are approved of by parental and other authority figures. Obeying these rules leads to feeling of pride, value and accomplishment. The conscience includes information about things that are viewed as bad by the parents and society. Breaking these rules can result in punishments or feelings of guilt and remorse. The ego ideal is often thought of as the image we have of our ideal selves- the people we want to become. It is this image we hold up as the ideal individual, often modelled after people that we know, that we hold up as the standard of who we are striving to be. The conscience is composed of the rules for which behaviours are considered bad. When we engage in actions that conform to the ego ideal, we feel good about ourselves or proud of our accomplishments.

The superego is also present in all three levels of consciousness. Because of this, we can sometimes experience guilt without understanding exactly why we feel that way. When superego acts in the conscious mind, we are aware of our resulting feelings. If, however, the superego acts unconsciously to punish or suppress the id, we might end up with feelings of guilt and no real understanding of why we feel that way. The superego acts to perfect and civilise our behaviour. It works to suppress all unacceptable urges of the id and struggles to make the ego act upon idealistic standards rather than upon realistic principles.

The ego is said to be the battleground for forces of the super ego and the id. With so many competing forces, it is easy to see how conflict might arise between the id, ego and superego. Freud used the term ego strength to refer to the ego's ability to function despite these duelling forces. A person with good ego strength is able to effectively manage these pressures, while those with too much or too little ego strength can become too unyielding or too disrupting. According to Freud, the key to a healthy personality is a balance between the id, the ego, and the superego.

It is believed that like ego, the superego strives to control the impulses of the id. But unlike the ego, the superego is also as irrational as the id in its demands on the ego. As the ego which originates from the perceptual system represents the demands of the external world and also wishes to be a loyal servant of id, it recommends itself as an object of the id's libido, then it breaks. However, the superego jealously watches every movement of the ego as it holds up certain norms of behaviour, without regard to any difficulty coming from the id and the external world. If the ego disregards the superego's norms, it mercilessly punishes it with the feeling of anxiety. And Freud insists that anxiety is the pillar of abnormal behaviour. The anxiety or tension which the superego imposes on the ego manifests in the form of inferiority complex or guilt. In this way, goaded by the id, hemmed in by the superego, and rebuffed by reality, the ego struggles to cope and harmonize these three difficult masters. And when it cannot cope and acknowledges its weakness, it breaks out into anxiety. This may be reality anxiety in the face of the superego, and neurotic anxiety in the face of the strength of the passions of the id.

The dynamics of the human personality are so complex that the built-up psychic energy of the id struggles to be let out, while the ego, which Freud describes as the "executive of personality," suppresses its release. It is believed that observable

behaviour is the product of this struggle. Freud posits that the basic form of defence mechanism which the ego employs to check the reckless and relentless impulses of id is through repression. Repression is seen as motivated forgetting in which the ego uses some of its energy to prevent anxiety-arousing memories, feelings and impulses from entering consciousness.

## Chapter Two

### Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Her Novel *Purple Hibiscus*

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a Nigerian writer, was born on 15 September 1977 in Abba, Anambra State, Nigeria. Her work drew extensively on the Biafran war in Nigeria during the late 1960s. Adichie is the fifth of six children. She has two older sisters, two older brothers and a younger brother. At the age of 19 she moved to the United States to live with her elder sister, Ijeoma, who has become as much a friend as sister. A voracious reader from a young age, she found *Things Fall Apart* by novelist and fellow Igbo Chinua Achebe transformative. After studying medicine for a time in Nsukka, in 1997 she left for the United States, where she studied communication and political science at Eastern Connecticut State University in 2001. Splitting her time between Nigeria and the United States, she received a master's degree in creative writing from John Hopkins University and studied African history at Yale University. She was married and divided her time between Nigeria and her job in USA. She teaches writing workshops.

In 1998 Adichie's play *For Love of Biafra* was published in Nigeria. She later wrote several short stories about that conflict, which would become the subject of her highly successful novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* 2006. Several of her stories portray the problems faced by the first-generation immigrants in the west that is ranging from the abuse and financial difficulties in an alien land.

As a student at Eastern Connecticut State University, she began writing her first novel, *Purple Hibiscus* in 2003. Set in Nigeria, it is the coming-of-age story of Kambili, a 15-year-old whose family is wealthy and well respected but who is terrorized by her fanatically religious father. *Purple Hibiscus* was long listed for the

Man Booker Prize 2004. It also received the Hurston or Wright Legacy Award 2004. Besides *Purple Hibiscus*, she has had short stories published in anthologies as well as in British and American journals.

*Half of a Yellow Sun*, Adichie's second novel, was the result of four years of research and writing. *Half of a Yellow Sun* became an international best seller and was awarded the Orange Broadband Prize for Fiction in 2007. One prominent feature in Adichie's writing is her unique style of writing; she writes mainly in English language but also with an inflection of some Igbo words.

*Purple Hibiscus* was written by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in 2003. It takes place in Enugu, a city in post-colonial Nigeria. The novel is narrated by 15-year-old Kambili Achike, the sheltered daughter of a successful newspaper owner and entrepreneur, Eugene Achike, also referred to as Papa, an extremely strict Catholic. Kambili lives with her parents and brother, Jaja, in the town of Enugu, Nigeria. The opening section takes place on Palm Sunday. At Mass, Jaja does not go up to take Communion. Papa, who demands academic excellence, total obedience, and Christian piety from his children, simmers with rage for the remainder of the service. At home, his rage erupts. He throws a missal a book used during Mass and it breaks a set of ballet dancer figurines on the étagère display cabinet that are important to Mama. This day, Kambili says, is when things started to fall apart.

The novel jumps back in time to explain how events in the family's life lead to the Palm Sunday turning point. Mama, who has been criticized for not giving her husband more than two children, is pregnant. Struggling with nausea one Sunday after Mass, she says she would prefer to stay in the car and rest rather than go into Father Benedict's home for their customary after-Mass visit. Papa becomes angry because

she wants to skip the visit with their parish priest, a white, English-speaking man whom Papa greatly admires. Though Mama does get out of the car, in obedience to her husband, and endures the visit, Papa's rage is not satisfied. At home, he beats Mama for even desiring to skip the visit. He carries her out of the door, leaving a trail of blood, which Kambili and Jaja clean up. The next day Mama returns, but she has lost the baby.

Over the next weeks, Kambili struggles to do well in school, though she knows she needs to excel on her exams or Papa will be angry. When she looks at her textbooks, all she sees is blood. She finishes second in her class, disappointing Papa, but he is distracted by outside political events.

At Christmastime Kambili's family travels to Abba, the hometown of Papa's side of the family. There, Papa allows Kambili and Jaja to visit his estranged father, Papa-Nnukwu, even though Papa-Nnukwu has refused to convert to Catholicism and still worships what Papa considers to be a heathen idol in a small shrine in his yard. The children are cautioned not to eat anything while there, not to look at the idol, and not to participate in any pagan rituals. The visit must last only for 15 minutes. Papa himself will not visit, nor does he allow his father into his home. Aunty Ifeoma, Papa's widowed sister, also comes to Abba with her children for the Christmas holiday.

The day after Christmas is a Sunday, and Kambili wakes up having started her period in the night. She has intense cramps and needs to take medicine, but the medicine must be taken with food. Unfortunately, Papa is strict about keeping a fast before Mass, a practice that allows participants to receive the Eucharist. Jaja and

Mama encourage Kambili to eat a small amount of cereal, believing Papa will not see. However, they are wrong. Papa comes in, sees her eating, and beats them all.

Before the end of the Christmas break, Jaja and Kambili are allowed to go to Nsukka to visit Auntie Ifeoma and her children. Auntie Ifeoma's apartment is a sharp contrast to Kambili's home; it is small and shabby, whereas Kambili's house is spacious and luxurious. Ifeoma's home is also louder than Kambili's. Ifeoma encourages her children to debate, laugh, and express themselves. Her home is filled with laughter and conversation, whereas Papa insists on quiet and silent obedience. During this time, both Jaja and Kambili grow in ways that would be impossible for them under Papa's oppressive rule. Kambili develops a crush on Father Amadi, a kind young priest who is friends with Auntie Ifeoma and her children.

While Jaja and Kambili are at Auntie Ifeoma's, Papa-Nnukwu suddenly becomes very ill. Auntie Ifeoma goes to pick him up, brings him to her home, and has him sleep in the room Kambili is sharing with her cousin Amaka. Kambili is terrified Papa will find out she has stayed in a house and slept in the same room with Papa-Nnukwu, knowing Papa will believe proximity to the man he calls a heathen is a sin. Papa does learn his father was in the home with his children, and he immediately comes to bring them home. Just before he arrives, however, Papa-Nnukwu is found dead. Back at home Papa punishes Kambili severely for not having informed him of Papa-Nnukwu's presence in Auntie Ifeoma's home. This time, however, instead of beating her he pours boiling water on her feet to remind her that if she walks into sin, her feet will get burned.

Amaka secretly slips Kambili a small painting of Papa-Nnukwu she has created, as Kambili and Jaja are leaving with Papa. Papa and Ade Coker, an editor at Papa's newspaper, the *Standard*, print a story about a prodemocracy activist; implicating the Nigerian head of state in the activist's death. Shortly afterward, Ade Coker is killed when a package bomb is delivered to his home. Papa generously gives money to his widow and children. Kambili knows that Papa will be angry if he finds the painting of Papa-Nnukwu, so she hides it in her room. One day she shows it to Jaja. The two of them look at it a little too long, and Papa comes into the room while they still have it out. He flies into a rage, tears the painting to pieces, and throws them on the floor. Weeping, Kambili crumples to the floor on top of the torn pieces. Papa then kicks her until she is unconscious. She wakes up in terrible pain, in the hospital. Papa, Mama, Aunty Ifeoma, and Father Amadi all come to see her in the hospital, and eventually Kambili is well enough to leave. For reasons unclear to Kambili, Papa allows Jaja and Kambili to go to Aunty Ifeoma's home in Nsukka so that Kambili can continue recovering.

Meanwhile, a great deal is happening in Aunty Ifeoma's life. There is tension between her and the sole administrator of the university because Ifeoma is politically outspoken and drawing the ire of the government. Looking for incriminating materials, government agents search Aunty Ifeoma's apartment to pressure her into silence. While all this is going on, Mama unexpectedly arrives, showing signs of another of her husband's beatings. Yet, when Papa arrives to bring them home, they all go with him.

Here, the narrative catches up to the present explored in *Breaking Gods: Palm Sunday*. The next day is Palm Sunday. Jaja refuses to take Communion. Papa breaks Mama's figurines.

After Palm Sunday, life changes in the Achike home. Papa seems weak and sick. Jaja is openly resistant to Papa's authority, and everyone seems less afraid. Ifeoma loses her job at the university and calls to tell them her and her family will soon move to the United States. Jaja and Kambili go to Nsukka to have one last visit with Ifeoma and their cousins and go with her on a pilgrimage to Aokpe. On the pilgrimage Kambili senses the presence of the Virgin Mary and sees visions of her everywhere. Father Amadi is called to a new location to continue his mission work. Before his departure, he and Kambili have an emotional farewell.

Unexpectedly, Papa is discovered at his desk, dead. After an autopsy reveals he was poisoned, Mama admits to Kambili and Jaja that she is the one who poisoned him. When the police come to the house, however, Jaja confesses to the crime to protect Mama. He is arrested.

It is three years later, and much has changed. Mama is like a shell of her former self, and Jaja has been imprisoned for a crime he did not commit. Kambili and Mama have gone often to the prison to see Jaja in the intervening years. Now, it seems likely he will be released, as a result of continuing bribes. Despite the violence and suffering her family has been through, Kambili feels a sense of hope.

## Chapter Three

### Psychoanalytic Elements in *Purple Hibiscus*

Father Amadi's influence on Kambili's life is manifested in the psychological transformation of Kambili. He triggers in Kambili what one may call a restructuring of the psychic composition. In Psychoanalysis, Freud talks about the structural composition of human psyche. It is composed of three parts: the id, ego, and the superego. A right balance of these inseparable parts ensures a person's mental health. The id is the source of all human psychic energy. It is the source of human passions.

Till Kambili meets Father Amadi, there is a dangerous repression of the id or the vital human desires and passions. According to Freud, id is run by what he calls the *pleasure principle*. Pleasure is absent in the life of Kambili. Papa Eugene negates the aspect of pleasure in Kambili and Jaja. A representative of religious fundamentalism, Eugene brands essential passions of life as sins and deprives Kambili of a gradual and healthy mental growth. The superego is dominant in Kambili's life at Enugu. Her psyche is run by the human realisation of superego- Papa Eugene.

Eugene's parenting style is authoritarian and he controls and restricts his children highly. He also ensures that they live a secluded and routine life. There is time for everything in the house, particularly for Kambili and Jaja. He likes order and ensures that daily schedule posted on the wall in their rooms have their names written on them. In the schedules written meticulously by their father "in black ink, cut across each day, separating study from siesta, siesta from family time, family time from eating, eating from prayer, prayer from sleep. He revised them often" Adichie (24). The problem about the schedule which specifies the routine lives of the children is that it leaves off the most important things that would have helped them. They do not

exercise or play with other children; they do not listen to music or watch television; they are not also involved in the gender-role activities. For example, Kambili does not know how to cook, how to peel yam, how to wash plates and how to pound cocoyam. When they come to Auntie Ifeoma's house at Nsukka with their schedules for the short stay, she takes them from them and starts retraining them.

Mr Eugene Achike had explained to his children the reason behind his stern approach to disciplining them. He did not want them to be "like those loud children people raising these days, with no home training and fear of god" Adichie (66). He worked hard and owned his own newspaper company, and many other business besides. He carried out many philanthropic works and contributed in many ways to the betterment of his own communities, including the state. He knew that he achieved these by dint of hard work, and through a purposeful goal of service of God and neighbour. He wanted to train his children in his own ways – to abandon the pleasure principle and embrace the principle of reality; that is, to be able to work hard, establish a purpose for their own lives, to serve God, to serve humankind, and steer away from choices that would deflect them from sublimating their drives into the achievement of higher goals. On one of the occasions when Kambili did not top her class, Eugene led her to the school and harangued her. His main concern, he explained:

Why do you think I work so hard to give you and Jaja the best? You have to do something with all these privileges. Because God has given you much, he expects much from you. He expects perfection. I didn't have a father who sent me to the best schools. My father spent his time worshipping gods of wood and stone. I would be nothing today but for the

priests and sisters at the mission. I was a houseboy for the parish priest for two years. Yes, a houseboy. Nobody dropped me off at school. I walked eight miles every day to Nimo until I finished elementary school. I was a gardener for the priests while I attended St. Gregory's Secondary School (47).

On occasions, he was extreme in his disciplining of the children; but he equally regretted his excesses, often trying to soothe the children back to serenity. In spite of that, he did not spare the children, in order that he might fashion them towards an ultimate goal of abandoning the pleasure principle and opt for the principle of reality.

Though Aunt Ifeoma is poor who cannot afford much for her children, there is an air of freedom in her home. What Kambili witnesses in her house amaze her, and underlines the basic difference between the two families. According to her; "Laughter floated over my head. Words spurted from everywhere often seeking and not getting any response. We always spoke with a purpose back home, especially at the table, but my cousins simply seemed to speak and speak and speak" (120).

Kambili's conscience is shaped by her Papa's religious doctrines and notions of sin and bliss. She gets controlled by the *morality principle*. Morality clouds the necessity of pleasures for a happy existence. Father Amadi is a force that initiates a gradual reshaping of Kambili's mental makeup. He forces her to confront her repressed desires and accept them as normal. The relationship between Kambili and Father Amadi becomes close rather quickly; it certainly pushes the boundaries of appropriateness. Father Amadi elicits a sexual awakening in Kambili. The id slowly starts making its presence felt in Kambili's thoughts. Although at the beginning

Kambili “felt almost sacrilegious addressing this boyish man-in an open neck T-shirt and jeans faded so much that I could not tell if they had been black or dark blue-as Father” (135).

As has been stated repeatedly, Nsukka marks the beginning of Kambili’s journey of self-discovery or identity formation. Apart from the silence that Kambili’s family house is registered with, it also echoes physical and psychological impediment; the freedom to do and to be. Part of the freedom to be that is inhibited involves the deterrent of articulating one’s sexuality, which is, identifying with the bodily and emotional changes that come with maturing or puberty. Hence, Eugene’s authority also engages in body mortification is a bid to kill the sexual urges that may be brewing in the minds of his adolescent children. Teenage years sees the development of sexual hormones and records markedly Physical changes in both male and female. This period for a young teenage girl is believed to be the time of her blossoming and becomes more self-conscious. However, Kambili is denied the chance to give attention to these changes and enjoy her femaleness because her religious father controls even her emotion. Kambili’s father feels if left alone, his children especially his daughter would be corrupted thereby committing sin with her body.

Eugene’s most brutal punishments are recorded by causing visible bodily harm that are likely to leave permanent scars on his victim such as Jaja’s gnarled left little finger or mama’s limping or the scars to later appear on Kambili’s scalded feet. This stems from his desire to prevent them from having any form of pleasure that is not derived from their religion or other family rituals. He neither affords them any privacy through his schedule for them nor allows them to be away from him without still maintaining control over them. His maiming them can also be understood as a desire to make them look unattractive to people or even themselves so that have anything to

be proud of which is sin to him. However, Freud already explains that sexual drive is part of the instinctual that is, the id which is naturally controlled by the ego so that the crude desires of the id are not followed through. In other words, having sexual thoughts is normal but is already censored by the ego, exerting external forces to suppress the drives or desires only creates individuals with abnormal sexual desires. Kambili's infatuation with Father Amadi is as a result in pent up impulses that she has never experienced attraction to the opposite sex.

Kambili has a crush with Father Amadi, a frequent visitor in Auntie Ifeoma's house. At first, she tries hard so that Father Amadi should not become a fascination for her but can't cast aside his musical voice; "Father Amadi's musical voice echoed in my ears until I fell asleep"(139).

So much Father Amadi tries to give words to Kambili's pent up feelings, so much she comes closer to him. Her feeling becomes solidified when the hair plaiting woman puts stress on the account that a man brings a woman to parlour when he is in love with that very woman. Kambili begins to rethink herself, about the world around her. Words which often come halting forth to her, begins to sing with her crush and often alone. A praising from him about her fine legs to run makes her play with schoolmates for whom she remained a 'snob' so long. She begins to analyse carefully how he behaves, moves, plays and drinks water. Father Amadi's physical gestures shoulder, bare legs- are within her gaze now. All these do not go beyond Amaka's sight as she proclaims, "You have a crush on him, don't you?" (219).

Kambili's attention shifts from admiring and fearing Eugene to admiring and longing for Amadi. Although there is a discernible change in her – she questions things, speaks more and even sings – Kambili only replaces one idealised man with another one. She is overwhelmed: "'Crush' was mild. It did not come close to what I

felt, how I felt” (219). Her feelings are similar to those she has, or had, for Eugene and hence approach a blind admiration that situates her as longing, passive and quiet. Amadi is a life-affirming force because he makes Kambili forget about Eugene.

After a few days of observing her cousin and aunt, Kambili begins to attempt to copy the performances of the two women. Physically trying to mimic two, Kambili uses Amaka’s lipstick and stares into the mirror with curiosity. In addition Kambili wears a shorts for the first time, and Father Amadi comments, “You have good legs for running,” which makes Kambili look away because she “had never heard anything like that before” (176). Comments such as these cause Kambili to develop a sexual attraction to Father Amadi, an emotion she could have never experienced under Eugene’s tyranny. Kambili begins to bloom as a sexual being during this time.

The awakening of her id, fills Kambili with a warmth that was absent in the fifteen years of her life. Father Amadi replaces the absences in Kambili’s life with vital psychic energy. Father Amadi, thus, restructures Kambili’s psyche. His influence permeates the grains of her mind. He radically subverts Kambili’s ideas about a good Catholic. When Kambili watches Father Amadi play football, she is shocked how ‘ungodly’ he appeared. Papa Eugene’s concept of religion represented by superego in Kambili clash with Fr Amadi’s idea of God which consists of a right mixture of the three parts-id, ego and the superego. In the presence of Fr Amadi, Kambili forgets about sins. She is overwhelmed by an active flow of energy from the id. We read:

I was always penitent when I was close to a priest at  
confession. But it was hard to feel penitent now, with Father  
Amadi’s cologne deep in my lungs. I felt guilty instead

because I could not focus on my sins, could not think of anything except how near he was (175).

Father Amadi prompts her to run, to chase joy, to smile, to laugh and to feel like a woman. He recovers her feminine identity. He transforms her mechanical life into a vibrant one. He evokes those feelings that were alien to Kambili till then. Kambili becomes aware of her appearance. She is enamoured by Father Amadi's eyes on her. Vanity makes an entry into Kambili's life. On her first outing with Father Amadi, she tries out lipstick. But her initial passions are overshadowed by a domineering conscience which triggers guilt in her. She wipes it off before she takes up the journey because: "Vanity is a sin." But Father Amadi creates a new identity for Kambili, that of a woman. The author gives subtle indications of a similar kind of feeling from the side of Father Amadi towards Kambili. But he is unable to pursue this emotion as he is bound by his duty as a Catholic priest. He dismisses Kambili's 'I love you' in a way that raises questions in the minds of readers. During an outing with Father Amadi, Kambili recounts: "He turned to me with an expression that I had never seen, his eyes almost sad. He leaned over the gear and pressed his face to mine. I wanted our lips to meet and hold, but he moved his face away. "You are almost sixteen, Kambili. You are beautiful. You will find more love than you will need in a lifetime," he said (280).

Here we can see ego makes its presence felt by urging both Father Amadi and Kambili to consider the impossibility of such a relationship. Ego is run by the *reality principle*. It manages the passions of the id. The id can be disruptive and socially unacceptable. According to Freud, the ego tries to resolve the tension created by the pleasure principle through a primary process which involves creating a mental image

of the desired object as a way of controlling the desire. In this way Kambili separates from Father Amadi, but carries with her a mental image that contains the memories of the best moments that they shared as an inspiring force that would guide her for the rest of her life. His melodious voice and cologne smell exist within Kambili despite Father Amadi's physical absence.

Thus, Father Amadi mobilizes Kambili's psyche that was stagnant for a very long time. He reawakens Kambili's vital passions (the id) and shatters the foundations of her existent superego. He creates a new morality that replaces the superego implanted by Papa Eugene. He activates her identity as a woman and elicits sexual passions common in any adolescent of her age. The clash between the two kinds of morality is ironical. Papa Eugene, a family man with children, negates passions and Father Amadi incites them in Kamibli despite being a Catholic priest.

## Conclusion

*Purple Hibiscus* makes an interesting reading in psychoanalysis. It attempted to show how psychological postulations of Sigmund Freud have influenced literary writers greatly. In *Purple Hibiscus*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie presents a young girl Kambili Achike. She starts out her adolescent journey confused and uncertain of their future as a result of what is expected of by their families and their own desires. This project is centered on the character Kambili and aimed to analyse her psyche with the perspective of Freudian psychoanalytic theory. This theory deals with the working of human mind; the id, the ego and the superego. Id is the pleasure seeker; ego provides balance between the id and superego which is extreme part of human psyche. This is also adopted theoretical framework for this study. The idea of examining the novel from a psychoanalytic point of view is to demonstrate how the writer create the characters and under the working of many unconscious elements beyond their control. Kambili suffers mainly as a result of father's Christian fanaticism. Nonetheless, from the narratives the girl present, the girls are highly observant of what happening in their society but her transformation or coming of age is necessitated by different conditions. Kambili had no significant future aspirations other than doing whatsoever pleases her father who is next to God in her life. She did not fully understand her world until she come in contact with people and places that shake the foundation of their belief system. The writer presents people and places that serve as catalysts to their transformation in the Kambili.

Before coming to Nsukka, Kambili was surrounded by so much wealth and abundance, yet she was unable to find happiness as a result of the father's fanatic Christianity. She was in an abusive silenced space and denied all her rights. She

begins to interrogate their family values after she become exposed to multicultural existence through close encounter with their Aunt's family in Nsukka. Nsukka signifies the contact with the new culture which challenge her upbringing. It paved way for religious liberty, individualization, voice, sexual awakening, happiness and socialization as opposed to religious fanaticism, voice-less-ness, naivety, dependence and fear.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**LESBIANISM ELEMENTS IN PATRICIA HIGHSMITH'S**

***THE PRICE OF SALT***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Arts

**NAJLA N. P.**

**Register No: DB18AEGR006**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project Supervisor: Mr. Jince Joseph**

**June 2021**

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Lesbianism Elements in Patricia Highsmith's *The Price of Salt*” is a bonafide work of Najla N P, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan  
Department in charge

Mr. Jince Joseph  
Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Najla N P, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Lesbianism Elements in Patricia Highsmith's *The Price of Salt*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Jince Joseph of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

08 June 2021

Najla N. P.

DB18AEGR006

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## Table of Contents

	Page No:
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	3
Queer Theory	
Chapter Two:	14
Lesbianism in <i>The Price of Sault</i>	
Chapter Three:	23
Theoretical Perspective of <i>The Price of Sault</i>	
Conclusion	39
Works Cited	42

## Introduction

Over the past decade, LGBT people have gained more and more tolerance and acceptance in India, especially in large cities. Most LGBT people in India closeted, fearing discrimination from their families, who might see homosexuality as shameful. People in the LGBT community are fighting for equal rights and acceptance. Trans-people, especially, face a lot of difficulty in finding acceptance. People in the LGBT community are looked down upon all the time.

In the first chapter, there is a detailed explanation of queer theory, which focus on sexuality and gender. *The Price of Salt* by Patricia Highsmith's characters shows lesbianism. Queer theory also analyses and critiques societal and political norms in particular as they relate to the experience of sexuality and gender.

In the second chapter, there is a brief summary of the book *The Price of Salt* by Patricia Highsmith. It is a semi-autobiographical story mined from her own life references and desire for a lost love. Highsmith described the characters of Therese as having come from her own bones.

In the third chapter discusses, the lesbian character of Carol Aird and Therese Belivet. Carol and Therese begin a deeply passionate relationship. That culminates in a road trip across the US during the Christmas holiday. In society normal men and women have the right to live in this society with respect then why not a person who belongs to LGBT can live in this society with respect.

Now, homosexuality and queer identities may be acceptable to more Indian youths than ever before but within the boundaries of families, homes and schools, acceptance still remains a constant struggle of LGBT people.

Therese works in theatre, which brings her into contact with a number of recognizable queers and allows us to think that if her career in set design takes off, she will never want for a community. Carol, separated from Harge, also chooses a promisingly alternative job selling antique furniture. She meet lots of homosexuals in her line of work, too. These women will not have to be alienated loners.

The novel indicates that a lot of people are unhappy conforming to what they are supposed to be doing, like Therese's boyfriend Richard, who thinks he wants to be a painter but is destined to end up working for his family's gas bottling business. Women like Therese and Carol, whose erotic identity and desires both respond to conventional markers of femininity: skirts, cosmetics, Perfumes, etc. For the woman like Therese who might thrill equally to the sight of herself in a beautiful dress, or the sight of another woman with lipstick and manicured fingernails, there was no language, no conceptual slot to fit herself into. As Therese tries to understand the nature of her feelings for Carol, she thinks that she had heard about girls falling in love, and she knew what kind of people they were and what they looked like.

*The Price of Salt* was bold for its time in many ways: it did not condemn its lovers to suicide or send them back to their men. It suggested that queers, in certain cities and certain professions, could find friends, communities, and creative work that were fulfilling and sustaining. Highsmith explicitly expresses and indicates the relation between the social context and sexual identity of homosexual through the story and the protagonists of her work. Queer theory is the lens used to explore and challenge how scholars, activists, artistic text, and the media perpetrate gender and sex based binaries, and its goal is to undo hierarchies and fight against social inequalities.

## Chapter One

### Queer Theory

Queer theory is used to designate the combined area of lesbian and gay studies together with theoretical and critical writings with all variance such as cross -dressing, bisexuality and transsexuality from society's normal model of sexual identity, orientation and activities. The term 'queer' was used to stigmatize male and female same -sex love as deviant and unnatural .certain gender critics have questioned the distinction between heterosexuality and homosexuality arguing that they are social constructs . Many of the critics agreed that sexuality is commonly conceived as containing only two possibilities, homosexuality and heterosexuality. Thus the notion ignores myriad variation and differences among individuals. The critics argued that most people are not exclusively homo or hetero sexual. Sexuality is innate and homosexuals and heterosexuals are naturally different. Sexuality encompasses a strange behaviour from bondage to bestiality. Queer theory in Britain develops out of cultural materialism and draws on the works of Foucault and Raymond Williams, in USA it develops out of lesbianism and is influenced by Derrida. The works of two significant theorists like Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky have heavily influenced the Queer theory.

The significance of queer theory lies in the fact that it has come to highlight the real practice of sexuality. Drag and cross -dressing have contributed to the analysis of sexuality. Cross – dressing is perfect for destabilizing generally accepted views of gender and sexuality: a man in long evening dress or a pleated skirt in public places would deal a good attention. Men in drag are interesting in queer theory because they simultaneously position themselves on the wrong end of two axes: on the gender axis they identify with the feminine pole, in spite of their maleness and on the axis of sexual orientation they take up the homosexual positions. The act of cross-dressing, the

appropriation of gender characteristics normally associated with the other sex has significance beyond other gender. In drag, gender and sexuality become inseparable. Cross-dressers effectively illustrate constructed character of gender and sexuality. While they draw attention to the difference between sexuality and acts of mere procreation. For queer theory, drag and other unusual intersections of gender and sexuality are sites where the constructions of sexuality become visible and where one is confronted with the fact that there are only ever shift in differences, even in the field of sexuality. It is an accepted fact that the queer theory has made sexuality the fourth category of analysis of literary and cultural studies next to race, gender and class.

In a patriarchal society dominated by male, the women function primarily within male – male relationship, particularly when two male want same female. The structure of this kind of society is homosexual – that is nature of social relationship rather than sexual ones. Homo-social relationship is different from homosexual relationship. The former deals with social relationship between man and woman and the latter deals with sexual relationship between two male. Gender studies and queer theory can be applied to literary text as tools of criticism with limited success. This is because life is not about sex only, it has other dimensions too. Hunger is the first drive of human beings, sex comes next. Desire in a man is not always sexual – it could be for political, social, material and even spiritual attainments. A man or woman has one of the four kinds of weaknesses: sexual, financial, and political and above all, the desire to be admired. Gender studies and queer theory explain a character in terms of his or her lust for opposite sex or even, for the same sex.

The term ‘queer’ was originally derogatory used to stigmatize male and female same-sex love as deviant and unnatural; since the early 1990s, however it has been increasingly adopted by gays and lesbians themselves as non-invidious term to identify

a way of life and an area for scholarly inquiry. Queer theory is used to designate the combined area and lesbian studies together with the critical and theoretical writings about all modes of variance such as cross-dressing, bisexuality, and transsexuality from society's normative model of sexual identity, orientation and activities.

Both lesbian studies and gay studies began as liberation movements in parallel with the movements for Afro-American and feminist-liberation during the anti-Vietnam war, anti-establishment, and counter-cultural ferment of the late 1960s and 1970s. Since that time these studies have maintained a close-relation to the activists who strives to achieve, for gays and lesbians, political, legal and economic equal rights to those of the heterosexual majority. Through the 1970s, the two movements were primarily separatists: gays often thought of themselves with the feminist movement, characterized the gay movement as sharing the anti- female attitudes of the reigning patriarchal culture. The two groups share a history as a despised and suppressed minority and poses common political and social aims.

In the 1970s, researches for most parts assumed that there was a fixed, unitary identity as a gay man or as a lesbian that has remained stable through history. A major endeavour was to identify and reclaim the works of non- heterosexual writers from Plato to Walt Whitman, Oscar Wilde, Marcel Proust, Andre Gide, W.H. Auden and James Baldwin and from the Greek poet Sappho of Lesbos to Virginia Woolf, Audrienne Rich and Audre Lorde. The list included writers who represented in their literary works homoerotic subject matter, but whose own sexuality, the available biographical evidence leaves uncertain. In 1980s the assimilation of the viewpoints and analytic methods of Derrida, Foucault and other poststructuralists, the earlier assumption of a unitary and stable gay or lesbian identity were frequently put increasingly subtle and complex.

A number of queer theorists adopted the deconstructive mode of dismantling the key binary opposition of western culture like male\female, heterosexual\homosexual, and natural\unnatural, by which a spectrum of diverse thing is forced into two categories, and in which the first category is privileged, power and centrality, while the second is derogated, subordinated and marginalized. In an important essay of 1980s, “Compulsive Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence”, Adrienne Rich stated what she called the ‘lesbian continuum’ as a way of stressing how far ranging and diverse is the spectrum of love and bonding among women, including female friendship, the family relationship between mother and daughter, women’s partnership and social groups, as well as overtly physical same sex relations. Theorists such as Eve Sedgwick and Judith Butler undertook to invert the standard hierarchical opposition by which homosexuality is marginalized and made unnatural, by stressing the extent to which the ostensible normativity of heterosexuality is based on the suppression and denial of same-sex desires and relationship. Queer reading has become the term of interpretive activities that undertake to subvert and confound the established verbal and cultural boundaries between male\female, homosexual\heterosexual and normal\abnormal.

A prominent procedure has been to undo the ‘essentialist’ assumption that heterosexual and homosexual are universal and transhistorical subjects of human subjects or identities by historicizing these categories by proposing that they are cultural and discursive constructs that emerged under special ideological conditions in a particular culture at a particular time. A central text is the first volume of Michael Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* (1976) which claims that, while there had long been a social category of sodomy as a transgressive human act, the homosexual as a special type of human subject or identity, was a construction of the medical and legal discourse of the latter part of the nineteenth century. In the further development of constructionist

theory, Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), described the categories of gender and of sexual as performative, in the sense that the features which a cultural discourse institutes as masculine or feminine, heterosexual or homosexual, it also makes happen by establishing an identity that the socialized individual assimilates and the patterns of behaviour that he\she enacts. Homosexuality is not a particular identity that affects a pattern of action, but a socially pre-established pattern of action that produces the effect of originating in a particular identity.

The constructionist view has been elaborated by considering the cross influences of race and of economic class in producing the identities and modes of behaviour of gender and sexuality. Sustained debates among queer theorists concerns the risk of a radical constructionism, which dissolve a lesbian or gay identity into a purely discursive product specific to a particular culture, as against the need to affirm a special and enduring identity in order to signalize and celebrate it, as well as a basis for concerted political action. A number of journals are now devoted to queer theory and to lesbian, gay, and transgender studies and criticism. The field has to become the subject of regularly scheduled learned conferences and has been established in the curriculum of the humanities and social sciences in many renowned colleges and universities.

Gay and lesbian criticism developed in response to the early stages of feminism which seemed to be based largely on the experience of white, middle- class heterosexual women and to offer that experience as universal. It did not directly challenge the traditional views of sexuality which are based around male-female sexual relationships. Lesbian criticism appeared as early as 1975 with the work of Jane Rule and developed, in the 1990s, into a way of reading not simply modern, overtly lesbian text but also text from the past where lesbian feelings may have been repressed or

hidden. A case in point would be Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market*, but the more general strategy of lesbian criticism is to draw attention to the secrecy and repression of texts together with an investigation of the complex relationship between lover and beloved in fictions. Similar moves are made by gay criticism, as in Alan Sinfield's analysis of Tennyson's long poem "In Memoriam" which traces out the nuances of the longing desire between the speaker and Arthur Hallam, Tennyson's friend, whose death prompted the poem. Such re-reading have led to the realization, not just of the intricate sexual patterns that make up human society, but also to a consideration of the constructed nature of sexual identity. Gender is a matter of biology: one is born as a woman or a man. Questions of masculinity and femininity are a matter of culture, debated and discussed at different historical periods. Sexuality is a question of sexual preference, but also again a language and discourse: what is considered normal and what is considered perverse is central to the legislation and rules that shape and define any every society.

Like all radical theories, queer theory involves reading texts against the grain and questioning and subverting traditional hegemonic structures of powers and sexuality .in the works of the American critics Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. Queer theory has gone on to question the very of sexual identity by arguing that sexuality is as much as matter of performances as of individual free choice and preference. Both heterosexuality and homosexuality are thus constructions: they are the effect of representation, as one's identity becomes what one acts. It is only a small step from this idea to the notion of cross -dressing and drag not as perverse forms of behavior but as parodies of the way in which all sexual identity is performed. The works of Oscar Wilde questions about identity, sexuality and society can be raised in any number of texts. In Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, Antonio seems willing to

die for the love of his friend Bassanio, or James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where Stephan Dedalus, the hero, moves between the male world of a boarding school, a catholic church dominated by male priest and at that time an all-male university life. Both gay and lesbian criticism, as well as queer theory draws attention to the way in which patriarchy operates and how it requires firm gender roles. Again, all draw attention to the homophobic nature of the recent history of western society.

The kind of Lesbian thinking designated as liberation lesbianism by Pulina Palmer, breaks away from feminism and makes new allegiances in particular with gay men rather than with other women and this kind of lesbian thinking sees itself as part of the field of Queer Theory or Queer Studies. The terms date from 1990 conference on queer theory at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Queer theory in this sense rather than being 'woman centered', rejects female separatism and instead sees an identity of political and social interests with gay men. The key underlying questions, for anyone choosing between these two possible alignments is whether it is gender or social sexuality which is the more fundamental in personal identity. Choosing the latter of course emphasizes lesbianism as a form of sexuality, rather than a form of female bonding or patriarchal resistance.

How exactly then in theoretical terms, does theory differ from lesbian feminism? The answer is that like many other current critical approaches, lesbian/gay studies within the queer theory have drawn particularly on post-structuralist work of the 1980s. One of the main points of post-structuralism was to 'deconstruct' binary opposition showing firstly, that the distinction between paired opposites is not absolute, since each term in the pairing can only be understood and defined in terms of the other and secondly, that it is possible to reverse the hierarchy within such pairs, and so

‘privilege’ the second term rather than the first. Hence, in lesbian or gay studies the pair heterosexual or homosexual is deconstructed in this way. The opposition within this pair is seen inherently unstable: as Diana Fuss puts it, in the introduction to *Inside/Outside: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*, much current work in the field aims to call into question the stability and ineradicability of the hetero\homo hierarchy. In an essay which one might take a practical example of how this dichotomy can be deconstructed, Richard Mayor writes, about the film star Rock Hudson once the screen epitome of attractive heterosexual masculinity. In fact Hudson was gay; the very qualities which made his image attractive to women were related to his homosexuality, for Hudson promised straight women a place of sexual safety, he would acquiesce to domesticity without insisting on male domination. Likewise straight male viewers had been relieved to find a role-model who did not require the exhaustive work of machismo to measure up to its masculinity. Deconstructing the homo\hetero dichotomy in this way has radical implications, since all such distinctions are constructed in the same way, so that to challenge this one is to challenge all the others too.

This anti-essentialism in relation to sexual identity is taken further by other critics. Judith Butler, a prominent contributor to *Inside\Outside: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* points out in her essay that ‘identity categories’ like ‘gay’ and ‘straight’ tend to be instruments of regulatory regimes, whether as the normalizing categories of oppressive structures. Hence it might be argued that the concept of homosexuality is itself part of homophobic (anti-gay). The term ‘homosexual’ is a medical legal one, first used in 1869 in Germany and preceding the invention of the term ‘heterosexual’ by eleven years. In this sense heterosexuality only comes into being as a consequence of the crystallization of the notion of homosexuality. Thus lesbianism, is not a stable, essential identity, in the words of Judith Butler, identity can become a site of contest

and revision. Taking this further, Judith Butler argues that all identities, including gender identities are a kind of impersonation and approximation a kind of imitation for which there no original. This opens the way to a 'post-modernist' notion of identity as a constant switching among a range of different roles and positions, drawn from a kind of limitless data bank of potentialities. Further, what is called into question is the distinction between the naturally-given, normative 'self' of heterosexuality and the rejected 'other' of homosexuality.

The 'other' in these formulation is something beyond us, and 'self' and 'other' are always implicated in each other, in the root sense of the word, which means to be intertwined or folded into each other. As basic psychology shows, what is identified as the external 'other' is usually part of the self which is rejected and hence projected outwards.

Eve Kosofsky Sedwick in her highly influential *Epistemology of the Closet* argues about the fluidity of identity including sexual identity. Sedgwick considers 'coming out of the closet' is not a single absolute act. Gayness may be openly declared to family and friends. Degrees of concealment and openness co-exist in the same lives. Nor will sexual orientation alone will make a person a complete outsider and therefore innocent of all patriarchal or exploitative taint. Sedgwick points that subject identity is necessarily a complex mixture of chosen allegiances, social positions, and professional roles rather than a fixed inner essence.

The consequences of this kind of argument are far-reaching both for politics and for literary criticism. The political consequences can be drawing upon a post-structuralist reading of Saussure, show that apparently elemental categories as heterosexual and homosexual do not designate fixed essences at all; they are merely part of a structure of differences without fixed terms, like Saussurean signifiers. The

theorists construct an anti-essentialist, post-modernist concept of identity as a series of masks, roles and potentialities, a kind of amalgam of everything which is provisional, contingent and improvisatory. The political consequences is that when we claim that gayness, or blackness is merely a shifting signifier, not a fixed entity, it becomes difficult to imagine how an effective political campaign could be mounted on its behalf. For in the name of anti-essentialism the bottom line concepts on which all forms of 'identity politics' depend have been removed. Identity politics mean that those which campaign for and by groups disadvantaged by some aspect of their identity, such as their gender, their age, or their sexual orientation. The opposite of identity politics would be class politics, where the campaign is on behalf of people disadvantaged by some aspect of their situation by being underpaid mine-workers.

Lesbianism is a force against rigid definitions and polar oppositions expressed in terms of gaps, spaces, disruption, the experimental, radical disruption, interrogation, and so on. This heady romantic stuff represents what one might call super-essentialism, since it tries to make one kind of resistance and thus places a political and social burden on sexual orientation which is surely unreasonable.

Closer examination of ethnographic, psychoanalytic, and sexological discourses of the last 120 years suggest that theories of sex and sexuality have always lacked definitional coherence. There is no doubt that discursive framework which defined sex and gender solely on the basis of binary categorization have been powerful in shaping culture and subjectivity over the course of last century; and the legacy of the uncontested homo-hetero bifurcation has been powerful. In Sedgwick's account, sexualities have never been clearly defined, marked as they are by haziness, indistinctness, and conflict. Theories of sex and sexualities demonstrate that there is no longer any pretense of unanimity over what sexualities actually are. In Jeanette

Winterson's work, sexualities excite textual as well as theoretical trouble; Edmund White's stories expose how some sexualities have more political and discursive leverage than others.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* sought to question what she describes as 'heterosexual matrix' that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized. Critical and cultural theory of last decade has produced conflicting statements and judgments, simultaneously reflecting those commitments and confusions about identity which have saved additionally served to constitute the very sexual and textual subjects under scrutiny. The homosexual of nineteenth century was given an identity, the lesbian and gay men are more usually associated with acts of self-nomination and choice. If terms such as 'homosexual' or 'gay' resonate with logic of identity, then the queer theory lacks the sexual fixity and coherence once thought to typify heterosexuals, homosexuals, lesbians and gay men.

## Chapter Two

### Lesbianism in *The Price of Salt*

Patricia Highsmith was an American novelist and short story writer widely known for her psychological thrillers, including her series of five novels featuring the character Tom Ripely. She wrote 22 novels and numerous short stories throughout her career spanning nearly five decades, and her work has led to more than two dozen film adaptations. Her writing derived influence from existentialist literature, and questioned notions of identity and popular morality. She was dubbed 'the poet of apprehension' by novelist Graham Greene. Her first novel, *Strangers on a Train*, has been adapted for stage and screen, the best known being the Alfred Hitchcock film released in 1951. Her 1955 novel *The Talented Mr. Ripley* has been adapted for film. Writing under the pseudonym Claire Morgan, Highsmith published the first lesbian novel with a happy ending, *The Price of Salt*, in 1952, republished 38 years later as Carol under her own name and later adapted into a 2015 film.

Highsmith endured cycles of depression, some of them deep, throughout her life. Despite literary success, she wrote in her diary of January 1970 that she was cynical, fairly rich, lonely, depressed and totally pessimistic. Over the years, Highsmith suffered from female hormone deficiency, anorexia nervosa, chronic anemia, Buerger's disease, and lung cancer.

As an adult, Patricia Highsmith's sexual relationships were predominantly with women. She occasionally engaged in sex with men without physical desire for them, and wrote in her diary: he male face doesn't attract me, isn't beautiful to me in a 1970 letter to her stepfather Stanley, Highsmith described sexual encounters with men as

steel wool in the face, a sensation of being raped in the wrong place- leading to a sensation of having to have, pretty soon, a bowel movement.

In 1943, Highsmith had an affair with artist Allela Cornell who, despondent over unrequited love from another woman, committed suicide in 1946 by drinking nitric acid. Between 1959 and 1961, Highsmith was in love with author Marijane Meaker. Highsmith was attracted to women of privilege who expected their lovers to treat them with veneration. According to Phyllis Nagy, she belonged to a very particular subset of lesbians and described her conduct with many women she was interested in as being comparable to a movie Studio Boss who chased starlets.

An intensely private person, Highsmith was remarkably open and outspoken about her sexuality. She told Meaker that the only difference between them and heterosexuals is what one does in bed. Highsmith was a resolute atheist.

Highsmith was an avowed anti-Semite; she described herself as a 'Jew hater' and described the holocaust as 'the semicaust'. Highsmith was an active supporter of Palestinian rights, a stance which, according to Carol screenwriter Phyllis Nagy, often teetered into outright antisemitism. Highsmith described herself as a social democrat.

Highsmith's first novel, *Strangers on a Train*, proved modestly successful upon publication in 1950, and Alfred Hitchcock's 1951 film adaptation of the novel enhanced her reputation. Highsmith's second novel, *The Price of Salt*, was published in 1952. Highsmith mined her personal life for the novel's content. Its groundbreaking happy ending and departure from stereotypical conceptions about lesbians made it stand out in lesbian fiction. The paperback version of the novel sold nearly one million copies before its 1990 reissue as hardcover. *The Price of Salt* is distinct for also being the only one of Highsmith's novels in which no violent crime takes place. And where her

characters have more explicit sexual existences and are allowed to find happiness in their relationship.

*The Price of Salt* is a 1952 romance novel by Patricia Highsmith, first published under the pseudonym 'Claire Morgan' Highsmith—known as a suspense writer based on her psychological thriller *strangers on a train*—used an alias because she did not want to be tagged as a lesbian-book writer, and because of the use of her own life references for characters and occurrences in the story. Though Highsmith had many sexual and romantic relationships with women and wrote over 22 novels and numerous short stories, *The Price of Salt* is her only novel about an unequivocal lesbian relationship and its relatively happy ending was unprecedented in lesbian literature. It is also notable for being the only one of her novels with 'a conventional happy ending' and characters who had more explicit sexual existences. A British radio adaptation of the novel was broadcasted in 2014. Carola film adaptation nominated for six academy awards and nine British academy film awards, was released in 2015.

Therese Belivet is a lonely young woman, just beginning her adult life in Manhattan and looking for her chance to launch her career as a theatre set designer. When she was a small girl, her widowed mother sent her to an Episcopalian boarding school, leaving her with a sense of abandonment. Therese is dating Richard, a young man she does not love and does not enjoy having sex with on a long and monotonous day at work in the toy section of a department store during the Christmas season. Therese becomes interested in customer, an elegant and beautiful woman in her early thirties. The woman's name is Carol Aird and she gives Therese her address so her purchases may be delivered. On an impulse, Therese sends her a Christmas card. Carol, who is going through a difficult separation and divorce and is herself quite lonely,

unexpectedly responds. The two begin to spend time together. Therese develops a strong attachment to Carol. Richard accuses Therese knows it is more than that: she is in love with Carol.

Carol's husband, Harge, is suspicious of Carol's relationships with Therese, whom he meets briefly when Therese stays over at Carol's house in New Jersey. Carol had previously admitted to Harge that she had a short-lived sexual relationship months earlier with her best friend, Abby. Harge takes his and Carol's daughter Rindy to live with him, limiting Carol's access to her as divorce proceedings continue. To escape from the tension in New York, Carol and Therese take a road trip west as far as Utah, over the course of which it becomes clear that the feelings they have for each other are romantic and sexual. They become physically as well as emotionally intimate and declare their love for each other.

The women become aware that a private investigator is following them, hired by Harge together evidence that could be used against Carol by incriminating her as homosexual in the upcoming custody hearings. They realize the investigator has already bugged the hotel room in which Carol and Therese first had sex. On a road in Nebraska, after the detective has followed them for miles and clearly intends to continue doing so, Carol confronts him and demands that he hand over any evidence against her. She pays him a high price for some tapes even though he warns her that he has already sent several tapes and other evidence to Harge in New York. Carol knows that she will lose custody of Rindy if she continues her relationship with Therese. She decides to return to New York to fight for her rights. Regarding her daughter, and will return to Therese as soon she can, Therese stays alone in the Midwest; eventually Carol writes to tell her that she agreed to not continue their relationship.

The evidence for Carol's homosexuality is so strong that she capitulates to Harge without having the details of her behavior aired in court. She submits to an agreement that gives him full custody of Rindy and leaves her with limited supervised visits. Though heartbroken, Therese returns to New York to rebuild her life. Therese and Carol arrange to meet again. Therese, still hurt that Carol abandoned her in a hopeless attempt to maintain a relationship with Rindy, declines Carol's invitation to live with her. They part, each headed for a different evening engagement. Therese, after a brief flirtation with an English actress that leaves her ashamed, quickly reviews her relationships-loneliness swept over her like a rushing wind-and goes to find Carol, who greets her more eagerly than ever before.

According to Highsmith, the novel was inspired by a blonde woman in a mink coat who ordered a doll from her while Highsmith was working as a temporary sales clerk in the toy section of Bloomingdale's in New York city during Christmas season of 1948. *The Price of Salt* is the classic American love story of boy meets a girl, their attraction immediate, the slow dance of courtship, and the headlong fall into a tempestuous affair. However in this instance the protagonists are not boy and girl but girl and older woman. These two people-the girl Therese aged 19 and the older woman Carol in her early 30s-meet in a department store during the Christmas season. Therese works temporarily as an assistant in the toy department, and Carol is looking for a doll for her young daughter:

The novel is written entirely from Therese's perspective, a single voice narrative style presently in vogue. Readers see Carol through Therese's eyes, they share Therese's introspection but not Carol's and yet Carol emerges as a fully developed character, complex and nuanced, not only the lens of Therese's perspective but also the

dialog used as a literary device allows us to more fully grasp the coloring of Carol's personality. Both what she says and how she acts carry layers of implicit meaning. At first Therese grapples with trying to understand why falling in love with a woman is classified as distinct from falling in love with a man. Each woman knows what she desires and while they dance around one another, neither knows the steps to manifest what she wishes.

One of the strengths of the novel lies on being privy to Therese's musings and struggles to find the mores and etiquette of her emotional responses to a woman. Highsmith's writing in creating this dynamic is revelatory. Initially, Therese experiences a romantic obsession. On an early visit to Carol's house, she plays the piano at Carol's behest: it was suddenly too much her hands on the keyboard Carol played, Carol watching her with eyes half closed, Carol's whole house around her, and the music that made her abandon herself, made her defenseless.

All through the book Therese grows into a woman as the house visits becomes a long road trip on which obsession becomes mutual love: she saw Carol's pale hair across her eyes, and now Carol's head was close against hers. And she did not have to ask if this were right, no one had to tell her, because this could not have been more right or perfect. Slowly the disapprobation of the morally prejudiced world shatters their idyll. Carol is undergoing a divorce and is in a legal battle for joint custody of her daughter. Gradually Therese comes to understand the societal costs of her and Carol's choices. There is heartbreak for birth. Therese and Carol are forced to separate by legal circumstances forged by the divorce proceedings.

Carol stands to lose her daughter on 'moral grounds', but during the process of hearings she refuses to accede to the demands of her ex-husband and his family that she

undergo correctional behavior therapy and give up forming liaisons with women. Courageously, Carol, accepting the reality of her identity, refuses to deny her sexuality although it means she cannot see her daughter. Yet love triumphs and the novel ends with a true beginning of the possibilities of a life together.

It is not difficult perhaps to see the novel as tinged with the darkness of the human condition that becomes Highsmith's landscape in her later novels. Carol, always under control, suave and sophisticated can appear as a spider spinning a web to trap Therese. At first maternal, but with an implicit edge of secret intimacy, she surprises herself by falling so deeply in love—desire becomes need. Having undergone her own journey and by relinquishing her daughter, she gambles on winning back Therese.

In the early part of the book Therese as an unwitting, innocent but willing quarry, but at the conclusion grown up now—she becomes truth predator and prey. Only a naturally talented and consummate storyteller could create the realistic and slowly evolving portrayal of Therese's character. *The Price of Salt* is a moving beautifully conceived and written book. It is mesmerizing to read.

Unusually for lesbian fiction, *The Price of Salt* has a relatively happy ending; nobody emerges unscathed from the events that unfold in the novel, but there is a hint that the two main characters, Therese and Carol, might ultimately get to walk off into the sunset, together, hand in hand. One of the main reasons for this is the way in which their relationship is presented in the narrative; many works of lesbian fiction written around the same time as this one seem to suggest that it is the responsibility of the homosexual couple to fit in with the rest of the world, and suffer a doomed and loveless existence because of it. This novel, however shows a basic, human love between two

lonely, damaged people, who manage to remain in love, and build a future together in spite of the circumstances and the people around them.

The narrative uses Harge to represent society and its view of lesbian women. Upon learning that his wife is a lesbian, Harge has a private detective tail her, and intends to use any evidence of homosexuality as proof that she is a bad mother. Being the man that he is, Harge would probably also have put a private detective on Carol's tail if he had suspected her of having an affair with another man; the main difference between the two scenarios is that he would use the affair with another as evidence that she was a bad wife. This small element in the story is extremely important because it shows that despite there being many sections of society who were not anti-gay, many also saw homosexuality as a corrupting influence on children, and as something that was in some ways too far from the perception of normal. As a cheating wife having a heterosexual affair, Carol might have come away from her marriage financially worse off, and with a significantly bruised spirit, but she would probably still have custody of her daughter. As a cheating wife having a homosexual affair she is seen as someone who could contribute to the moral delinquency of a minor and is therefore treated differently than she would have been had she been straight.

The novel also takes a long look at relationships in general and the emotional state of those involved in them. All of the main characters in the book are flawed in some way, Therese and Harge the most obvious examples of this. Therese was abandoned by her father when he died and abandoned by her mother after his death. At a time when she was at her most vulnerable, this feeling of abandonment embedded itself in her and was never something she was able to shake off. Her constant need to be the only significant relationship in Carol's life also shows up a flaw in Harge's

argument that her relationship with Therese made her an unfit mother; when required to choose between her lover and her daughter, Carol ended her relationship with Therese and choose her daughter. This is doubly ironic because in choosing to be with Carol at the end of the novel, Therese is drawn to a mother who refuses to abandon her child, something that she has been searching for since childhood.

## Chapter Three

### Theoretical Perspective of *The Price of Salt*

Today, homosexuality and queer identities may be acceptable to more Indian youths than ever before, but within the boundaries of family, home and school, acceptance of their sexuality and freedom to openly express their gender choices still remain a constant struggle for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people. In urban India, where social media and corporate initiatives have created increasing awareness of LGBT rights, the scenario looks more upbeat for gay men than for transgender people or lesbian women. While urban LGBT voices that are heard through several online and real world platforms form an important part of LGBT activism, these expose only a small part of the diverse challenges faced by the community.

In other parts, lesbian women are subjected to family-sanctioned corrective rapes, which are often perpetrated by their own family members. Vyjayanti Vasanta Mogli, a transwoman LGBT activist and public policy scholar at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad, who has openly spoken about her abuse at school, says that lesbian women and transmen in rural areas end up at the bottom of the hierarchy when it comes to basic human rights within the unit of family and village.

An analytical study of the novel Patricia Highsmith's story of romantic obsession may be one of the most important, but still largely unrecognized, novels of the twentieth century. First published in 1952 and touted as the novel of a love that society forbids, the book soon became a cult classic.

The main characters of this novel are Therese, Carol, Richard, and Harge. The story is set in 1950's Manhattan, New York. This part of the study mainly focuses on

the main lesbian women, Therese and Carol. The writer will try to analyze their history, their sexuality, as well as their moments of sexual awakening. The protagonist characters in this novel are Therese Belivet and Carol Aird. Therese Belivet is a shy nineteen-year-old girl who is working at the doll department of Frankensberg's department store in Manhattan and wants to be a stage designer. Therese is in a relationship with Richard Semco but is not in love with him even though Therese describes Richard as "a decent man—better than the others. He treated her like an actual person instead of just some girl that he could get with". (Highsmith, 45)

As stated before how the exposition of the story is similar to that of a lesbian pulp fiction, Therese is unhappy despite having almost everything that she can ever need such as a job that is enough to provide for her daily life and a boyfriend who loves her. Therese feels like her day job and her steady domestic relationship with Richard strips her off of her individuality and sense of self.

Furthermore, Therese is a lesbian woman who has never received any sex education for her sexuality. Therese's lack of individuality and self-identity may be the reason why she is so unhappy of her life and unsure of herself.

Her queer tendencies starts to show in her views of the nun who took care of her; Sister Alicia, whom Therese "adored and thought of so often, with her pale blue eye". (26) Referring to Mark Manson in *The Levels of Eye Contact*, he explained a level of eye contact called 'the gaze', which is when one looks at another person's eyes for 2-3 seconds without breaking eye contact. The gaze usually occurs consciously and is a clear sign of attraction. The gaze allows someone to pay attention to the other person's eyes and make their impression of them.

If Therese can remember and describe Sister Alicia's eyes, it can be inferred that Therese paid attention to them when she was little. The writer believes that this attention to and description of Sister Alicia is a foreshadow that indicates Therese's sexuality, since later on in the story when she meets Carol and is instantly attracted to her, one of the very first thing that Therese notices about Carol is also her eyes, meaning that Therese, in some ways, paid attention to and is attracted to both of them.

Therese's sexual awakening can be seen based on her immediate reaction and enthusiasm when she first meets Carol when the latter is looking for a Christmas present in the department store Therese is working in. "Her eyes were gray, colorless, yet dominant as light or fire, and caught by them, Therese could not lookaway." (27) At this moment, Therese has, in Manson's words, given Carol the gaze.

Though there were a number of salesgirls between them, Therese felt sure the woman would come to her. ... Then Therese saw her walk slowly toward the counter, heard her heart stumble to catch up with the moment it had let pass, and felt her face grow hot as the woman came nearer and nearer. ... Her eyebrows were blond, curving around the bend of her forehead. Her mouth was as wise as her eyes, Therese thought, and her voice was like her coat, rich and supple. (20)

Therese's blush and nervousness when Carol is walking to her can be seen as a sign of attraction. Even though Therese is not aware of her own sexuality yet, her gaydar as explained in the previous chapter is already working because Therese is already putting in effort to impress Carol. When they meet for the first time, Carol asks to see the valise on the window. The only person allowed to open the display window is Therese's manager, but Therese quietly takes the key and opens the display window for

Carol. This spontaneity and recklessness can be seen as a result of Therese's gaydar telling her that she is attracted to Carol and vice versa. They saw more and more of each other, without actually growing closer.

She still wasn't in love with him, not after ten months, and maybe she never could be... Sometimes she thought she was in love with him, but the feeling bore no resemblance to what she had read about love. Love was supposed to be a kind of blissful insanity. Richard didn't act blissfully insane either, in fact. (16)

In the quotation above, Therese explains how she feels about Richard after dating him for ten months. As Therese explains it, what she is experiencing in her relationship with Richard does not fit Moore's characteristics of being in love, because, referring to how Therese explains her feelings for Richard, she does not experience any signs of love to Richard. After having her sexual awakening, Therese becomes surer of herself. She fell madly in love with Carol, and Carol with Therese. Therese's love for Carol is so intense and so explicitly expressed that it is a solid proof that Therese's sexuality as a lesbian is valid. When Therese and Carol decided to meet each other and Carol is a quarter of an hour late, Therese stated that "If she didn't come, she would probably keep on waiting, all day and into the night". (46) This can be seen as an example of obsession and desperation according to Moore. (35)

The moments of Therese's feelings when she is with Carol and when she is thinking about Carol are surprising for the readers because it is such a drastic and change from Therese's boring and dull life. The moments Therese talks about Carol are the only times in the story where Therese's dynamic character is really apparent. These moments that are filled with excitement, melancholia, and obsession can only mean that

Therese is madly and hopelessly in love with Carol. Had these moments happened to a heterosexual person, there would be no question or doubt about the validity of their feelings and sexuality, but since Therese is a woman who is in love with another woman, she has to face many questions and doubts from the people around her, including the person closest to her at that time, Richard. Therese's responses and behavior in these scenes can be seen as the first few stages of love, which are attraction, lust, and attachment, according to an article written by Katherine Wu for Harvard University's Science is the News, entitled "The Science Behind Lust, Attraction, and Companionship" (2017).

Similar to Therese, Carol is also a dynamic character. However, the change in her character only shows at the very end of the book, when she looks at Therese who agrees to come live with her, to which Carol welcomed warmly with an eager greeting. "Therese watched the slow smile growing, before her arm lifted suddenly, she had waved a quick, eager greeting that Therese had never seen before" (249).

Throughout the story, from Therese's eyes, Carol has always been so cold and mysterious. She has flawless manners and can handle herself really well, which explains why she has a successful furniture business. Even when Carol is with Therese, she can always keep her composure and has her guards up very high. She almost never shows any distinct emotion, be it excitement or sadness, it is easy to mistake Carol Aird as a flat character.

While Therese has no information about her own sexuality, Carol already has some experience with same sex relationships. In the story, Carol has a best friend called Abby, whom she has a brief sexual relationship with. This brief relationship with Abby

is what brings Carol the conflict with Harge and when she is facing the law later on, because Carol and Abby's relationship prevents Harge from trusting her completely.

It has been previously stated that Carol Aird has a really strong personality. During the time, women were not expected or supposed to have strong personality as it would then be harder to control. Furthermore, because Harge's family already dislikes her for having her own business and not being the soft, submissive woman that they wanted, Carol's strong personality can be seen as an act of rebellion against all those expectations put on her. Carol is a very independent woman. Even though at that time it was the norm for wives to rely on their husbands as the sole provider for the family-and Harge is more than capable of doing so-Carol still holds on to her business and maintains her own life without depending on her husband.

Despite being in a relationship and married to a man, both Therese and Carol are lesbian women. Highsmith stated that Therese is a character based on her own self as a lesbian, depicting her real life experiences while she was working at a department store. Carol is also a lesbian woman. Despite being married to a man, Highsmith created Carol as a case in point for lesbian women who were forced to marry men in order to 'save their dignity' and avoid prosecution for being lesbians.

There are 4 types of conflict that the writer will analyze in this paper; man against self, man against man, and man against society. The man against self conflict that the writer will analyze from the novel is Therese's struggle with discovering and accepting her own sexuality. Therese already has feelings towards the same sex ever since she is a kid. However, throughout the novel, even when Carol is present and Therese is so madly in love with her, Therese still struggles to truly accept her

sexuality. This struggle is proved by how much doubt Therese is having when she needed to talk about her sexuality or when she is deciding to act on something.

Were you ever in love with a boy? A boy? Richard repeated, surprised. Yes. Perhaps five seconds passed before he said, 'No,' in a positive and final tone. At least he troubled to answer, Therese thought. What would you do if you were, she had the impulse to ask, but the question would hardly serve a purpose. She kept her eyes on the kite. They were both looking at the same kite, but with what different thoughts in their minds. (81)

Therese's doubt in accepting her sexuality is shown in the dialogue above when she tries to indirectly affirm her sexuality by asking Richard if he ever falls in love with another man. The impacts of Therese's struggle with her sexuality will be further explained in the next sub-chapter on the effects of heteronormativity and homophobia. The main man against society conflict in this novel is Homophobia. As lesbian women living in the 1950's in America, Carol and Therese face many cases of homophobia from the society.

Therese may have been a lesbian her whole life but she has only realized it when she meet Carol. In the beginning of the novel, Therese explains how she adored Sister Alicia, the nun who took care of her. This adoration towards Sister Alicia might have been love but since the environment in which Therese is living is very heteronormative and homophobic, Therese has never considered her feelings towards Sister Alicia as love. Another factor that leads to the late discovery of Therese's sexuality might be the responses from the people closest to her; more specifically, Richard. When Therese finally has the courage to acknowledge her feelings for Carol,

Richard goes on and mock her instead of taking her seriously. The readers, however, can see that Therese is serious, as it is the very first time Therese—who is unsure about everything—said that she is very sure of herself.

You've got a hell of a crush on her, Richard announced, explanatorily and resentfully Therese took a deep breath. Should she be simple and say yes, or should she try to explain it? What could he ever understand of it, even if she explained it in a million words? Does she know it? Of course she knows it. Richard frowned and drew on his cigarette. Don't you think it's pretty silly? It's like a crush that schoolgirls get. You don't understand, she said. She felt so very sure of herself. (88)

After meeting Carol for the first time at the department store, Therese has the initiative to send Carol a Christmas card. The writer considers this as a bold move because Therese trusts her gaydar enough to make the first move on Carol without first knowing virtually anything about her other than her name and address. With the heteronormativity and homophobia that are very restrictive, making a move towards someone from the same sex can be very risky but Therese does that anyway.

This proves that even though Therese is not entirely sure of her sexual orientation yet, the sexual awakening that is her brief meeting with Carol has given her a form of self-identity. It is just the beginning, but sending a Christmas card is a sign that Therese has learned a little bit more about herself and understands what she wants, and finally follows her heart and instinct.

Carol's custody battle with her husband. Being in a homophobic society, Carol already has the court and lawyers against her for being a lesbian. When Carol is on the road trip with Therese, Harge hired a private investigator to stalk them and gather proof

that Carol is indeed a lesbian, strengthening Harge's suspicion and mistrust based on Carol's past relationship with Abby. Carol loses the custody and Harge gets full custody solely because Carol is a lesbian, disregarding the fact that Harge violates Carol's privacy, has abusive tendencies, is an alcoholic, and objectively a worse parent than Carol. United States court. In the novel, it is mentioned that Carol has a childhood best friend named Abby. Carol and Abby have had a brief sexual and romantic relationship, as explained by Carol; "I knew I was in love with Abby. I don't know why not call it love, it had all the earmarks". (113) If there is a law legalizing gay marriage in 1950's New York, there will be a rather good chance that Carol and Abby might end together, but there is not.

The illegality of homosexuality was one of the main issues that queer people face during that time. Illegal same-sex marriage means homosexual couples can never marry no matter how long they have been together.

Furthermore, Liv Taylor wrote in an article for the Seattle Times that the illegality of same-sex marriage prevents committed homosexual couples from accessing things that married heterosexual couples are able to access. For heterosexual couples, when one person dies, the other gets the deceased's Social Security and pension check. Another example is that before same-sex marriage was legalized in all 50 states in 2015, committed homosexual couples were unable to care for each other if one person was chronically ill or recovering from a surgery and needed constant care, because only family members (husband, wife, or children) were allowed to provide constant care up to 12 weeks while still receiving salary, according to the federal law.

The biggest impact of homophobia that Carol has to face is losing the custody of her daughter. The custody battle between Harge and Carol is also the main conflict

of the novel. The writer believes that this conflict might be the reason why Highsmith decides to use a pseudonym, because it calls out how unfair and homophobic the court is towards innocent lesbian women. The custody battle between Carol and Harge shows how harsh and unforgiving the stigmas against homosexuals are. Even though Harge does not approve of Carol's career because he thought it made her less of a mother, it was solely Carol's sexual orientation that makes her lose the custody over their daughter, even though Harge has violated her privacy and showed abusive tendencies. In Carol's letter to Therese after they part, Carol explains to Therese how she loses the custody over Rindy.

I am not even going into court. This morning I was given a private showing of what Harge intended to bring against me. Yes, they have a few conversations recorded--namely Waterloo, and it would be useless to try to face a court with this. I should be ashamed, not for myself oddly enough, but for my own child, to say nothing of not wanting you to have to appear. Everything was very simple this morning--I simply surrendered. (148)

Carol's lost custody over Rindy fits the explanation by Penn State University in the previous chapter. Because of her sexuality, Carol is automatically seen an unfit and incompetent parent, regardless of her capability to provide for her child and the amount of attention she can give to Rindy. Full custody is automatically given to the heterosexual parent, which is Harge. One of the first effects of gender roles and homophobia that existed in 1950s America that is shown in Therese is that she is unsure about her feelings for Richard despite being together for several months and having sex several times. This might be one of the conflicts that are caused by the

gender roles between men and women at the time. Since the men are responsible to provide for women, the writer believes that it creates a form of ownership that is similar to that of an employer with the employee, or an owner with the slave. Men automatically feel significantly more powerful, and vice versa. Women unconsciously start to feel like they have to do what the men tell them or give what the men want. If they do not, they will feel as if they have been selfish, ungrateful, and disappointed the men. As a result, they will often try to overcompensate for the guilt that the situation causes.

Therese clearly states several times that she does not love Richard and that she is not excited to have a future with him, while Richard is so eager to get married and move into domesticity. In this condition, Richard understands his position as a man well and uses it to try and manipulate Therese to stay in the relationship. Richard does not violently force Therese to stay with him, but he keeps spoiling her, giving her his affection, and introducing her to his family. As a result, Therese feels guilty for not loving him back and feels like she has to compensate for his feelings, which makes her agree to keep staying with him.

She knew what he was about to say, that she gave him practically nothing in the way of affection, but he wouldn't say it, because he knew very well that she wasn't in love with him, so why did he really expect her affection? Yet the simple fact that she wasn't in love with him made Therese feel guilty, guilty about accepting anything from him, a birthday present, or an invitation to dinner at his family's, or even his time. (31)

It is clear that Therese has given signs of rejection and that Richard understands them. The writer assumes that since the feminist movement that brought up the issue of

domestic violence did not start until the 1960, there is fear of getting abused that Therese feels if she decides to leave Richard.

Especially because she does state that Richard is better than the other men, Therese might be afraid that if she ever tries to leave him, he will turn to violence. Richard, on the other hand, seems to be aware of this situation, and decides to make the most of it by using Therese to fulfill his needs of affection, sex, and ultimately, a steady future.

Richard's ways of fulfilling those needs are by buying her gifts such as the St. Christopher medallion, showing her attention and affection, helping her with finding a job at the stage designing by introducing her to his friend, and consistently coaxing her to marry him by showing her what their life will be "a shoe clerk and a secretary, happily married on West Twentieth Street, and she knew Richard meant to show her an ideal life in theirs, to remind her that they might live together the same way one day".  
(83)

Even though it is not Cantwell who popularizes the comparison between people to things that are on sale, that metaphor is planted in society. The suggestion for women and men to get married in their early 20s is problematic because it stops women from pursuing education and career. It is also dangerous for the mental health of the people because if they were single, they would have this fear and anxiety of not being good enough to marry.

Carol also goes through a problem in the form of forced submission and early marriage caused by the gender roles and heteronormativity that is imposed to the people at that time. Understanding that same-sex marriage is illegal, Carol has no other choice than to marry a man. So as expected, Carol married Harge Aird when they both

were young, which she explained to Therese during their first lunch together; “At least you're not going to make the same mistake I did, to marry because it was the thing to do when you were about twenty, among the people I knew.” (45) As explained in the previous section, Carol and Harge do not marry out of love, but merely to fulfill society’s expectation Harge, who has a business in real-estate, is very influenced by gender roles, so he gives in to the pressure of marrying a woman that he deems inferior to him. He marries Carol, assuming that just because Carol never “embarrassed him socially.” (112) It means that Carol was a submissive like how women were expected to be at that time.

Unfortunately, that is not the case. In the novel, it is not mentioned what job Carol has when she marries Harge, but from examining how badly Harge changes the way he treats Carol as well how much Harge’s family dislikes Carol, the writer assumes that Carol is possibly single when she marries Harge and starts her business after that. Carol briefly explains to Therese about how Harge’s family treats her when they are having a conversation in Carol’s house.

What do they criticize you for?-For having a furniture shop, for instance.  
 But that didn't last a year. Then for not playing bridge, or not liking to.  
 They pick out the funny things, the most superficial things.They sound  
 horrid. One's just supposed to conform. I know what they'd like, they'd  
 like a blank they could fill in. (111)

Carol’s description of how Harge’s family has been treating her is a depiction of what is happening to young single girls at the time. They are expected to be a blank slate for the family or husband to fill in and to control. Each man and his family will expect women that are submissive and moldable to fit into their own values and desires.

Women with strong personalities such as Carol cannot be shaped or molded. This causes a conflict between Carol and Harge's family. Carol is not desirable in Harge's family because she disrupted the family's expectations, but the fact that she was already married to Harge make his family angry and so they treats her terribly even though she has done nothing wrong to them.

Another reason why Harge's family despises and constantly criticizes Carol can be because Harge's family sees Carol as a threat to Harge's masculinity and pride. As men are expected to be the superior sex, it is easy for men to see successful career women as threats. In Harge and Carol's case, Harge and his family might have seen Carol as more of a competitor than a partner. Belittling and criticizing Carol can be a way that Harge's family uses to remind her that Harge is still superior and maintaining the family's dignity. By giving them a happy ending, Highsmith who is a lesbian, has sparked a little fire through the projection of herself and her sexuality in Therese Belivet. This spark contributes to the desire of lesbian women to fight and demand for equal rights.

Despite being young and unsure, Therese is an independent woman. In the beginning of the story, she is and already has been in a relationship with Richard who is very eager to marry her. During the 1950s, it is the men's responsibility to provide for the women. Richard is willing to provide for Therese but she keeps refusing, even before she meets the wealthy, furniture- business-owner Carol Aird. Therese insists on working and providing for herself even though it means she cannot live lavishly.

Therese's change of ideals and character are also showed in her response towards Richard's resentment for her and Carol's relationship. At first Therese is very submissive and timid, but once she discovers her sexuality and what she wants, she

becomes braver. “She sensed that he was never so bound to her as now, never so determined not to give her up. It frightened her. She could imagine the determination transformed to hatred and to violence.” (134)

Since the book is told entirely from Therese’s point of view, Carol is described to be so perfect, almost like a goddess. As explained before on how Highsmith created the main characters to be unconventional to the image of both heterosexual and homosexual couples, Carol has several masculine/dominant traits, but not a physically butch lesbian. Therese has described how Carol presents herself multiple times, including Carol’s dominance through her outfit, voice, and how she carried herself. “She is tall and fair, her long figure graceful in the loose fur coat that she held open with a hand on her waist. Her eyes were gray, colorless, yet dominant as light or fire, and caught by them, Therese could not look away.” (20)

As explained before, prior to the gay liberation and lesbian feminist movement, homosexual relationships are most commonly seen as an illness because of religion. However, literature, specifically lesbian pulp fiction novels, also plays a big role on how society shapes its views and understanding about lesbian relationships. Since it has been explained how lesbian pulp fiction novels are mostly written by heterosexual male authors for heterosexual male audience, the authors usually take a more pornographic approach to the story to keep the sales up. The writer believes that the pornographic contents in lesbian pulp fictions contributes to the stigma that lesbians are inherently pornographic, deviant, and taboo, because they are one of the very limited sources of information regarding lesbianism. Furthermore, because of the portrayal of femininely presenting lesbians as damsel in distress and masculine presenting lesbians as incomplete men, as well as the tragic endings of lesbian relationships depicted in

lesbian pulp fictions, the readers and society see lesbian women a joke or a phase. This assumption is depicted by the novel in the scenes where Richard calls Therese's feelings for Carol silly, "Don't you think it's pretty silly? It's like a crush that schoolgirls get". (88) Because of the sex conflicts within the last several decades, some sexual behaviors have made their way from the bad side of the line to the good side of the line. Before, almost all acts of homosexuality were on the bad side of the line. By writing and presenting homosexuals as human with depth, conscience, maturity, and morals like what Highsmith did with *The Price of Salt*, society has begun to acknowledge that some forms of homosexual erotic behaviors might be on the 'good side' of the line, such as the sex acts that Therese and Carol experienced, all of which include a full range of human emotions and interactions.

The title of the novel *The Price of Salt* is referring to a term like the 'spice of life', or in this case, the salt of life. In this book, the spice of life for Carol is being with Therese, not hiding who she is, and living life the way she wants without her husband bossing her around (the spice of life). But the 'price' for her living a full life is giving up her house and the custody of her child, as well as her social standing. For Therese, the price she pays to be with Carol is giving up her potential set designing jobs and giving up connection with her boyfriend and family. So the title, in its, is about how much sacrifice someone must make to live a true life in a restrictive must make to live a true life in a restrictive society like in the 1950s.

## Conclusion

In the world now there are different kinds of partners: black, white, interracial, straight, gay, etc. But like many people, in the world, not everyone is accepted many people do not except homosexuals for the reason that they are different from us. People would say that homosexuals choose to live a 'non normal life'. But they are people just like us .they have a heart just like we do, but they choose to put their heart towards their own sex. Society develops fears of homosexuality do to the belief that it disrupts the family, promotes pedophilia, child slavery, and contributes to the moral decline of society.

Patricia Highsmith's *The Price of Salt* portrays the life of a lesbian couple during the 1950's in the United States. The story features two lesbian women, Therese Belivet and Carol Aird. Therese in *The Price of Salt* is portrayed as a nineteen-year old girl working at a department store. Unhappy and sexually confused, Therese falls in love with Carol Aird, a customer at the department store. The two then start a relationship and face many challenges caused by their sexual orientation together. The analysis of this thesis is divided into two aspects, which are intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic analysis focuses on the plot, characters, and conflicts of the story, which is essential in analyzing the kinds of challenges that Therese and Carol face because of their sexual orientation. The extrinsic analysis focuses how Highsmith created the characters and conflicts to depict the real-life struggles and situation of lesbian women in the United States at that time. In addition, the extrinsic analysis also explores the impacts of *The Price of Salt* as a literary work on the lesbian feminist movement, as well as on society's perception and treatment towards lesbian women in general.

The theme analysis of *The Price of Salt* is sexual orientation and identity. It explores how Sapphic themes such as *The Price of Salt* was very popular at that time. The plot analysis of this thesis explores how *The Price of Salt*'s happy ending is a groundbreaking and revolutionary. As the first lesbian pulp fiction novel that has a happy ending, *The Price of Salt* has a massive impact in triggering proper lesbian representation in American literature, giving hope to lesbian women, and ultimately, motivate the lesbian feminist movement.

The characters analyzed in this thesis are the four main characters in the novel; Therese Belivet, Carol Aird, Richard Semco (Therese's boyfriend), and Harge Aird (Carol's ex-husband). Richard Semco and Harge Aird play an important role in representing the challenges of homophobia, heteronormativity, and gender roles that Therese and Carol face as lesbian women and as a couple. The conflicts experienced by both Therese and Carol are basically caused by their sexual orientation. Therese's conflict involves the invalidation of her feelings and sexuality by her boyfriend, as well as an internal struggle in finding her self-identity. The main conflict in the story is faced by Carol, who lost custody of her daughter solely because of her sexual orientation. Unjust treatment in court is a major form of systematic homophobia towards lesbian women in the United States.

The extrinsic analysis of this thesis explores the effects of homophobia and heteronormativity faced by lesbian women in the United States as depicted by the characters in the novel, as well as the impact of *The Price of Salt* as a novel for the lesbian community. There are several effects of homophobia, gender roles, and heteronormativity on the lives of lesbian women that are depicted in the novel. There is a lack of understanding of one's own sexual identity and orientation, which is depicted by Therese and her internal conflicts regarding her sexual orientation.

Forced submission and the obligation to marry early is depicted by Therese, Carol, and their relationships with their opposite-sex partners (Richard and Harge). Therese is pressured to marry Richard soon, even though she is not ready, while Carol faces backlash from Harge's family for not being submissive and regrets her decision to marry early. Richard's disbelief towards Therese's sexual orientation is a depiction of the invisibility and invalidation of lesbian identity. The discriminative laws and unjust treatment in court is represented by Carol and her loss of custody because of her sexual orientation.

*The Price of Salt* has a major impact in changing lesbian representation for the better. The happy ending in the novel gives hope and visibility for lesbians couples in the United States. Furthermore, *The Price of Salt* encourages other authors to follow its path and write happy endings for lesbian characters in novels and movies, thus pushing forward lesbian and queer presence in literature and films. The realistic depiction of *The Price of Salt*'s lesbian characters and their romantic relationship also fixes how lesbian fictional characters are portrayed in literary works. As a result, lesbian women are being treated better in real life, because they are no longer seen as deviance, obscene, or perverted.

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**DONBOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**REFLECTING AZA'S PSYCHE IN *TURTLES ALL THE WAYDOWN*: A PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE**

**A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Arts**

**NAMBIAR SNEHA DAYANANDAN**

**Register No: DB18AEGR007**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project supervisor: Ms, Twinkle Thomas**

**June 2021**

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Reflecting Aza’s Psyche in *Turtles All The Way Down: A Psychoanalytic Perspective*” is a bonafide work of Ms, Nambiar Sneha Dayanandan, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. Twinkle Thomas

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Nambiar Sneha Dayanandan, hereby declare that the project work entitle “Reflecting Aza’s psyche in *Turtles All The Way Down* : A Psychoanalytic Perspective” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English in record of original work done by me under the supervision of Miss. Twinkle Thomas of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before authority.

Angadikadavu

Nambiar Sneha Dayanandan

08/06/2021

DB18AEGR007

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Nambiar Sneha Dayanandan

**Table of Contents**

	<b>Page No</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter One	3
The Theory of psychoanalysis	
Chapter Two	10
An Analysis of the novel <i>Turtles All The Way Down</i>	
Chapter Three	15
Psychoanalytic elements in <i>Turtles All The Way Down</i>	
Conclusion	24
Works Consulted	25

## Introduction

Fiction often presents problematic everyday realities of human life. These include versatile range of chaos like mental discrepancies, stress, anxiety, panic attacks and so on. It helps the wide range of reader folks to trace their personal life experiences through the characters. John Green's *Turtles all the Way Down* is an amazing piece of psychological fiction circumnavigating on the elements of mental agonies in the mind of a teenager.

The novel's narrator Aza, a lower-middle-class high schooler who suffers from profound anxiety – in particular, an obsession with intestinal germs. Periodically, she even drinks hand sanitizer. And while she's receiving psychiatric help, she believes that she'll never really get better. Aza, victimized by obsessive thinking, seems a prime example of someone who “cannot will what she wills.”

Green's narrative sensitively explores the suffering caused by both obsessive-compulsive disorder and fiscal malfeasance. *Turtles All the Way Down* doesn't promise or offer much of a happy ending. The heroes won't find love, and there's no suggestion that Aza will ever escape her anxiety disorder. Green is to be commended for keeping our eyes on the tough stuff.

The present study is intended to find id, ego and super ego in the view of Sigmund Freud on the basis of psychoanalytic theory in the character Aza of the story, *Turtles all the way down*. The project contains three chapters. The first chapter is dealing with psychoanalytic theory. This chapter gives the concepts of psychoanalytic theory.

The second chapter is about the book *Turtles all the way down*. This chapter gives an analysis of the story.

The third chapter studies the book in the point of view of psychoanalytic concept like id, ego and superego. This chapter proves the causes of mental illness of the character and the way she recovers from it, after several treatments.

## Chapter One

### The Theory of Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a theory about the human mind. Psychoanalysis concepts are prevalent in our everyday life, and criticism related to these is psychoanalytic criticism. It came into being during the 1920s. This criticism can be understood as emerging from the romantic view that literature is an expression of its author's person. The psychoanalytic view of human behavior is relevant to our experience of literature. Psychoanalysis is defined as a form of mental therapy, which aim to cure mental disorders by investigating the interactions of the conscious and unconscious elements of the mind.

Many of the principles such a therapy are derived from the works of the Austrian medical practitioner, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), whose ideas about psychoanalysis evolved over a period of time. It was he who gave his ideas the name, psychoanalysis in 1896. He said that people are motivated be desires, fears and conflicts of which they are unaware. They are unconscious of these forces. These forces are stored in our memory, and are repressed. This is the unconscious mind. This is a part, or section, a sub-system of the mind, by lying below the level of consciousness, and it organizes our current experiences and emotions. The unconscious is dynamic, and is always at work, controlling us from the very depths of our being.

Psychoanalysis is simultaneously a form treatment, a theory, and an 'investigative tool'. Freud used each of these three facets of psychoanalysis iteratively to progress our understanding of human mental functioning. Among Freud's unique theoretical insights into the human condition was the historically new idea that humans are primarily animals driven by instincts who undergo growth via universal

developmental stages that are influenced by family and social life. This was in opposition to the prevailing view of his time that humanity was God's highest creation. Freud challenged the cherished belief that humankind is rational and primarily governed by reason, replacing it with the disturbing notion that we are in fact driven by unacceptable and hence repressed aggressive and sexual impulses that are constantly at war with the 'civilized' self.

Psychoanalytic theory postulates a multitude of different change mechanisms, and a host of new ways of conceptualizing the change process continue to emerge as psychoanalytic theories themselves evolve and proliferate. At the most basic level, there is an understanding that change generally involves making the unconscious conscious, as expressed by Freud's oft cited axiom whereid has been there shall ego be. Although Freud's understanding of the nature of the change process evolved over the course of his lifetime, central to his mature thinking was the idea that change involves first becoming aware of our instinctual impulses and unconscious wishes, and then learning to deal with them in a mature, rational, and reflexive fashion. For Freud, a central premise was thus that we are driven by unconscious wishes that we are unaware of and this lack of awareness results in driven or self-defeating behavior. Freud believed we delude ourselves about reasons for our behaviors and this self-deception limits our choice. By becoming aware of our unconscious wishes and our defenses against them we increase the choices available to us. Thus, as we decrease the extent to which we are driven by unconscious factors we assume a greater degree of agency.

During the 1890s, Freud worked with Austrian physician and physiologist Josef Breuer in studies of neurotic patients under hypnosis. Freud and Breuer observed that, when the sources of patients' ideas and impulses were brought into consciousness during the hypnotic state, the patients showed improvement. Freud held that the

patient's emotional attachment to the analyst represented a transference of the patient's relationship to parents or important parental figures. Freud held that those strong feelings, unconsciously projected to the analyst, influenced the patient's capacity to make free associations. By objectively treating these responses and the resistances they evoked and by bringing the patient to analyze the origin of those feelings, Freud concluded that the analysis of the transference and the patient's resistance to its analysis were the keystones of psychoanalytic theory.

In the *Unconscious*, Freud (1915) revisited and reworked his ideas. He proposed 'psychical systems' that he named Conscious, Pre Conscious and unconscious, he referred to these as the 'psychical topography'. He coined the term 'depth psychology' to indicate that he had advanced the field beyond the 'psychology of consciousness'. Freud subsequently renamed his depth psychology, metapsychology, in which all psychological phenomena were examined from three different perspectives: topographical, economic and dynamic. The topographical analysis identified the system in which the psychic action was occurring, the economic analysis assessed the quantity of psychic energy being expended and the dynamic analysis explored the conflict between the pressures from instinctual drives and the ego defenses that are deployed to prevent the release of the forbidden material from repression.

According to Freud's structural model, which he introduced in 1923, our personality is an organized energy system of forces and counter forces whose task is to regulate and discharge aggressive and sexual energy in socially acceptable ways. This model re-focused attention on the importance of the social environment and the role of relationships with primary care givers aggressive impulses that seek gratification. The id, the home of unconscious drives and impulses, operates according to a primary process that is very different from conscious thought, or secondary process thinking. It

has no allegiance to rationality, chronology or order, and is fantasy-driven via visual imagery. The role of the ego is to regulate the primitive impulses of the id, the relentless and punishing superego and the demands of external reality. The ego protects itself from the unconscious by developing repressing forces that keep repressed material from breaking through the consciousness. Freud defined the ego in two ways, firstly, as the structure needing protection from the unconscious, secondly, as the repressing force that keeps disturbing material at bay. Since the process of repression is itself unconscious, there must be an unconscious part of the ego.

In his theorizing, anxiety was understood to be related to the fear of discharge of unacceptable sexual or aggressive drives. Subsequently, Freud (1926) understood anxiety to be, simultaneously, an affective signal for danger and the motivation for psychologically defending against the (perceived) danger. Freud believed at first that repression caused anxiety, he subsequently came to the view that it was anxiety that motivated repression (Freud, 1926). Freud proposed four basic danger situations – the loss of a significant other, the loss of love, the loss of body integrity, and the loss of affirmation by one's own conscience (moral anxiety). When an individual senses one of these danger situations, motivated for defending against the anxiety is triggered.

Freud distinguished between traumatic (primary) anxiety, which he defined as a state of psychological helplessness in the face of overwhelmingly painful affect, such as fear of abandonment or attack, and signal (secondary) anxiety, which is a form of anticipatory anxiety that alerts us to the danger of re-traumatization can be taken. He also revised his view about what was repressed, concluding that it was not traumatic experiences or memories but conflicted impulses, wishes and desires with their attendant anxiety that motivate repression. Hence, Freud shifted his focus from external trauma to a focus on inner conflict as the core of psychoanalytic theory and

psychoanalysis. Contemporary psychoanalytic theory reversed this shift, re-focusing on external trauma as the locus of psychotherapy. According to Freud, the superego is formed out of the internalized or introjected values of parents and society and becomes the person's conscience from which an ego ideal, the standard by which one measures oneself, is formed.

Psychoanalytic theory focuses on the role of a person's unconscious, as well as early childhood experiences, and this particular perspective dominated clinical psychology for several decades. Psychoanalytic theory is often used interchangeably with psychodynamic theory, but psychodynamic theory generally applies to a broader field of study based on Freud's theories as well as those of his followers.

According to Freud, our personality develops from the interactions among what he proposed as the three fundamental structures of human mind: the id, ego and superego. Conflicts between these three structures, and our efforts to find balance among what each of them behave and approach the world. The id is the conscious part that is the cauldron of raw drives, such as for sex or aggression. The ego, which has conscious and unconscious elements, is the rational and reasonable part of personality. Its role is to maintain contact with the outside world to keep the individual in touch with society, and to do this it mediates between the conflicting tendencies of the id and the superego. The superego is a person's conscience, which develops early in life and is learned from parents, teachers, and others. Like the ego, the superego has conscious and unconscious elements. When all three parts of the personality are in dynamic equilibrium, the individual is thought to be mentally healthy. However, if the ego is unable to mediate between the id and the superego, an imbalance is believed to occur in the form of psychological distress.

The id, the most primitive of the three structures, is concerned with instant gratification of basic physical needs and urges. It operates entirely unconsciously (outside of conscious thought).

The superego is concerned with social rules and morals – similar to what many people call their “conscience” or their “moral compass”. It develops as a child learns what their culture considers right and wrong. If your superego walked past the same stranger, it would not take their ice cream because it would know that would be rude. However, if both your id and your superego was strong enough to override your superego’s concern, you would still take the ice cream, but afterward you would most likely feel guilt and shame over your actions.

In contrast to the individual id and the moral superego, the ego is the rational pragmatic part of our personality. It is less primitive than the id and is partly conscious and partly unconscious. It’s what Freud considered to be the “self”, and its job is to balance the demands of the id and superego in the practical context of reality. Freud believed that the id, ego and superego are in constant conflict and that adult personality and behavior are rooted in the results of these internal struggles throughout childhood. He believed that a person who has a strong ego has a healthy personality and that imbalances in this system can lead to neurosis (what we now think of as anxiety and depression) and unhealthy behavior.

Freud’s theories also placed a great deal of emphasis on sexual development. Freud believed that each of us must pass through a series of stages during childhood, and that if we lack proper nurturing during a particular stage, we may become stuck or fixated in that stage. Freud’s psychosexual model of development includes five stages: oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital. According to Freud, children’s pleasure seeking

urges are focused on a different area of the body, called an erogenous zone, at each of these five stages. Psychologists today dispute that Freud's psychosexual stages provide a legitimate explanation for how personality develops, but what we can take away from Freud's theory is that personality is shaped, in some part, by experiences we have in childhood.

## Chapter 2

### **An Analysis of the novel *Turtles All The Way Down***

*Turtles all the way down* is the latest novel by John Greene. It, like the most of his others, takes a look at the complicated part of life that is the teenaged years. This book uses high school romance, friendship, loss and mystery as the backdrop to a story that takes a look into the brain of a sixteen-year-old girl suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder. The story delves deep into the mind of the main character, Aza Holmes. While many things happen in Aza's life, the true focus of this book is on her inner struggle.

Aza has a best friend called Daisy and the book opens in a high school cafeteria where Aza is experiencing a "thought spiral" as she calls it. Life is going on in the cafeteria as her friends try to engage in conversation, but Aza is trapped in her own thoughts. Daisy is a complete contrast to Aza, as we see Green subtly and effectively building the tension between them.

Aza is hopelessly lost in her own mind, and while her and Daisy share a sharp wit and a love of Applebee's. Daisy is full of excitement for life and relationships while Aza is not. Aza and Daisy simultaneously complement and irritate each other.

The storyline starts with the mysterious disappearance of an Indianapolis CEO and billionaire, Russell Pickett. A reward is proposed for any clues as to where he is. Daisy is exhilarated by the idea of solving a mystery and getting a hefty reward. Aza knows Pickett's son, Davis, and Daisy insists that they visit him.

As the love story unfolds between Davis and Aza, it can be seen that this is not a story about teen romance. Aza is still completely controlled by her compulsions and the

story takes an unexpected turn. Green has spoken out about suffering with O.C.D himself and as the story progresses, it comes to the mind that this book is about learning to live with mental illness and how Aza finds herself in the midst of it. Green builds this theme in the first half of the book by introducing a few of Aza's compulsions and irrational fears. She is deathly afraid of contracting clostridium difficile. An infective bacteria and is perpetually aware of her churning stomach as she pictures the bacteria spreading.

She compulsively cleans a small cut on her finger, which she has had since she was a child. She even goes so far as to drink hand sanitizer.

Green paints a dark chilling picture with the way he writes Aza's dialogue. It is a constant battle with herself. More often than not, she looks and is left feeling helpless and afraid. O.C.D, like many mental illnesses, is often misunderstood. Green does not shy away from showing all of it. He does not sugar coat the intense fear and loneliness that Aza feels.

One day at lunch, as Aza fights to tamp down her fears that her body has been infected by bacteria, her friends Daisy Ramirez and Mychal Turner discuss the disappearance of a local billionaire businessman, Russell Davis Pickett, Sr. Pickett fled to avoid being arrested for fraud and bribery concerning a sewer project. Daisy wants Aza to contact Pickett's son, Davis (Russell Davis Pickett, Jr.), who Aza knew years before. Aza rejects the idea, but Daisy, who comes from a poorer family and needs to save money for college, wants to try and collect the \$100,000 reward that has been posted for information about Pickett's disappearance.

When Aza and Daisy visit Davis, they find out that Russell's company never finished work on sewer lines it was contracted to repair and that's when Russell went

missing. Before the left, he willed his whole estate to his pet lizard, and Davis fears he's not in his right senses. Aza and Daisy leave, but Aza and Davis start texting. As time passes, Aza doesn't obsess over her finger as much. However, when she forgets to clean it, she gets very distressed. Davis is a distraction- first they're texting all the time, and then they start seeing each other. This wasn't part of the plan, but Aza can't help feeling attracted to him. Davis, however, fears that Aza only cares about money. He gives her \$100,000 in cash: if she keeps seeing him, he'll know she cares about him and not the money.

Aza does care about Davis, but her panic attacks are more frequent than ever. When she kisses Davis, all she can think about are the germs he's infected her with, and she wants to stop seeing him. However, Davis understands her condition, and he's happy to take their relationship slow. Daisy isn't happy that Aza has so much control over the \$100,000, but she doesn't say anything.

Meanwhile, Aza feels bad that she doesn't see Daisy as often anymore. Aza wants to make it up to her, and she reads Daisy's online blog to comment on her writing. When Aza visits the blog, she discovers that Daisy based a character on her- a character riddled with anxiety. Aza is offended, but the character is how Daisy deals with the difficulty of being Aza's friend. Unsurprisingly, Aza and Daisy have a fight. Aza realizes there's a lot she doesn't know about Daisy's life because she's always obsessing over germs. Aza hates herself for being so self-centered even though she can't help it; she's so distressed that she gets in to a car accident. When Aza is taken to the hospital, she's so worried about germs that she drinks hand sanitizer. Her psychiatrist prescribes different medication for her illness.

Meanwhile, Daisy apologizes to Aza for her outburst, and Aza apologizes for being selfish. The pair attend Mychal's art show when Aza gets out of the hospital. They walk through the sewer system, which gives Aza an idea. She worries that Russell is in the sewers somewhere because he couldn't complete the project. She tells Davis about her theory and he believes her, fearing that his father is dead one day, Aza finds out that Russell is found dead in the sewer system. Devastated, Davis moves with his brother to Colorado. They have no inheritance because everything is going to Russell's pet lizard. With the mystery behind her and Davis gone, Aza can focus on keeping well and moving on with her life.

The novel ends with present-day Aza telling the reader that she has written this chronicle as an exercise given to her by her psychiatrist. As an adult, Aza went on to marry and have children, though she still deals with her mental illness.

All the characters in *Turtles All The Way Down* are intensely interested in the English language. They're all very well read, and the novel is filled with allusions and references to a number of classic novels, like F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The characters are also interested in the mechanics of language itself. They ask questions about parts of speech and sentence structure, as well as the words the English language offers to describe different intangible things. As the characters borrow language from authors, poets, and each other, borrowing words from others to create meaning out of their own lives through language becomes, for the characters, an integral part of the process of forging identities.

Many of Aza's questions about language have to do with her inability to describe her pain and her thought spirals to her friends or her therapist, let alone to herself. Her therapist, Dr. Singh, offers the insight that although pain is undeniably real, there are

few words to truly describe the depths or the particulars of someone's pain. This leads Aza to one of her scariest questions: If she doesn't have the words to describe herself, is she even real? In this way, Aza creates an equivalence between being real and being able to articulate the meaning of one's experience. In turn, Aza wonders if she's not just unreal, but fictional and literally made up of words written by someone else.

As Aza continues to question her own reality, her increasingly intense thoughts spiral along with her inability to articulate her feelings—lead her to feel increasingly isolated. Daisy and Davis, on the other hand, use language as a tool for processing their emotions, by writing Star Wars fanfiction and poetry, respectively. Daisy's weekly Chewbacca installments allow her to mentally escape from reality while making sense of what reality throws at her. Her characters take on the qualities of individuals in Daisy's real life, and the anonymous online platform gives her the opportunity to write what she actually thinks about those individuals. Davis, on the other hand, uses his blog as a public diary. He follows a very specific format in which he responds to a quotation with a short musing about his life that loosely ties in with the quote. In both cases, Daisy and Davis find a sense of purpose and some relief from their daily struggles by putting their thoughts not just on paper and out of their heads, but literally into the public sphere of the internet. Notably, John Green himself has said about his own novel that he achieved a similar sense of purpose and relief by engaging with Aza, writing her story, and sharing it with others.

This book starts off slow and there is little outer conflict until the end. This sort of structure may not be for everyone. It is extremely insightful and reflective but could be difficult to get into at first. Some of the characters in this story lack depth and description. Mostly it is stuck with Aza.

## Chapter 3

### Psychoanalytic Elements in *Turtles All The Way Down*

In literature, characters are created to align with the wills of the author, and with that, the direction the author has for their plot and development of the story. In *Turtles All The Way Down* by John Green, Green uses his platform as a writer to convey scientific concepts behind his personal struggles with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). OCD is an anxiety disorder characterized by rumination over obsessive thoughts and the compulsions that ease the intrusive thoughts from continuing. The aim of this literary analysis is to examine *Turtles All The Way Down* from the perspective of psychological sciences.

Here, the study aims to describe the type of Aza's mental illness reflected in the novel *Turtles All the Way Down*. The cause of Aza's mental illness and how Aza tries to solve her mental illness. The theory here used is the theory of psychoanalysis from Sigmund Freud. Freud believed that the Id, Ego and Superego are in constant conflict and that adult personality and behavior are rooted in the results of these internal struggles throughout childhood. He believed that a person who has a strong ego has a healthy personality and that imbalances in this system can lead to neurosis (what we now think of as anxiety and depression) and unhealthy behaviors. The results of this study indicate that the type of Aza's mental illness is Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), the Id has the most powerful role than Ego and Superego. The causes of Aza's mental illness are obsessive thought and compulsive behavior. Although Aza has not fully recovered, she is already better because she has done several treatments, such as therapy, meditation, and strong motivations.

The type of Aza's mental illness in this novel is Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD): Aza struggles with OCD, a mental illness that was first identified in the twentieth century- though it has been written about under different names for centuries dating back to Ancient Greece. OCD causes a person to obsess about something (in Aza's case, a bacterial infection known as C.diff) and then act on compulsions to relieve the fear or stress caused by the obsession (Aza's wound on her finger). The OCD on Aza will be depicted using Psychoanalytic Approach by Sigmund Freud. David Rapaport in *The Structure of personality theory* (1960) book stated that Sigmund Freud developed the Psychoanalytic Theory of personality development, through conflicts among three fundamental structures of the human mind: the id, ego and superego.

And then two or five or six hundred minutes pass before you start to wonder, Wait, did I get all the pus out? Was there pus even or was that only sweat? If it was pus, you might need to drain the wound again. The spiral tightens, like that, forever. (Greene 47)

Id on Aza is very strong. She can suddenly have thoughts and desires that are not controlled.

I felt like a perfectly normal person, who was not cohabitating with a demon that forced me to think thoughts I hated thinking, and I was just feeling, like, I've been better this week. Maybe the medicine is working, when from nowhere the thought appeared: The medicine has made you complacent, and you forgot to change the Band-Aid this morning. I was pretty sure I had actually changed the Band-Aid right after waking up, just before I brushed my teeth, but the thought was insistent. I don't think you changed

it. I think this is last night's Band-Aid. Well, it's not last night's Band-Aid because I definitely changed it at lunch. Did you, though? I think so. You THINK so? I'm pretty sure. And the wound is open. Which was true. It hadn't yet scabbed over. And you left the same Band-Aid on for—God— probably thirty-seven hours by now, just letting it fester inside that warm, moist old Band-Aid. I glanced down at the Band-Aid. It looked new. You didn't. I think I did. Are you sure? No, but that's actually progress if I'm not checking it every five minutes. Yeah, progress toward an infection. I'll do it at the bank. It's probably already too late. That's ridiculous. Once the infection is in your bloodstream-stop that makes no sense it's not even red or swollen. You know it doesn't have to be-Please just stop I will change it at the bank- you know I'm right. (128 )

Conversation in mind as quote above often happens to Aza. She often feels like a normal person but suddenly when she remembers about her Band-Aid, her Id always appears and has long and complicated conversations for her to think that she hasn't changed her band-aid and likely will be infected. Then Ego tried to calm down that she had changed her band-aid.

Could be sweat, of course, but also might be water from the river, or worse still seropurulent drainage, a sure sign of infection, so you find the hand sanitizer in the medicine cabinet and squeeze some onto your fingertip, which burns like hell, and then you wash your hands thoroughly, singing your ABCs while you do to make sure you've scrubbed for the full twenty seconds recommended by

the Centers for Disease Control, and then you carefully dry your hands with a towel. And then you dig your thumbnail all the way into the crack in the callus until it starts bleeding, and you squeeze the blood out for as long as it comes, and then you blot the wound dry with a tissue. You take a Band-Aid from inside your jeans pocket, where there is never a shortage of them, and you carefully reapply the bandage. You return to the couch to watch TV, and for a few or many minutes, you feel the shivering jolt of the tension easing, the relief of giving in to the lesser angels of your nature.

(47)

Aza does the ritual, which is to replace her Band-Aid. In the quote above, the ego plays a role in carefully replacing the band-aid. In addition, there was a Superego which took part in convincing Aza that she had rubbed her hands as recommended by the Centres for Disease Control.

“Wrong,” Daisy said. “For instance, there is very little high-quality romantic Chewbacca fiction the internet, and I am just one person, who can only write 6 so much. The world needs Holmesy’sWookiee love stories.” There was a brief pause in the conversation. I felt my arms prickling with nervousness, sweat glands threatening to burst open. And then they went back to talking, the conversation shifting this way and that, everyone telling stories, talking over one another, laughing. I tried to smile and shake my head at the right times, but I was always a moment behind the rest of them. They laughed because something was funny; I laughed because they had. (118)

Aza felt uncomfortable when hanging out with Mychal, Daisy and Davis. Especially when they are talking about Star Wars. Because she is not at all interested in that story. Nervousness arises and the sweat glands threaten to burst open. The superego works when she has to respect them, so she tries to enjoy the moment.

The causes of Aza's mental illness caused by two things, namely her obsessive thought and compulsive behaviour.

“I don't follow how that would make you fictional.” “I mean, I don't control my thoughts, so they're not really mine. I don't decide if I'm sweating or get cancer or C. diff or whatever, so my body isn't really mine. I don't decide any of that—outside forces do. I'm a story they're telling. I am circumstances.” (165-166)

When Aza consulted with Dr. Karen psychiatrist, Aza tried to explain how she feels so far. She felt uncomfortable with the obsessive thoughts that bothered her and the anxiety she had.

Ever since I was little, I've pressed my right thumbnail into the finger pad of my middle finger, and so now there's this weird callus over my fingerprint. After so many years of doing this, I can open up a crack in the skin really easily, so I cover it up with a Band-Aid to try to prevent infection. But sometimes I get worried that there already is an infection, and so I need to drain it, and the only way to do that is to reopen the wound and press out any blood that will come. Once I start thinking about splitting the skin apart, I literally cannot not do it. I apologize for the double negative, but it's a real double negative of a situation, a bind from which negating the negation is truly the only escape. So anyway, I started

to want to feel my thumbnail biting into the skin of my finger pad, and I knew that resistance was more or less futile, so beneath the cafeteria table, I slipped the Band-Aid off my finger and dug my thumbnail into the callused skin until I felt the crack open. (5-6)

The quote above shows the initial reason Aza cut her fingerprint. Because it was the wound that eventually developed in worry to replace her band-aid.

The Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER), there are two treatments carried out by people with OCD, namely psychotherapy and medications. Not only those two treatments, but Aza also gets huge support from the loved ones. type of mental illness suffered by Aza in the novel *Turtles All The Way Down* is Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). According to the Mayo

The quote below shows that Aza is doing some therapy suggested by Dr. Singh is practicing breathing, taking medicine, and others. This is enough to make it back to normal.

Some days I fell deeper into spirals than others, but changing the Band-Aid sort of worked, and the breathing exercises and the pills and everything else sort of worked.

Aza felt that when she was overly anxious, she would imagine turning in a spiral. She often fall in the spiral of her mind. But when her consciousness could still be felt, she tried to overcome it as much as possible by carrying out the therapy suggested by Dr. Singh.

I went to the bathroom when I got home and examined the cut. The swelling seemed down. Maybe. Maybe the light in the bathroom just wasn't strong enough for me to see clearly. I cleaned it with soap and water, patted it dry, applied hand sanitizer, and then rebandaged my finger. I also took my regular medication, and then a few minutes later an oblong white pill I'd been told to use when panicky. (133)

One part of Aza's concern was the wound on her finger. It affects the OCD that will continue to emerge when thinking about changing Band-Aid. So to reduce it 8 all Aza to heed enough the advice of Dr. Singh, one of them is to be regularly in taking the medicine.

Despite of mental illness sufferers doing therapy and medication as their treatment, if there is no support for recovery from themselves and the people around them, it will certainly be useless.

After the nervous-making car trip, my brain was revving up. I told myself that having a thought was not dangerous, that thoughts aren't actions, that thoughts are just thoughts. Dr. Karen Singh liked to say that an unwanted thought was like a car driving past you when you're standing on the side of the road, and I told myself I didn't have to get into that car, that my moment of choice was not whether to have the thought, but whether to be carried away by it.

Aza began to think positively and calm her thoughts. She has been able to control her mind and so as not to follow the flow. This is one effective way to cure it from OCD because it all depends on how a person controls the mind.

Over the next few months, I kept going. I got better without ever quite getting well. Daisy and I started a Mental Health Alliance and a Fan-Fiction Workshop so that we could list some proper extracurriculars on next year's college applications, even though we were the only two members of both clubs. We hung out most nights, at her apartment or at Applebee's or at my house, sometimes with Mychal but usually not—usually it was just the two of us, watching movies or doing homework or just talking. It was so easy to go out into the meadow with her. (281)

Finally, a few months later Aza began to get better in continue her life. In her new life, Aza is more active in her activities. And her friendship with Daisy is getting tighter.

Aza is the main character in John Green's *Turtles All the Way Down* (2017) novel, she is the main subject of this research. In the analysis above it has been explained that Aza's mental illness is an issue that has been discussed here. The type of mental illness suffered by Aza is OCD. To fulfill the object study, it is analyzed based on three parts.

The first is to use the Psychoanalytic Perspective from Sigmund Freud, the second is to explain cause Aza suffered from mental illness and the last is how Aza deals with her mental illness. The first is Psychoanalytic Perspective by Sigmund Freud, there are three structures of personality, they are: Id, Ego and Superego. Of the

three structures above, the biggest id influences Aza's mental illness. Ego and Superego Aza act as supporters in realizing the desire of Id. Second is because Aza suffered from mental illness. Aza did feel abnormal like other humans. She realized that she was different, especially on her mental health.

## Conclusion

This project used *Turtles All The Way Down* novel by John Greene as an object study by analysing Aza's mental illness using a psychoanalytic perspective. First, Aza's mental illness type is Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). When analysed using Psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud, the role of Aza's Id is stronger than Ego and Superego.

Second, Aza's mental illness is caused by two factors, namely obsessive thought and compulsive behaviour. Both are equally strong in influencing Aza's mental health. When Aza's obsessive thought actively works, compulsive behaviour supports it.

The last is how Aza solves her mental illness. In dealing with her mental illness, Aza did three treatments, namely psychotherapy, medication and strong motivation. First is the psychotherapy that she meets Dr. Karen Singh routinely. Next is medication, Aza has taken the medicine given by Dr Singh. She had several times changed medication because of the developing condition. The last is a strong 10 motivation, she gets motivation from herself, mom and Daisy, her best friend. Although not fully recovered, but Aza feels better and prepared to move on.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**Colouring Qabar by K R Meera With the outline of Feminism Theory**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**NASIHA T P**

**Register No: DB18AEGR008**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project Supervisor: MS ANU P THOMAS**

**April 2021**

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Colouring Qabar by K R Meera With the outline of Feminism Theory” a bonafide work of Ms Nasiha T.P who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Head of Department

Ms Anu p Thomas

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Nasiha T.P, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Colouring Qabar by K R Meera With the outline of Feminism Theory” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms.Anu p Thomas of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College. I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Nasiha T P

08 June 2021

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## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	01
<b>Chapter One:</b>	02
Across boundaries : a feminist reading of Qabar	
<b>Chapter Two:</b>	10
Brushing The Lines of Qabar by K R Meera	
<b>Chapter Three:</b>	17
Colouring Qabar by K R Meera With the outline of Feminism Theory	
<b>Conclusion</b>	25
<b>Work Cited</b>	26

## Introduction

K.R Meera is an Indian author, born in Sasthamkotta, Kollam district in Kerala as the daughter of Ramachandran Pillai, both professors. She completed her predegree from D.B collage Sasthamkotta. Meera cites the work of a number of an Indian authors as influencing her work, including EV Krishna Pillai, Kamala Das, T Padmanabhan, CV Sreeman, ONV Kurupp, and Sugathakumari. Amongst non Indian writers, she cites Gabriel Garcia Marquez as a primary influence. Her work explores themes relating patriarchy, discrimination, and individuality, focusing on the inner lives of women and challenging traditional power dynamics. Meera has described her work as engaging with her political environment, stating, "Every writer is a political writer. It is very difficult for any writer to shut down from what is happening in society through our writing. Writing's a mixture of conscious and unconscious creative thinking \_ intuition and craft \_it feels very unnatural to analyse it in any other kind of systematic way. Meera's first published work was a story submitted to Mathrubhumi, a Magazine, in 2000. Her first short story collection Ormayude Njarambu was published in 2002. This collection won the Gita Hirayan Endowment Award instituted by Kerala Sahitya Academy. Her other collections include K.r Meerayude kadhagal , a collection of major 26 stories . Machakathe Thachan, ave maria, mohamanja, ormayude njarambu, soorpanaka, alif Laila and ottapalam kadakkuvolam.

## Chapter One

### **Across boundaries : a feminist reading of *Qabar***

Radical feminists, however, do not agree with liberal feminists on the resolution of the discrimination against women. Radical feminism, explores the reproductive and sexual roles of women. Androgyny was upheld as an ideal model of experience for both men and women by some radical feminists. Marxist and Socialist feminists insisted that women's oppression is a result of capitalism. In a deeply classist society, patriarchy is inevitable. To instill gender inequalities, both patriarchy and capitalism should be dismantled. Socialist feminism sought to assimilate several forms of women's oppression in order underline the layered and complex ways of subordination inflicted upon women."Psychoanalytical feminists turned their enquiry inwards ;unlike Liberal, Radical, Marxist or Socialist feminists, they tried to analyze the forms and structures of oppression as internalized and expressed in the psyche" (Chakrabarti, 192). Psychoanalysts sought to understand the psychosexual implications of the paradigms of masculinity and femininity Theorists such as Julia Kristeva (b-1941), Helene Cixuos (b-1937) and Luce Irigaray (b-1930) concerned themselves with the pre-oedipal, pre-linguistic stage of Liberal feminism starts with Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. John Stuart Mill's (1806-73) *Subjection of Women* (1869) and the Women's Suffrage Movement in both the United Kingdom and the United States.

Liberal feminists found discrimination against women in the public sphere. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, several thinkers and social reformers debated in favor of women's claims to social and political equality. John Stuart Mill, Mary

Wollstonecraft and Harriet Martineau (1802-76) provided the impetus for this first wave of feminism. In the turbulence of the 1960s, women's movement gained momentum under the banner of women's liberation. "The feminist literary criticism of today is the direct product of the women's movement of the 1960s" (Barry.116).+ Irigaray (b-1930) concerned themselves with the pre-oedipal, pre-linguistic stage of experience. Postcolonial or multicultural feminism seeks to identify the differences that exist between women. They subvert the monistic myth of the category "woman". Underlying the varieties of female experiences across, race and sexuality. This diversification of feminism challenges essentialism and chauvinism by caste, class emphasizing the contexts of women's oppression. The differences in age, religion, education, occupation, health, domestic status, etc., contribute to the plurality of women's material reality. Values of many literary presentations. The second-wave feminist criticism placed literature in historical and social frameworks with gender and sexist features. Sexual politics (1970) argues that patriarchal power ubiquitous there is a deeply entrenched "politics" of sexuality, beginning with the reproduction of patriarchy, through psychological conditioning in the family, which operates in all economic and cultural structures (Abrams, 124).

Third- wave feminism is a feminist movement that began in the early 1990s. It seeks to challenge and expand common definition of gender and sexuality. Some early disciples of the new approach were literary daughters of the second- wave. Third Wave Direct Action Corporation (organized in 1992) became in 1997 the Third Wave Foundation. There are mainly three waves of feminism. First wave feminism refers to a period of activity during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the

United Kingdom and United States. Originally it focused on the promotion of equal contract and property rights for women and the opposition to the chattel marriage and ownership of married women by their husbands. However, by the end of the nineteenth century activism focused primarily on gaining political power, particularly the right of women's suffrage. The term first-wave was first coined retrospectively after, the term second wave feminism began to be used to describe a newer movement that focused as much on fighting social and cultural inequalities. Mary Wollstonecraft published the first feminist treatise: *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) in which she advocated the social and moral equality of the sexes. Second-wave feminism refers to a period of feminist activity beginning in the late 1960s and 1970s.

The movement was concerned with the issue of economic equality between the genders. In the second wave feminism, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) and John Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1970) threw into question the cultural and ethical dedicated to supporting groups and individuals working towards gender, racial, economic and social justice, were founded by Rebecca Walker, the daughter of the novelist and second waver Alice Walker. Feminist movement or the women's movement sought to free women from oppression and mass learning supremacy. Feminism as a theory doesn't start with women's movement. It was indeed a renewal of an old tradition of thoughts and action which is found in the classic books. Feminist criticism is concerned both with the representation of women in literature and with changing women's position in society by freeing them from oppressive restraints

Feminist entices is, of course, part of the larger movement in the contemporary world for women's equality

Feminism refers to political, cultural, or financial movement aimed at making sure that female have equal rights and legal protection. Feminism is a movement that promotes gender equality for girls and campaigns for their rights and interests, as properly as political and sociological theories and philosophies worried with troubles of gender difference. Although the phrases "feminism" and "feminist" did not emerge as extensively used until the 1970s, they have been already in common utilization lots until now ; for occasion , in the1942 movie female of the year, Katherine Hepburn refers to the "feminist movement."

The information of feminism, in accordance to Maggie Humm and Rebecca Walker, can be divided into three waves. The first feminism wave took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the second in the Sixties and 1970s, and the 1/3 in the 1990s. These feminist moves spawned feminist theory. It can be located in a wide range of fields, together with feminist geography, feminist history, and feminist literary criticism. Most feminist moves and theories had been led by way of means of widely speaking middle-class white girls from Western Europe and North America for a good deal of their history. Alternative feminisms have been advised via female of their races thinking about the fact that Sojourner Truth's 1851 speech to American feminists. With the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and Southeast Asia in the 1960s, this style accelerated. Since then, "Post-colonial" and "Third World" feminists have been proposed by using way of lady from former European colonies and the Third World.

One of the limitations of ancient documentations has been the exclusion and marginalization of ladies and their contributions. This has created the challenge of ascertaining what sincerely the thoughts of ladies have been over the centuries. The difficulty of marginalization and subjugation of girls does no longer just give up at the denial of girls civil and prison rights; it moreover extends to the systematic suppression of the intellectual contributions of female and the failure to document many of such contributions inside archives books. However, it will be a fallacy to say that usually ladies made no attempts to air out their grievances closer to these unjust treatments. Some female in documents truly spoke out in opposition to gender inequality and the practices of marginalization and subjugation of the girl sex. Even even though they may additionally be no emphasis with the aid of historians showing that girls in the medieval length stood up for the attention of their rights, this does now not logically suggest that there had been no such cases. However, the correct component is that there are documented indicators that such feminist campaigns existed.

Simone de Beauvoir wrote that "the first time we see a lady take up her pen in safety of her sex" used to be Christine de Pizan who wrote *Epitre au Dieu d'Amour* (Epistle to the God of Love) in the fifteenth century. Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa and Modesta di Pozzo di Forzi labored in the sixteenth century. Marie Le Jars de Gournay, Anne Bradstreet and Francois Poullain de la Barre wrote at some point of the 17th.

Feminists and scholars have divided the movement's records into three "waves". The first wave refers regularly to women's suffrage actions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (mainly concerned with women's proper to vote). The 2nd wave

refers to the ideas and movements related with the women's liberation action go-off in the Sixties (which campaigned for criminal and social rights for women). The 1/3 wave refers to a continuation of, and a reaction to the perceived disasters of, second-wave feminism, establishing in the 1990s.

First-wave feminism refers to an prolonged duration of feminist endeavour in the direction of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States. Originally it established on the promotion of equal contract and property rights for ladies and the opposition to chattel marriage and ownership of married ladies (and their children) via their husbands. However, by the quit of the nineteenth century, activism targeted in particular on gaining political power, specially the right of women's suffrage. Yet, feminists such as Voltairine de Cleyre and Margaret Sanger have been nevertheless lively in campaigning for women's sexual, reproductive, and financial rights at this time. In 1854, Florence Nightingale installed woman nurses as adjuncts to the military.

The time period first wave was coined retrospectively after the term second-wave feminism commenced to be used to describe a more moderen feminist motion that cantered as an awful lot on combat social and cultural inequalities as political inequalities.

Second-wave feminism refers to the length of activity in the early Sixties and lasting via the late 1980s. The student Imelda Whelehan suggests that the 2nd wave was a continuation of the previously section of feminism involving the suffragettes in the UK and the USA. Second-wave feminism has continued to exist considering the fact that that time and coexists with what is termed third-wave feminism. The scholar Estelle

Freedman compares first and second-wave feminism announcing that the first wave focused on rights such as suffrage, whereas the 2d wave was once mostly worried with other problems of equality, such as ending discrimination.

The Indian society trusts that men have the electricity and social authority in the society. A unique thing of the Indian society is that men protect maleness and think about ladies not masculine which isn't always essentially human. Women are minimized thru social organizations and non secular customs. Feminist trends have been going after for evacuation of this underestimation. The stable influx of feminism during the Nineteen Seventies estimated a lady's talk. A feministically perused content can on the spot a best comprehension of the lady's condition. In this manner the very premise of feminism which is reformistic in nature motives girls to know their state of affairs in a most fulfilling way. In this placing Linda Gordon's supposition is that "feminism is an examination of women's subjection to make feel of to transform it merits a mention". The women-focused factor of view at present finds express beliefs in the lady experience. This should, thoughtfully, take to a centred investigation of feminism in order to put in the fantastic viable factor of view something is essential about woman during daily life and literature. Ideally this ought to be separated from anything the 'ism' represents ever of.

"In the existing setting, the ascent of women's enlivening and of maturing recognition motives the subsequent battle against a custom framed through male overwhelmed society. However the truth stays that feminism is essentially a improvement social in necessities and socio-political in accelerated measurements, and is basically

coordinated in opposition to the sufferings of ladies on account of mischievous men".

An historic lawgiver of Hinduism, Manu says, "The dad takes care of her all through adolescence, the partner ensures her at some stage in youth, and the teens deal with her when she winds up old. Lady is by no means fit for opportunity".

This builds Indian point of view on womanhood that relates essentially to the Indian texture of living. It is quintessential in this manner, for the feminist to recollect that the Indian society has given an difficult image of womanhood. In the modern times we have super political illuminating presences as Kasturba, Sarojini Naidu, and Indira Gandhi who took using part in making India free.

Administrations of Tara Bai, Ahalyabai, Razia Begum, Rani Durgaavathi, Jhansi Laxmi Bai and so forth to our u . s . are individual and great in nature. Women like Gargi, Mitreyi of historic occasions superior our profound legacy. They are likewise situations of liberated women.

"Feminism" generally signifies "the conviction that human beings ought to have equal rights and openings". It is additionally a composed motion in assist of women's rights and interests. It is a gathering of developments and trust systems went for characterizing, constructing up and shielding equal political, financial and social rights for women.

## Chapter Two

### Brushing The Lines of *Qabar*

K .R . Meera is an Indian writer who writes in Malayalam. She was born in Shasthamkotta, Kollam district in Kerala as the daughter of Ramachandran Pillai and Amritakumari, she passed her Master's degree in Communicative English from Gandhigram Rural Institute, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. She worked as a journalist in Kottayam based Malayalam daily Malayala Manorama. Once K .R . Meera is an Indian author who writes in Malayalam. She was born in Shasthamkotta, Kollam district in Kerala as the daughter of Ramachandran Pillai and Amritakumari, she passed her Master's degree in Communicative English from Gandhigram Rural Institute, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. She worked as a journalist in Kottayam based Malayalam daily Malayala Manorama. Once her stories were published and well received, she abandoned journalism in 2006 and transformed into a author. She was the senior sub editor of Manorama when she resigned. During her journalistic career, she published many special stories which won numerous awards and recognitions. She won the PUCL Human Rights Award for journalism in 1998 for her investigative series on the plight of women labour's in Kerala.

This series also won the Chowara Parameswaran Award instituted by Kerala Press Academy. A series on children won her the Deepalaya National Journalism Award for Child Rights in 2001. She started writing fiction in 2001 and her first short story collection Ormayude Njarambu was published in 2002. This collection won the

Gita Hirayan Endowment Award instituted by Kerala Sahitya Academy and the Ankanam Literary Award. Her next book Mohamanja was published in 2004. It was translated into English by J.Devika as *Yellow is the of Longing* (penguin, 2019). The title story, which explores the absurdity of desire, was also published in *Ashrilatha. Women fiction in India and Bangladesh* (ed.Niaz Zaman m ). She won the Kerala Sahitya Academy Award in 2008 for the work *Ave Maria*. Her other collections include *K. R. Meerayude Kathakal*, a collection of major 26 stories published so far, including *Machakathe Thachan*, *Ormayude Njarambu* , *Mohamanja*, *Ave Maria*, *Karineela*, *Malakhayude marukukal*, *Soorpanaka*, *Alif Laila*, and *Ottapalam Kadakkuvolam*. Her early novels include *As Maratheyum Marann Marann Njan*, *Meera saadhu*, *Nethromneelanam*, and *Yudasinte Suvishesham*. Five of her short novels have been compiled into a single book titled *Meerayude Novelukal*(2004).

Meera cites the work of a number of Indian authors as influencing her work, including E.V. Krishna Pillai, Kamaladas, T.Padmanabhan, S.V.Venugopan Nair, Annand, M.Mukundhan, C.V. Sreeraman, ONV Kurup, and Sugathakumari. Amongst non-Indian writers, she cites Gabriel Garcia Marquez as a primary influence. Her work explores themes relating to patriarchy, discrimination, and individuality, focusing on the inner lives of women and challenging traditional power dynamics. Meera has described her work as engaging with a political environment, stating, every writer is a political writer. *Qabar* by K.R Meera is undoubtedly the best Malayalam novel.

Meera's *Qabar* touches upon how judgements can't be solutions , why narrating a story rooted in realism and magical realism. Read in the wake of contemporary India where a temple is being built after bringing down a masjid , *Qabar* unveils through the

fantasy and reality of a district judge named Bhavana, and Kakkassery Thanghal , a respondent in a case she hears .The respect , love ,grief and commitment of the characters are tied to the lineage they carry with them . Bhavana Sachidhananthan is the strong character of K. R. Meera. Bhavana and Cethana Mallik in her novel hangwomen is almost similar character who emotionally suffers in their life. Meera includes family, love, and meaningful and meaningless love in her novel Qabar, Story stars with Bhavana, a District judge. Pramod and Bhavana is mates in law collage and they loves each other and become partners in their life, but their equality and her freedom lost after their marriage. Their married life had destroyed when she became aware of her job. In this patriarchal society women have no rights to become higher than man. Bhavana gives birth to a baby boy and Pramod noted the problems in his son's behaviour and they understood that he has Attention Deficit Hyper Active Syndrome and it was a reason for Pramod to divorce his wife. After divorce she became a District judge and she proudly looks after her disabled child and make him confident.

At that time a case related to a Qabar reaches in court. This story starts from the court. Another character in the story is Kakkassery Hayaluddin Thangal who was a magician, files a case in the court against his brothers. Saketham Charitable Trust bought 15 cent land from his brother Salahuddin Thangal and they started to build an auditorium but Hayaluddin Thangal did'nt accept it because he says that there is a Qabar belongs to his old generation in the east side of that place and it must be protect by him, he says that according to the plan of auditorium toilet will be come in place where Qabar situated. As a part of this case Bhavana and Hayaluddin Thangal

know each other, when Bhavana saw him she lost her control, she saw her uncle which she believe that who were died .Its because of the speciality of Hayaluddin Thangal. She saw that her uncle named Yogiswaran came infront of her with two girls, after that she woke up in hospital and her colleges says that Hayaluddin Thangal is a magician and he can do anything using his talent. Bhavana thinks deeply about Yogiswaran uncle and asks her father to know more about him. Her father and mother were separated and he says the story of Yogiswaran uncle. In olden days in her family aged people did'nt wait for their death. They will go to Kashi (a holy place) when they realizes that everything has finished, and they will die from Kashi or on the way to Kashi. But surprisingly Yogiswaran uncle did'nt die and her returned back with two girls and they were angels. After the meeting with her father she went to her mother to know about Yogiswaran uncle. Her mother was leafing a single life after the marriage of Bhavana because she desires to be free from her husband and she needed freedom, now she has pet dogs with her. When Bhavana questioned about her father's love she replied that "love is not a wage given by one to another for her work but it is a thing that to find from one to another." Her mother says another story about Yogiswaran uncle, other members in the house were not in good terms with Yogiswaran uncle as he came with two girls.

They decided to kill him but it doesn't happen because of the power of two angels with him, and finally, they killed him. It is a story entirely different from the story told by her father. She got angry with Hayaluddin thangal and she decided to reject his case. And she started to think how to reject their case. During the trial of the case many things happened in the court such as her pen became a snake but she did'nt get

afraid and she started to write with that snake, snake became pen because of her power and fearlessness. And she got more angry upon Hyaluddin thangal. And she saw him playing with her disabled child, gives many chocolates to him and her child becomes happy. After that she can't forget Hayaluddin thangal. His gestures, smell of rose flower everything follows her. He tried to disturb her by his magic but at last he realized her talent and he realised that she is a bold and confident lady whom nobody can defeat, gradually they fall in love and he respects her self-confidence. She became closer to him. And they take a journey to his new home, on the way of their journey she saw that he makes her son happy and her son was more comfortable with him, she was surprised by seeing his new home because that home was named as Bhavana. She turned into an imaginary world. She shares everything happen in her life to Hayaluddin Thangal. They talk each other, she asked him "when will you stop your magic." And he replied that "till the time you permitted". At that time she realized that the smell of the rose flower has gone and only a flower in her hair exists. She was more attracted by him, she became an addict to his love and respect. As they are in love he always tries to call her Madam and when she asks the reason about it he replied that "The only thing that you never got and you deserves it is respect and me too." Here we can see a man with humanity and goodness, he realizes the pain and insult experienced by her. He tries to become closer to her disabled child.

Kakkassery Thangal says that "he experienced a problem that crowd of people questioning his gender, a human who experienced this situation never belongs to a cast or religion if it is Hindu, Muslim, or Christian." She was shocked by hearing this words by him because till that time they talk each other as a women and men but it is

diverting as Hindu and Muslim. She realized that Hayaluddin thangal is becoming a part of her life. She asked to him that “when will we see again”. And he replied that they can see each other in November 19, the final hearing of the case that you rejecter, now it will be reached in the high court. She was waiting for that day because she was eager to see Things. But she was disappointed because she couldn’t see him but she saw his lawyer and he came in front of her. She was shocked by hearing the sad news by him, khayaluddin Thangal is passed away because of Brain Attack. She couldn’t control herself, she was completely broken. But she tries to complete the procedure even when she was broken completely and thus ends the story.

One of the angel came to Yogishwaran and was killed by the other people in the house another angel was escaped and she reached in the rooftop a rich man, by seeing her beauty he put her in a vessel and close it . Bhavana’s mother had two children while she was pregnant but one child was not alive after her delivery. Bhavana was very sad of thinking that she herself thinks that she is the only reason for the death of her sibling. Yogiswaran Uncle in the story and the old generation of Khayalluddin thangal whose qabar were situated in that place were one person .here author tries to prove that qabar of Hindu and Muslim was same. There is no cast and religion for death but, people Say that Yogiswaran uncle who went to Kashi returned to his land by becoming a Muslim. There is a Qabar in every peoples inside. People read history in different ways, there is no value for history which has no proof. At the end of this story author is arising many questions to audience, it is a chance to audience to think about. “Qabar” points out women’s life, politics, and history, K.R. Meera is feminist writer, and we can see powerful women characters in all her works.

As usual we can see a powerful character in *Qabar*. Bhavana's mother is another powerful character in the story, here she has a minor role in the story but it reaches deeply in the minds of readers. She says that we have to live for our self, not for others. She gives energy to her daughter and gives confidence.

Woman is not an object to live for the likings of man. They have their own self esteem. In this novel author tries to speak about powerful politics using metaphor. Here she writes about the current political issues in the society. Author portrays Bhavana as a good wife for her husband because she didn't get any respect from her husband, but still she never disobeys him. There is no cliché concept in her works that women must be patient. She has emotions and as every human being she too has rights to express her emotions, if its happy , sad, or anger. He wants to chase her dreams. There is no justice in saying that woman is always in the second position. If women got more opportunity they will do their best than man. Here she indirectly criticize the decision of building Ayodhya temple by destroying the Babari masjid. There are many themes in this novel and love is the main theme of the story. the protagonist Bhavana falls in love with Hayaluddin Thangal who belongs to another religion, but the author tries to convey that there is no religion and caste in love. Love is pure and its an emotion that happen to anyone. In our society religious discrimination still exists.

## Chapter Three

### **Colouring *Qabar* by K R Meera With the outline of Feminism Theory**

Feminism incorporates the position that societies prioritize the male point of view, and the women are treated unjustly within those societies. Efforts to change that includes fighting against gender stereotypes and establishing educational, professional, and interpersonal opportunities and outcomes for women that are equal to those for men. Feminist movement have campaigned and continue to campaign for women's rights. There are some kinds of wave in feminism. And the first wave in the late nineteenth century was not the first appearance of feminist ideals, but it was the first real political movement for the western world. Mary Wollstonecraft is the main figure in the feminist movement. The second wave of feminism took place in the 1960's and 70's. it built on first wave feminism and challenged what women's role in society should be. Inspired by the Civil Rights movement and protests against the Vietnam War, activists focused on the institutions that held women back. This meant taking a closer look at why women were oppressed.

Three main types of feminism emerged: liberal, radical and cultural. Liberal feminism focused on institutional reforms, which meant reducing gender discrimination. Giving women access to male dominated spaces, and promoting equality. Radical feminism wanted to reshape society entirely, saying that the system was inherently patriarchal and only an overhaul would bring liberation. It resisted the belief that men and women were basically the same. Cultural feminism had a similar view and taught that there is a "female essence" that distinct from men. In third wave of feminism women were able to think about other aspects of their identity,

welcoming individuality and rebellion. This was an era of reclaiming. Third wave feminism also became more conscious of race. Social media activism has propelled the movement firmly into the technological age. We can apply the feminism theory into the novel "Qabar" by K.R. Meera. Here is a situation that the protagonist Bhavana went to her father to see him, her parents are separated. And she asked him that "Is your blood test got normal" (40). And he replied that "I am 70 now and getting too old and I am not bothered about it, and I am stopping tests and medicines. If I get ill nobody is there for me to look after" (41). Bhavana replied that "who said that you don't have anyone, you have a wife and children. And he angrily replied that "wife? Which wife? Women who avoid her old husband and gone for her own sake is a wife?" Here we can see that Bhavana's father never gives respect to her mother and she is only an object for him. He has his own rights and his wife should obey him. She has a job in the collectorate and while returning to home she saw a dog which was fractured, she couldn't leave him alone and she takes that dog home. But Bhavana's father didn't like it and he never allowed her to enter that dog into home. Sadly she said to Bhavana, "I do it because I thought that this is my house." Then Bhavana replied that "why are you behaving like a small child it's your home too" but she said that "at that moment I realized that that is not my home, I have no freedom to do anything for my desire" (56). Women and men were not equal in 19th century.

Women were seen as 'the weaker sex'. The middle classes took the role of women very seriously because they did not have to worry about things like poverty. The ideal woman was to be 'the angel in the house' and support her husband. When Bhavana went to see her mother she asks about Promod (her husband) while talking.

They discussed about Promod's second marriage. Bhavana's mother and father received an invitation card from Pramod, because of which Bhavana was disturbed. Even they are separated but a big thunder was going on in her mind, as she loved him even after separation. Here we can see an usual behaviour of a woman. She was a judge in the court but she did not have power to hate someone. Like most of the women she hide her problems and fits a smile on her face and cried loudly inside. Bhavana's marriage was before seven years of her mother's retirement. As usual her mother give some advice to her daughter before her marriage. "My duty and responsibility is over by your marriage". Bhavana replied that "is it?" her mother replied that of course, I have to help you while your delivery". "And I have to visit Kashi". Bhavana replied with a smile "dad never came with you to Kashi." Mother said "I am going alone" (55). By saying this she meant that living her rest of her life alone. In a patriarchal society women have no role in their home. They are meant only to cook, wash cloths of everyone in the home and do household. She never appreciated this custom. Here Bhavana's mother brings a fractured dog in their home but her father did not like it. His male ego came out and scold her mother. At that moment she realized that she has no role in her family, she is the only object to obey her husband.

Her opinion and desire has no value in her family. At that moment she decided to get separated by her husband. In my point of view she is a strong character in this novel because at the moment that she realized that she has no role in her family she decided to live her own sake. And she was not alone, she has 36 pets with her who loves like her children. Here we can see the third wave of feminism called cultural

feminism. Bhavana received a letter while she was giving food to her child Adwaid. She started to read that letter, it was her ex - husband's wedding invitation card. Her hands got shivered and she remembered her love, she realized that it's a wedding card of her love whom she loved most at her 20 th age. And she realized that it's a qabar of her love, and expectations. She cried a lot. As every women Bhavana also wish love, care and attention from someone. And she also have emotions and she couldn't share or express it to anyone. She did not give up, she decided to attend Pramod's marriage. But her son never accept it, she said him to take leave from the school but he did not like to see his father's new wife. He became violent. He said that "I don't want came with you." "I don't want to see him." "Please don't take me to his marriage" (77). But she didn't allow it because he also will have a situation that to see his father and his new wife. it's better to see them early. And they went to marriage, she didn't eat anything and she went near to them to inform her Wishes. His wife started to talk to her. "Madam, I wished to talk to you but I thought that you don't like it." And they talk each other and she returned to home. Here Bhavana went to his marriage as a revenge.

Now it's her revenge to her ex husband, if she did not go to marriage it will be his victory. He will think that she was sad about thinking of him, so she didn't went to marriage. Actually she has pain in inside but she never express it to anyone and as a revenge she went his marriage and inform her greetings to him. Here she won in front of everyone. Bhavana's marriage was a love marriage at the period of her studies, they met each other in law collage and fall in love. She suffered a lot for getting him as a husband. She take fasting in all Mondays along 7 years, she saved her salary for

buying gold for their marriage while practicing as a junior at advocate Kurupp sir, after marriage she attend big case increases his inferiority complex and she avoided all her chances for him, she decided not to write munsif magistrate test because once he had failed in that exam. Bhavana never dressed for her own wish, she never put a saree that Pramod hates, and she never talked to people whom Pramod hates. She is not happy for things that make Pramod sad, she didn't take a little bit of oxygen without asking to Pramod. Is it satisfied him?. "Pramod called me 'edi' after our first kiss" Bhavana says. Here we can apply Radical feminism because this society must be change a lot. Pramod's thought wasn't to make happy each other, his aim is only become well than his wife Bhavana. As an advocate she got many appreciation and publicity that never make him happy. This all make him angry, so he finds a reason that their child has Attention Deficit Hyper Active Syndrome and avoid his wife and child. Patriarchy makes use of sexual differences so as to maintain an inequality between man and women. Indian patriarchal society renders a female submission by ignoring her desires, and needs. Both the society and family denies and disregards her freedom. After that she attend exam of magistrate and she became judge.

Her life was secured with courterse, vehicle allowance, and two office assistants. As a single parent she looks after her differently abled child without any problem. Here we can apply liberal feminism, there is no difference between women and men, women also have right to study and take job. Now our society has changed a lot women also have job and they learn to stand in two legs. A case related to a place which was family asset shared by three siblings came in the court. The civil suit was given by Khayaluddin thangal. The case was related to a Qabar of an old person in

their generation. The case was against his brother and 61 others. Salahuddin thangal sold his asset to Saagetham charitable trust to build auditorium, but khayaluddin thangal claims that there is a Qabar situated in that place of a person in their generation. Thangal is a magician, his advocate Shyam Krishnan wants to go to hospital for his daughter's delivery. So, thangal show a magic and Bhavana become abnormal. And she was admitted to hospital, at that time she know more about Khayaluddin thangal and she realized that he is the reason for her illness and she reached her home and her thought was that days incident. She was disturbed and anxious about thinking it. She saw her uncle who were dead years before and he came in her dreams and she couldn't sleep that day. But she didn't believe in magic and these kind of things. At morning itself she went to her father and ask about yogishwaran uncle and she realized. She also ask about Kakkassery battathiri, and he know about his family history. Her anxiety and anger to Khayaluddin thangal was increased. And she decided to revenge on him. His case was shifted to next day and she decided to revenge by stopping his case, before reading the case file she decided the final result of his case. Next day she went to court and she saw him, but she didn't look at his eyes. And the case started and advocate Krishnakumar asked some questions to him, thangal says that it is the Qabar of Hassan koya who went to Mecca and with Cheraman perumal and accepted Islam religion. But judge didn't mind it and she shifted the case on August 19. She look on his was and he was really shocked, mentally he was disappointed. But Bhavana became happy because she got a chance to revenge him. Here we can apply feminism. Bhvana, she shows that she is very strong and no one can tolerate her. Here she represents women who stand strong when ay problem has happened in their life.

Bhavana went to court next day and Khayaluddin thangal's case has started sit on her chair with a happiness of defeating him. Suddenly she saw a king cobra (snake) on her table. She suddenly jump from her chair and cried loudly. Every one in the office stood up from their chair. She understood that it is khayaluddin's magic. She was scared but she didn't show it because, if she shows any fear on her face it will be Khayaluddin's victory. She started her work without any of expression on her face and she was looking that cobra frequently. But she realized that her pen was missing. She was shivered and sweating, with her sweat hands she take that snake with fear and started writing. Again that snake became her pen itself. This incident is an example that shows how strong character was selected by the author.

Bhavana and her son went for a film. But there she saw Yogishwaran uncle and she was really afraid, suddenly he became Khayaluddin thangal and he asked her to forgive him. She looked at his eyes it looks like diamond in the light of screen. She replied that "can I give you a pen to change it a snake". He again replied "sorry". She said "did you have slaves for doing work for you". He replied "no, they are not my slaves they are my friends". She asked "can they do anything for you"? He said that "they will only do right thing". She replied "can they vanish me"? And he smile and replied that "we are already vanished". While driving he call her "Madam". She asked him that "why are you calling me as madam". He replied that "the only thing you need is respect, and it is the only thing that you never get". She was very happy to hear it. Respect is the only thing that a women needs and the never got it. Here Khalayaluddin thangal is a strong character who respects women and this incident is an example of it.

While she was talking she has little bit of anxiety because she is a judge in the court and he is a person who claims a case and she asked him that “is a judge and a client seeing each other a right thing.” He laugh at her and give her water to drink. As every women she also fall in love with him. She forget that she is a judge in front of love. There was a history on the birth of bhavana, her mother conceive her after 5 years after her brother has born. Her mother conceives twin babies, Bhavana and her sister. During the scanning of six months only one heart was beating inside. After delivery they realized that her twin sister was no more. And at her time of her birth itself she suffered a lot. Her father’s relatives says that she ate her twin sister. She was really disappointed by hearing this at her childhood itself. And she asked to her mother that “mom, is it true that I ate baby in your tummy” (95). And her mother console her.

Even years had passed she didn’t forget that incident. In our society women had to suffer lots of problems in their life and they had to overcome it. They should have to experience a lot in their life, here Bhavana suffered a lot in her life in her beginning of her life itself. Bhavana asked her mother that “did you mean that father has no love in you?”. Her mother replied that love is not a payoff given by one to another, it a completeness that should find in another one”(56). In our society there is negative thinking that women is an object to obey men and his love is a payoff to her. This journey foretells journey of women who will come out of their confines breaking all the chains by which they are strangulated.

## Conclusion

*Qabar* by K.R Meera is a wonderful book that speaks about a strong women. It's a best Malayalam novel of the year, Meera's *Qabar* touches upon how judgements can't be solutions, while narrating a story rooted in realism and magical realism. Read in the wake of contemporary India where a temple is being built after bringing down a masjid, *Qabar* unveils through the fantasy and reality of a district judge named Bhavana, and Kakkassery Thangal, a respondent in a case she hears. The respect, love, grief and commitment of the characters are tied to the lineage they carry with them. Bhavana is the main protagonist in the novel and she was a judge and a divorcee too. She look after her affected child without anyone's help. Kakkassery thangal and she meets up by a case and they fall in love each other. But the end of the novel they cannot live together and that case had left there itself.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**Encounters with Trauma and its Appropriation in**

**Lidia Yuknavitch's *The Small Backs of Children***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**NEENU PAUL**

**Register No: DB18AEGR009**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mrs. JESNA KURIAKOSE

June 2021

**Kannur University**  
**Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Encounters with Trauma and its Appropriation in Lidia Yuknavitch’s *The Small Backs of Children*” is a bonafide work of Neenu Paul, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Mrs. Jesna Kuriakose

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Neenu Paul, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Encounters with Trauma and its Appropriation in Lidia Yuknavitch’s *The Small Backs of Children*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Jesna Kuriakose of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Neenu Paul

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR009

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## Table of Contents

	Page no.
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	4
Unraveling of Trauma	
Chapter Two:	15
Abstract of <i>The Small Backs of Children</i>	
Chapter Three:	23
Exertion of Trauma Theory in <i>The Small Backs of Children</i>	
Conclusion	21
Work cited	33

## Introduction

Literature has always been a medium for authors to express themselves, their beliefs and the ideologies they acquire from their communities. While for the authors of the marginalized races, literature is the weapon through which they defend themselves and make their voices heard and the mirror that reflects their suffering. The trauma novel demonstrates how a traumatic event disrupts attachments between self and others by challenging fundamental assumptions about moral laws and social relationships that are themselves connected to specific environments novels represent this disruption between the self and others by carefully describing the place of trauma because the physical environment offers the opportunity to examine both the personal and cultural histories imbedded in landscapes that define the character's identity and the meaning of the traumatic experience. The primacy of place in the representations of trauma anchors the individual experience within a larger cultural context, and, in fact, organizes the memory and meaning trauma.

Trauma refers to a person's emotional response an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society. The term trauma novel refers to a work of fiction that conveys profound loss or intense fear on individual or collective levels. A defining feature of the trauma novel is the transformation of the self-ignited by an external, often terrifying experience, which illuminates the process of coming to terms with the dynamics of memory that inform the new perceptions of the self and world. This Project will examine trauma from a psychological perspective in Lidia Yuknavitch's novel *The Small Backs of Children* (2015).

*The Small Backs of Children*, Lidia Yuknavitch creates a similar character, a photographer who by chance snaps a perfectly emotive image of a girl in Eastern Europe, where there's violence without war, persistent but unacknowledged elsewhere. The novel begins the moment after the shutter clicks, and follows the child subject as she races into the woods, away from an explosion that's killed her mother, father and brother. The girl has morbid run-ins with soldiers and eventually happens upon an older woman, widowed as a result of their country's unstable state. The girl is nurtured back to physical and mental health; she begins painting, she learns English. But the rest of the world associates her with a different image: flying forward from the power of the bomb, her face frozen in horror, her body arrested midair. By delving into the messy depths and possible outcomes of her life after the half-second shot is frozen in time, published, disseminated and awarded the highest prizes.

Yuknavitch is rebelling against the clean, swift straightforwardness of plot, and the monolithic representation of truth presented by a work of art. A large literature has long focused on the role of trauma in childhood and risk for psychological disorders in adulthood. Despite several studies preformed to date, it is not clear which weight have different childhood stressors specifically on the nick for depression in adult life. Yuknavitch looks to strike a balance between the poetics of genre fiction and the common language of shared experience. There's bluntness to the prose, both in terms of sentence simplicity and the direct language used in communicating the plot. In the book Yuknavitch looks to strike a balance between the poetics of genre fiction and the common language of shared experience. There's bluntness to the prose, both in terms of sentence simplicity and the direct language used in communicating the plot.

The first chapter of the project describes trauma theory in detail. Second chapter deals with the descriptive summary of Lidia Yuknavitch's novel *The Small Backs of Children* and a short biography of the author. Third chapter deals with the understanding of the traumatic elements in the novel and the central character's traumatic experiences which make the novel's psychoanalytical reading much easier.

## Chapter one

### Unraveling of trauma

Trauma or traumatize means a traumatic event which involves a single event or experience; it involves the feelings and emotions. Moreover, psychoanalysis trauma engages serious long-term negative consequences. Essentially, past trauma and traumatic memories affect the mind of the characters. Confusion and insecurity cause trauma; typical causes of psychoanalysis trauma are sexual abuse, employment discrimination, police brutality, bullying, domestic violence, and particularly childhood experiences. Significantly, childhood trauma can lead to violent behavior. Psychoanalysis trauma are caused by catastrophic events, war, treachery, betray and sexual abused. However, the main point is that the different people will react differently to similar events. In other words, not all people who experience the same traumatic event will become psychoanalysis traumatized. Interdisciplinary, trauma has a close relationship with the other field such as psychology, sociology, history, war, politic, and significantly literature.

The catastrophes of the 20th and 21st centuries, wars, the Holocaust, racist and ethnic persecution, as well as the increase in social violence and the newly developed awareness of violence in families, maltreatment and sexual abuse of children, have made the development of a theory and technique of traumatization and its consequences an urgent task in psychoanalysis.

On the one hand, we are faced by the task of gaining as comprehensive an understanding as possible of the destruction and consequences of violence and traumatization; on the other, the therapeutic concepts of psychoanalysis have to be

reexamined to determine the extent to which they are suitable for the treatment of trauma.

For a long time, trauma and its consequences, political and social violence, was not accorded the status that it should have been in psychoanalysis. Clinical and theoretical assessments of it were often characterized by a peculiar ambivalence. One of the main reasons for this is that clinical theory in psychoanalysis increasingly focused on the here and now of the transference-counter transference relationship and thus on the meanings that unfold in the psychoanalytic encounter within the treatment situation. The current intersubjective, constructive and narrative theories conceive of the perception of oneself and of the outside world as being complex and undetermined. Their meaning is created anew in the intersubjective relationship between the analyst and the patient. Experience is thus regarded as an ongoing intersubjective and interpretative process. Childhood experiences and the determining force of the past become vague for the most part. The physicality of all human experience also disappears, for it cannot be totally subsumed by a model of social constructivism, nor can it be defined entirely in terms of social and intersubjective categories. This one-sidedness of post-modern intersubjective theories becomes especially evident in the treatment of trauma, for the trauma breaks through the protective shield that is formed by the psychic texture. It is indelibly recorded in the body and has a direct effect on the organic substrate of mental functioning. The quality that is specific to trauma, which has to be adequately described in psychological terms, lies in the structure of the perceptual processes and of the affects as well as in the experience that the psychic space has been broken through and symbolization is destroyed. The traumatic experience is essentially one of too much.

Psychological trauma, its representation in language, and the role of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities are the central concerns that define the field of trauma studies. Psychoanalytic theories on trauma paired with additional theoretical frameworks such as post-structural, sociocultural, and postcolonial theory form the basis of criticism that interprets representations of an extreme experience and its effects upon identity and memory. The concept of trauma, itself a source of critique, is generally understood as a severely disruptive experience that profoundly impacts the self's emotional organization and perception of the external world. Trauma studies explore the impact of trauma in literature and society by analyzing its psychological, rhetorical, and cultural significance. Scholarship analyses the complex psychological and social factors that influence the self's comprehension of a traumatic experience and how such an experience shapes and is shaped by language. The formal innovations of texts, both print and media that display insights into the ways that identity, the unconscious a person subjected to trauma may respond in several ways. They may be in a state of shock, extreme grief, or denial. Apart from the immediate or short-term response, trauma may also give rise to several longer-term reactions in the form of emotional ability, flashbacks, impulsiveness, and strained relationships. Besides the psychological symptoms, trauma can lead to physical symptoms, such as headaches, lethargy, and nausea. Some people may be affected a lot more than others. Such people may be entrapped in the emotional impact of the trauma and find it difficult to move on with their lives. Such long-term manifestation of trauma can lead to a psychological condition called PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder. A qualified psychologist can help people, who faced a traumatic experience, to recover from the experience and lead a productive life.

Trauma is not a precisely defined concept in psychoanalysis. In the course of its development, many different forms of traumatization have been described, related to a variety of external events, such as: seduction trauma, sexual abuse, war trauma, extreme trauma, deprivation trauma, silent trauma, stress trauma, cumulative trauma, among others. If only because of this breadth of phenomena, it could not be assumed that the effects and consequences of trauma were homogeneous. Moreover, the term had more or less lost its specificity and could often no longer be adequately distinguished from other pathogenic causes and severe frustrations or mental stress. During the 1980s, a working party on Conceptual research based at the Sigmund Freud Institute in Frankfurt under the direction of Joseph Sandler examined the range of meanings covered by the concept of trauma, assuming that, from the standpoint of its meaning, it can be regarded as the prototype of an elastic term. The study showed that distinctions between the various dimensions of trauma and their interaction were fuzzy at best. Yet, a distinction has to be made between the process of traumatization, the traumatic state and the pathological changes that remain afterward. Aside from massive or extreme traumatization, not every traumatic situation has the same kind of effect on all people. This means that a trauma, as far as its effect is concerned, can as a rule only be defined in retrospect from its consequences for the psyche. Predisposition factors have to be taken into account as well.

Trauma as an official diagnosis first entered the DSM in 1980 and literary theorists began employing the term to discuss literature not too long after. Since the 1990s, theorists have largely focused on twentieth-century trauma literature with Holocaust and Modernist texts garnering much of the critical interest. Yet, Victorian life was also marked by trauma-causing events. From railway catastrophes, to industrial accidents, to premature deaths, and infectious diseases, Victorians reckoned

with wounds to the mind through their lived experience. Trauma scholars who work with nineteenth-century texts, with few exceptions, consider trauma in terms of its modern theories. While the work of Cathy Caruth, Shoshanna Felman, Ann Whitehead, E. Anne Kaplan, Dominick La Capra, and Judith Herman has stimulated important discussions about trauma literature, their development of the concept of trauma rarely reaches further back than Freud. Victorian configurations of the mind and its response to psychical wounding have much to offer to the current discussion of literary trauma. This dissertation presents a study of Victorian literary texts through current theories of trauma juxtaposed with nineteenth-century formulations of the concept. The analysis offers three main points: one, to identify instances of trauma in nineteenth century texts that would otherwise go unnoticed; two, to situate texts within the cultural and historic milieu of their publication and to consider how literary conventions and forms indicative of the nineteenth-century serve to represent the effects and symptoms of trauma, and three, as a result of seeing trauma in the texts, to challenge common readings of Victorian literary characters, images, and forms.

A Brief History: The term trauma originally derives from the Greek word for a physical wound. Thus, when the term trauma, first appeared in the seventeenth century, it referred specifically to a physical wound. This nearly exclusive use persisted for more than one hundred years until late nineteenth century physicians and psychologists began to consider the psychical nature of trauma. In the mid nineteenth century, the telegraph, the telephony, and the railway provided evidence that voices could travel as quickly as electrical spark. From its beginning, railway travel was dangerous and often deadly. Records from the Railway Regulation Act Indicate that between 1871 and 1901, deaths due to railway travel numbered no fewer than two hundred passengers a year. Victims and witnesses of railways

accidents reported the traumatic symptoms of flashbacks, paranoia, and lack of affect which manifested sometime after the accident.

In the words of current theorists, the symptoms appeared belatedly. English physicians were divided about locating the cause of accident-related illness in the psyche. J.E. Ericson labeled the condition a concussion to the spine in 1875, noting that any psychological problems were the result of a physical wound. A few years after Ericson's declaration, Herbert Page and Charles Dana put forth that the emotions accompanying severe danger were alone enough to produce symptoms of shock. Several scholars thus locate the origins of trauma in the Burgeoning railway system of the 1860s; however, others argue that the concept of trauma appeared long before the seventeenth century. Edward Tick argues that trauma has been evidenced for thousands of years under more than eighty labels, each invoking different nuances connected to the time and culture of its recognition. Labels such as hysteria, shock, railway Spine and shell shock reflect historically and culturally inflected attempts to recognize psychological wounds, which could manifest in body and mind or in mind alone.

In spite of the evidence trauma's pre-nineteenth-century history, many contemporary theorists tend to unravel no further than Freud. Part of this reluctance to engage pre-Freudian discourses on trauma may involve the distinction some draw between shock and trauma. Prior to the late nineteenth century, physicians described psychological wounding when it was accompanied by physical injury as shock. Since early nineteenth-century physicians rarely conceived of a wound lodged only the psyche as being able to profoundly affect the victim's mental well-being, they relied on the language of nervous shock to indicate that a physical injury, such as a carriage

accident or a near-drowning incident, delivered a shock to the nervous system which in turn triggered aberrations of thought, such as repetitive nightmares, memory losses, incoherent babblings, or hallucinations. It was not until Freud considered the injuries of shell-shocked WWI soldiers that the limits of shock's physical causality were reckoned with. To Freud and others, it was clear that some soldiers suffered wounds to the psychic with no physical origin.

The Consequences of World War II and the Discussion of Trauma in Post-War Germany: Millions of people in Germany were affected by the mental and emotional consequences of World War II, soldiers by their war experiences, the civilian population, women and children, by the bombings of their cities, fleeing, etc. These experiences must have been present in the psychoanalytic psychotherapeutic treatments of the post-war years, either consciously or repressed, denied and split off, but represented in symptoms and through derivations of them in their minds. This fact did not lead to research or reflection on traumatic experiences and their effects on any large scale. Although such symptoms and consequences were described in individual case reports that were published from time to time, they were not recognized as being traumatic, nor were they treated as such.

The after-effects of the war on the psyche of individual Germans were mixed with their involvement in National Socialism and its crimes and with the repression of guilt and responsibility. This also had an impact on memory and the process of coming to terms with reality and the consequences of the war. Alexander & Margarete Mitscherlich, in their famous study (1967), analyzed the social processes of repression and denial that resulted in an inability to mourn, defenses against remembering, a realization and emotional numbing as well as a general immobilism. The Mitscherlichs base their analysis on Freud's conception of mourning, without taking

recourse to a theory of trauma. Today we can assume that an inability to mourn, affective numbing and immobilism may also be consequences of traumatization. Considering whether a traumatic disorder is being presented does not mean substituting the question of guilt and responsibility and the necessary distinction between victim and perpetrator. Trauma is an empirical-clinical term and can help one to understand the situation at that time in a more comprehensive, differentiated way.

Character traits, more fully consolidated by adulthood, further affect the outcome of adult trauma, leaving some individuals more susceptible to protracted PTSD reactions than others. Character traits formed in the process of resolving childhood conflicts may be reactivated by adult trauma, influencing the symptomatic picture. Considerably, literature has influenced in the life of human being. It has an empowered language to display the inner world of man. There is a space for memories, introspection, retrospection, foreshadow, flashback and awful remembrances that are coloured by pain, wound and trauma. Now is the time of producing the plot of anxiety in modern world.

There are many different experiences that can constitute trauma. Childhood trauma is an event experienced by a child that threatens their life or bodily integrity. Physical or sexual abuse, for example, can be clearly traumatic for children. One-time events like a car accident, natural disaster like a hurricane, or medical trauma can take a psychological toll on children as well. Ongoing stress, such as living in a dangerous neighborhood or being the victim of bullying, can be traumatic, even if it just feels like daily life to an adult. Childhood trauma also doesn't have to occur directly to the child. For instance, watching a loved one suffer can be extremely traumatic as well. Exposure to violent media can also traumatize children.

Many children are exposed to traumatic events at one point or another. While most of them experience distress following a traumatic event, the vast majority of them return to a normal state of functioning in a relatively short period of time. Some kids are much less affected by their circumstances than others. A child's relationship with their caregiver whether their parents, grandparents, or otherwise is vital to their emotional and physical health. This relationship and attachment help the little one learn to trust others, manage emotions, and interact with the world around them. When a child experiences a trauma that teaches them that they cannot trust or rely on that caregiver, however, they're likely to believe that the world around them is a scary place and all adults are dangerous and that makes it incredibly difficult to form relationships throughout their childhood, including with peers their own age, and into the adult year

In adulthood, these children often are described as shallow or emotionally aloof and have difficulty forming close relationships, demonstrate a lack of resilience, and frequently display severe antisocial behavior. In recent research regarding long-term family foster care, older children were often described by foster and adoptive parents as suspicious and highly adaptable, all in an effort to control or manipulate people viewed as sources of fear rather than sources of love or security. Research studies focusing on different methods of attachment related treatment indicate that these children generally present as a diagnostic challenge and were likely to view caregivers as someone who must be controlled through threats and intimidation. This finding is especially important to the psychological treatment of children, given recent retrospective evidence that most attachment and post-attachment related

problems inevitably impact other family members and eventually influence adjustment outside the family. As such, these problems represent a major challenge for therapists and other mental health professionals who are often confronted with the difficult emotional and behavioral reactions in these children, as well as the fear and desperation of their caregivers and adoptive parents. While family therapists have embraced many elements of attachment theory as a critical treatment area for working to repair

Attachment related problems with adoptive and foster children there is still a significant lack of research into the treatment of either maltreated or previously institutionalized children who continue to show attachment disorder behavior following adoption. The effects of child trauma are many, and they are nuanced depending on the trauma and the child themselves. If a child comes from a home that does not provide a sense of security and protection for that child, they may resort to developing their own forms of coping mechanisms allowing them to function day-to-day just to survive. They may live on eggshells, having become accustomed to a parent or caretaker lashing out. The result is sensitivity to each interaction and the moods of others, fearful that the individual fly into a rage. These children learn to adapt by withholding their own emotions and making waves. Masking their fear, anger and sadness. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, strong connections exist between childhood trauma and high-risk behavior such as smoking, having unprotected sex, and experiencing chronic illness such as heart disease and cancer. Individuals who have experienced abuse are likely to experience stress and anxiety later in life. This long-term stress and anxiety can cause physical symptoms as well as emotional issues throughout life. In short,

childhood trauma creates a fractured foundation for the individual for the rest of their lives. The way we are raised and the sense of security it creates all impact the emotional, and sometimes physical path, we take as adults.

Trauma studies constitutes a huge field today, keeping whole armies of Theorists-philosophers, literary scholars, and historians as well as clinicians-very busy. There are many reasons for this starting with the enormous and still growing interest In the Holocaust and other collective historical traumas, the diagnosis of Post traumatic stress disorder, which first entered the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual in 1980, was based largely on symptoms of Vietnam War veterans, and extending to the increased clinical awareness of sexual abuse as a Phenomenon of everyday life for both adults and children.

## Chapter two

### Abstract of *The Small Backs of Children*

Lidia Yuknavitch as a distinguished writer and poet criticizes the social, political, and spiritual bonds for female characters in her stories. She has an aim to illustrate the pain and suffering of female characters in order to gain self-knowledge of and self-confidence for women. Lidia Yuknavitch is the author of the National Bestselling novels *The Book of Joan* and *The Small Backs of Children* (winner of the 2016 Oregon Book Award's Ken Kesey Award for Fiction and the Reader's Choice Award), the novel *Dora: A Headcase*, and three books of short fiction. Her widely acclaimed memoir, *The Chronology of Water*, was a finalist for a PEN Center USA award for creative nonfiction and winner of a PNBA Award and the Oregon Book Award Reader's Choice. Her book based on her recent TED Talk, *The Misfit's Manifesto* is forthcoming from Simon and Schuster - TED, October

While it received a great deal of attention for its inventive depictions of sexual expression, the real power of Lidia Yuknavitch's latest novel *The Small Backs of Children* rests in its thread bare plot that still manages to move the Earth as you read it. Yuknavitch previously received praise for her novel, *Dora: A Headcase*, as well as her memoir, *The Chronology of Water*. While both works deal with the more painful aspects of living, it's her memoir, a frank meditation on the author's sexual growth and personal struggles that her latest work most resembles. Hinging the crux of the book on a fictionalized version of Yuknavitch's real-life stillbirth experience, the work serves as a potent consideration of what it means to be many things, up to and including both a privileged white American and an artist.

Starting off with a tight focus on a small girl trying to survive in the aftermath of a bombing, the character goes on to embody a sort of wish-fulfillment for someone known as the writer. After she sees the child in a Pulitzer-winning photograph taken by her friend, she quickly becomes obsessed with finding her. The reader learns that the writer lost a young daughter, and rather than connect that loss to her obsession with finding this girl, Yuknavitch simply explains it away as a primal yearning to try to have that lost opportunity.

The novel doesn't examine characters and humanity so much as it carves scenes out for brutality to happen. In some ways, it's tempting to read this as a preoccupation with the unspoken, the difficult, and the truly devastating; Yuknavitch's vision for the future of her characters is largely hopeless, even by comparison to other writers such as Cormac McCarthy and Chen Qiufan, who use primitive violence and bleak landscapes to paint specific versions of dystopian environments. An ex-husband, simply called the painter, is murdered before he has a chance to kill himself. A Pulitzer-winning photographer goes on to live a life of terrible unfulfillment and personal/sexual isolation. There is cruelty in nearly every chapter, every page. However, Yuknavitch strives here for something akin to a sort of realistic fiction. The novel is literary the preoccupation of the novel isn't making sure the prose lives up to the lofty standard established by the writing world. Instead, Yuknavitch looks to strike a balance between the poetics of genre fiction and the common language of shared experience. There's a bluntness to the prose, both in terms of sentence simplicity and the direct language used in communicating the plot. In the book's world, characters encounter trouble constantly, but it's a lack of reaching for the perfect word, a favoring of the pedestrian, that really lifts each sorrow off the page.

While the repetition of violence and violation may seem craven or nihilistic, the sparse, blunt prose manages, oddly, to celebrate life. This can be seen in plot points that involve an assault or attack on the characters as they look for ways to thrive and stave off the darkness. After the poet gets raped by Russian gang bangers while trying to track the girl down, she is immediately placed into the next scene, feigning stability and moving forward. On the plane back to America, she lifts the little airplane drink up to her face again and again. And the tiny lines near her eyes that have written themselves this day. Where most writers would focus on the ways such an act would destroy or mangle a person both physically and psychologically, Yuknavitch finds interest in what decisions those moments lead to. The pain in her work isn't literary or necessarily structural; it just is. There is no batting of the eye when the poet is violated, just a cut to the aftermath, as she drinks on an airplane to cope. Here Yuknavitch portrays the world as it exists, and the job of her characters becomes one of reflection and positive response. The poet, The painter, The photographer, The playwright, The writer, The filmmaker they depict and swallow the struggles we face individually, but they refuse to back down or wallow to achieve a literary quality. They may drink or have sex to numb the pain, but they move forward, speeding as they must into the next great swath of misery.

All of this seemingly ties into the concept of America, both what it stands for and what it willingly turns a blind eye to. Smartly, Yuknavitch doesn't look to tackle this in any large way, even when the issue arises. Instead, she opts to depict small moments in war-torn Eastern Europe, beginning with the photographer capturing the body of a girl flying through the air post-explosion, and ending with the rape of the poet when she visits that country to track down that same girl from the photograph. These smaller focuses look to make the case that there's a disconnect between the

safety one is afforded in America, the luxury of privilege afforded the artistic class, and the rest of the world. The insulated characters in the novel gleefully hurt one another because they're afforded the ability to do so with the knowledge that there are no real stakes for doing so. The ugliness of the crimes in Europe even the small glimpses we're given are meant to pry that notion open and create a wall between how their behavior constitutes badness, and the actual evil that they don't run up against within the padded walls of their country.

Ultimately, Yuknavitch's tight, deliberate plotting and unyielding honesty give the novel an incendiary propulsion. In many ways, this is a novel unlike anything else currently being written or published. Perhaps it's unfair to gawk at the bluntness and inventive sexual preclusions of a novel's writing, but Yuknavitch's comfort with the great bleakness of life is nothing but commendable. Writers tend to have little problem with being mean or cruel to their characters Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* comes to mind but it's not entirely clear that Yuknavitch crafts characters so much as she does avatars of the creative class. The brilliant people who populate this work are barely carved out caricatures of themselves, and yet they carry real secrets that they stubbornly refuse to be crushed by. To shrug at the violence of a life and choose empathy in spite of it is nearly impossible, and it's this optimism that places *The Small Backs of Children* in a league of its own.

In interviews, Yuknavitch has said that, in conceiving the novel's characters, she rejected psychological realism, and instead selected a moment or two of emotional intensity and put those emotional intensities in motion. The effect is a novel propelled not by a linear narrative but by something closer to the imagistic logic of poems. Much has been made of Yuknavitch's formal experimentation, especially the text's use of hybrid forms: some scenes are presented as dramatic scripts; verse is inserted in prose;

one chapter consists of two columns of text to be read, somehow, simultaneously. But the genuinely subversive and challenging aspect of Yuknavitch's work is her foregrounding of the body, and especially her presentation of sex. Yuknavitch forces us to see the body in all its physicality, its flesh and fluids and excretions, and she depicts scenes of sex, including fetishistic and sadomasochistic sex, that are brutally visceral. Yuknavitch's sex scenes are remarkable among current American novelists

Art and sex are both morally fraught activities for Yuknavitch. In *The Small Backs of Children*, the painter, the photographer, and the playwright all believe that art places them outside the moral order, licensing because art is everything even serious harm. The photographer will argue with the writer about her responsibility to the lives she documents; the painter will save himself from the wifehouse with an act of shocking violence. The painter shot his wife and the photographer shot me, to make art, the girl thinks late in the book. And sexual violence is omnipresent in the novel, suffered especially by the girl in her world of anarchic conflict. There is no girl we are not always already making into a woman from the moment she is born, Yuknavitch writes. This is a charge both against the men who sexually violate the girl and the artists who want to turn her into their muse.

But, for Yuknavitch, extreme experience which includes rough sex, inebriation, pain, and making art offers access to a self that precedes or exceeds the rational; it submerges her characters in the corporeal and instinctual, bringing them to what she calls the brink of animal. In such a state, violence can be productive of beauty. After a night of intense, sadomasochistic sex, in which she directs one woman to pierce another's thighs with needles, creating railroads across the territory of a woman's body, the poet wakes with the first line of a poem in her head. She transforms the victim of violence of the photographer's image into a woman who comes out of fire with a

vengeance in her stare. Such images make me a different kind of alive, the girl says, a statement that could be spoken by any of the novel's characters about the intense experiences they seek. Writing those experiences, Yuknavitch is willing to risk melodrama, obscenity, and sentimentality, seemingly indifferent to the supposed canons of good taste.

By insisting on a conception of art and writing that emphasizes the physicality of both, and by finding in the erotic what Audre Lorde called a well of replenishing and provocative force, Yuknavitch draws on a specifically queer and feminist tradition of thought. She joins the assaultive presentation of sexuality in the work of the Marquis de Sade and Georges Bataille a tradition Yuknavitch calls the underbelly of literature with the ecstatic lyricism of the French novelist and theorist Monique Wittig, plus the conviction, shared with Helene Cixous, that formal experiments can be politically liberating. Such is the strength of women that, sweeping away syntax, breaking that famous thread. Yuknavitch's sadomasochistic sex scenes also owe a debt to another French thinker, Michel Foucault, and his notion that consensual, ritualized sexual violence can affirm the limited being and the limitlessness into which it leaps. Such acts, in this view, have the potential to renew or even reinvent the self. Cixous, Wittig, and Foucault were among a number of French thinkers who became popular on university syllabi after the theoretical turn in literary studies in the nineteen-eighties, and in her memoir Yuknavitch notes the exhilaration she felt when she first encountered them as a graduate student. Not since Kathy Acker Yuknavitch's literary foremother, to whom she dedicated her second book of stories has an American novelist written so vitally from within this tradition, claiming the body, especially the female body, as her primary subject, and writing polymorphous sexuality not only so explicitly but with such joy.

Yuknavitch resists the grandest claims of thinkers like Cixous, especially their hope that aesthetic commitment can lead to social transformation, a hope Yuknavitch tempers with American skepticism. It's not as if anything in all of pukey human history has ever changed because some painfully brilliant person wrote down their ideas, a narrator says in her second collection of stories, *Liberty's Excess*. Her aesthetic project centers on more intimate transformations: This is a mother-daughter story, she writes in the new novel. Just once, the story will keep its allegiance to the body of a single woman. And, for all the violence and even brutality of her work, she rejects the nihilism and death-hauntedness of Sade and Bataille, in favor of a commitment to community and mutually sustaining love. This has been my life, the writer thinks, late in *The Small Backs of Children*, expressing a sentiment that could as easily be spoken by the girl. It is not a black hole of grief. It is making art. Yuknavitch's formal experiments attempt, like Acker's, to communicate extreme emotional states, the intensity of lived experience. I am trying to put things into the world that alchemize the dark, she says, and turn it to something beautiful.

*The Small Backs of Children* is an exploration of the body, the body as art, the body as politic, all the ways we use and lose control of our bodies, or have them used against us. Writer Lidia Yuknavitch on having a fragmentary writing style, fiction as allegory, the value of unconventional storytelling modes, and how to engage your body and mind as a way to jumpstart your creative practice. Juxtaposing the horror of war in Eastern Europe with the more quiet horror of grief of an US-American writer, Lidia Yuknavitch shows the whole range of human emotions in a way that is more stylized than true to life but still feels completely real and honest. Her short chapters read like short stories but still connect to a whole that is greater than its parts.

The characters are without names but it doesn't matter, the author makes you know who they are even without knowing their names: The Girl, The Writer, The Photographer, The Widow, The Poet, The Playwright, The Filmmaker, and the Writer's Husband. Their lives become intertwined but artistry is everything. The plot is one of the inner journeys, and with it there can be violence. The writing is exquisite, raw, and filled with meaning.

## Chapter three

### Exertion of Trauma Theory in *The Small Backs of Children*

*The Small Backs of Children* is Yuknavitch's second novel, and her first book to appear from a major press. In all of her work, sex, violence, and art are inextricably linked. Her new novel centers on a photograph of a girl taken in an unnamed, war-torn Eastern European country, her image haloed in fire, captured at the moment when an explosion atomizes her home and family. The photographer sends it to a friend and former lover, a writer who, traumatized by the image of the girl, soon refuses to get out of bed. She stops speaking and eating; eventually, she's hospitalized. Convinced that the fate of the writer and the girl in the photo are connected, the writer's circle of friends, all of them artists filmmaker husband, her playwright brother, a renowned poet who is her dearest and fiercest friend hatch a plan to bring the girl to America. Characters are not identified by name in the novel, but the details of the writer's life she has recently delivered a stillborn child, she has struggled with addiction, her childhood was marked by sexual abuse match many of those Yuknavitch offers in her memoir *Images*, sentences, even whole scenes of the novel are recycled from that book and from her collections of short fiction.

It begins with the words: "You must picture your image of Eastern Europe. In your mind's eye. Whatever that image is. However it came to you. Winter. That white ..." (Yuknavitch 1). The reader is then asked to people this barren, winter landscape with a young girl and the widow who takes her in, "after the blast that has atomized her entire family in front of her eyes," (1). in an unnamed Eastern European territory perpetually at war. It's an indelible scene that introduces the book's main themes of art, violence and the body: "This is how the sexuality of a girl is formed an image at a

time against white; taboo, thoughtless, corporeal” (3).

The girl is the central figure of the novel, both as her own character and as symbol, object and beloved of a coterie of American artists. In the moment her family is atomized in an inconsequential blast in her war-torn village, she is captured, mouth open in agony, by the lens of an American photojournalist. Alone and unheeded, she runs into the woods, where she meets a widow who takes her in and teaches her about art.

Wandering from the widow’s home, the girl comes upon a wolf caught in a trap, his blood stark against the bright white snow. Witnessing the wolf’s grisly escape from the trap forms the bedrock of the girl’s sexuality and her sense of herself as “wounded and animal, lurching against white” (3). This moment, only one of many scenes of terrible beauty in the novel, suggests that, while *The Small Backs of Children* may trade in fairy tale time and imagery, it is anything but a traditional once upon a time tale. Yuknavitch’s masterful narrative is, among other things, a radical retelling of a variety of our most prized bedtime stories, most notably that little girls are there to be, first, preyed upon, and, then, saved. Instead, the Girl in *The Small Backs of Children* learns from the wolf how to save herself. Never named, obliterated by early trauma, she nonetheless finds a bread crumb-strewn path toward home by becoming an artist. Here, art, like the wolf’s blood, is “this obscene and beautiful making against the expanse of white”(1).

The photograph takes on a life of its own, garnering fame and prizes and changing the fates of several Americans in the photographer’s circle. The photographer sends the image to her friend the writer, who excoriates her for leaving the girl. The writer, fresh with despair after delivering a stillborn daughter becomes obsessed with the orphan, mentally fusing together these two lost daughters. When

the writer falls into a deep, suicidal depression, her crew of artist friends and family undertake a mission to find the girl in the photograph and bring her to the States.

The novel bounces between multiple perspectives and first, second, and third person narrative, with several successful experiments in form. It straddles the U.S. and Eastern Europe; it straddles the space of the body and the space of the mind; it straddles truth and fiction. The writer, like most characters in the book, is unnamed, but she is a clear stand-in for Yuknavitch, who traces her career in both memoir and fiction to the death of her daughter the day she was born. Every self is a novel in progress, says the fictional writer, who frames part of the girl's story as a novel, then disappears into that novel. "Every novel a lie that hides the self" (9).

This is not a conventional work of fiction, and at times things like character development and pacing are sacrificed in favor of broad strokes that are poetic and shocking but a bit circumspect. The central cast is large for such a short book, and few characters get enough exposure that their betrayals and injuries, whether inflicted or received, resonate deeply. While the themes are fascinating and nuanced, the plot ends up feeling like a compilation of extreme actions and events that read like art as provocation. Which, incidentally, seems to be the point. Yuknavitch writes to evoke and stir the body: as the widow tells the girl, the body is the metaphor for all experience. A woman's body more than any other. Like language, it's beautiful but weaker sister. She writes about the union of body and art in the face of death, often achieved, by both characters and author, through gruesome use of sex and violence. This is a book of intriguing ideas; it is also a book of bodily fluids.

The photograph of the girl, blown toward the camera's lens as a bomb explodes behind her, her expression crystallized in a perfect moment of fear, becomes famous. But the image has debilitating consequences for the writer. The writer's fascination

with the orphan girl's photograph sends her into a suicidal coma, and she is hospitalized.

Hoping to save their friend, the artist's journey to Eastern Europe in search of the lost girl. They want to bring her to America, thinking that perhaps the girl's real presence, resurrected from the ephemera of image, will be enough to shake the writer from her depression and reawaken her. What follows is a clash of cultures and an exploration of the boundaries between sex and violence, art and obsession. About a quarter into Lidia Yuknavitch's *The Small Backs of Children*, the reader discovers the novels' title as the playwright sits in the hospital while his sister, the writer, is mysteriously wasting away: as children, the playwright has the pair perform Shakespeare, her as Romeo and him as Juliet, and once she improvises the line, "Pity the small backs of children" (59).

And it is here also in this chapter that along with the central image of the girl, the dominant motif of the narrative is exposed:

"The playwright stops typing for a second and stares at his hands on the laptop. He can't believe he's already writing this. Already twisting it into art. Cannibal. He feels a pang of guilt. You're in a hospital. Your poor sister is dying. But even as his heart is beating him up in his chest, he can't not do it. He can't...If he doesn't get it down now, it will blur and hum away like a train." (58).

"She is at a crossroads: a child's violent will to survive lodged in her chest where her heart should be, but an utter indifference along with it" (21). Many abused children cling to the hope that growing up will bring escape and freedom. But the personality formed in the environment of coercive control is not well adapted to adult life. The survivor is left with fundamental problems in basic trust, autonomy, and

initiative. She approaches the task of early adulthood establishing independence and intimacy burdened by major impairments in self-care, in cognition and in memory, in identity, and in the capacity to form stable relationships. She is still a prisoner of her childhood; attempting to create a new life, she re-encounters the trauma.

"She's thinking about grief and trauma, how they can hide out inside a woman, how they can come back. The playwright follows her eyes, until he sees what she sees. The photographer's framed image, the orphan girl lit up by the explosion, a girl blowing forward, a girl coming out of fire, a girl who looks as if she might blast right through image and time into the world, I know what's happened" (25).

There are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds. Traumatized people chronically feel unsafe inside their bodies: The past is alive in the form of gnawing interior discomfort. Their bodies are constantly bombarded by visceral warning signs, and, in an attempt to control these processes, they often become expert at ignoring their gut feelings and in numbing awareness of what is played out inside. They learn to hide from their selves. The feeling that she had never really lived in this world caught her by surprise. It was a fact. She had never lived. Even as a child, as far back as she could remember, she had done nothing but endure. She had believed in her own inherent goodness, her humanity, and lived accordingly, never causing anyone harm. Her devotion to doing things the right way had been unflagging, all her successes had depended on it, and she would have gone on like that indefinitely. She didn't understand why, but faced with those decaying buildings and straggling grasses, she was nothing but a child who had never lived.

I was transfixed by that cover and title and would come to realize the brilliant and awful paradox of the cover since the novel's central image is that of an Eastern European girl blown free of her family killed in that blast, the ceaseless violence of her native land, a photograph captured by the photographer, a photograph that brings disruptive and uncomfortable praise and an award:

"Remember what Virginia Woolf said: Give back the awards, should you be cleverly tricked into believing they mean something. Do not forget that the door you are being ushered through has a false reality on the other side. Do not forget that the door is opening only on someone else's terms, someone else's definition of open" (48-49).

Yuknavitch crafts a gut-wrenching and heart-wrenching work that reads simultaneously as narrative fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, but also blurs stark realism with allegory. The characters are all status: the writer, the girl, the widow, the playwright, the filmmaker, the photographer, the performance artist, the poet, and the painter. Tying everything together, however, is "everyone I love is an artist" (9).

While the novel weaves a gripping story around the orphaned and abused girl who is inextricably linked to the main American artists of the narration, the overarching message of the novel is a portrait of the artist under high capitalism, what the playwright identifies above as cannibalism and what the writer admits in the second chapter:

"We make art, but in relation to what exactly? All the artists we admired from the past came out of the mouths of wars and crises. Life and Death. We come out of high capitalism. Consumerist monsterhood. Even when our lives went to shit, they were still just our lives. Our puny, overdramatic, American lives." (10).

Like Roxanne Gay's *An Untamed State*, *The Small Backs of Children* is both hard to put down and hard to read because the abuse and violence juxtaposed in the horrors of the girl's life and the narcissism and folly of the American artists' lives are equally compelling and repelling.

Throughout the story, the essential nature of love, sex, and art seems corrupted by the high capitalism of the American artists, especially as their lives contrast with the Eastern European girl, who out of repeated rape, the obliteration of her family, and years spent living with a widow herself becomes the sort of artist that the writer has framed against the recurring awareness found in, for example, the performance artist:

"She sighs the big sigh of twenty-six, wondering if we are all trapped inside identity, genetics, and narrative some whacked-out Kafka god handwriting our unbearable little life stories. Then she thinks an American-artist thought, the rough-and-tumble kind: how can I use this?" (111).

Ultimately, the novel is as often poetic "The girl is so beautiful it feels violent. Like god appearing to an atheist" (171). it proves to be the sort of redeeming art about art that frets over the soulless consequences of capitalism and consumerism: "This is what's bad: The Nixon administration. The Reagan administration. The Bush administrations. War. Poverty. Injustice. Christians. Oils. Racists. Global warming. Homophobia. Corporations. The plight of third world nations. This is money." (193-194).

And like the girl, the reader is left with a powerful and even uplifting view of art's potential: The widow tells the girl,

“Do not listen to what any society tells you about the body—the body is the metaphor for all experience. A woman’s body more than any other. Like language, it’s beautiful but weaker sister. Look at this poem. This painting. Look at these photographs. Thebody doesn’t lie.” (117).

Neither does this novel as a meditation on art as well as the violence that is the lives children and women.

Through the illumination of these traumatic experiences, *The Small Backs of Children* sheds light on the myriad psychological symptoms that are expressed by victims of trauma. This novel exemplifies the function of trauma narratives in society as it raises a lens to the reader in which they can view the traumatic experiences of individuals outside their own identity or observed by readers alike to the characters in the novel to comprehend their own experiences.

## **Conclusion**

A central claim of contemporary literary trauma theory asserts that trauma creates a speechless fright that divides or destroys identity. This serves as the basis for a larger argument that suggests identity is formed by the intergenerational transmission of trauma. However, a discursive dependence upon a single psychological theory of trauma produces a homogenous interpretation of the diverse representations in the trauma novel and the interplay that occurs between language, experience, memory, and place. Considering the multiple models of trauma and memory presented in the trauma novel draws attention to the role of place, which functions to portray trauma's effects through metaphoric and material means. Descriptions of the geographic place of traumatic experience and remembrance situate the individual in relation to a larger cultural context that contains social values that influence the recollection of the event and the reconfiguration of the self.

As discussed in the first chapter, the individual's personality was a point of interest for both the psychoanalytic and literary fields. Both of them aim at understanding the human's psyche in order to analyze their personality and to get access to the hidden part of their identities. It helps in diagnosing the psychological disorders as well as the reasons behind those psychological problems and to increase the possibility of healing. As revealed in this chapter, this is one of the many common points between the psychoanalytic approach and the theory of literary criticism. Literature is the field of testimony and the source of many psychological concepts, while the psychoanalytic approach serves as the foundation upon which the literary criticism is conducted. Literary critics use the psychological findings in order to analyze literary works, the author's psyche, and that of the readers as well.

Fractured, scattershot, compulsive, agitated, *The Small Backs of Children* refuses to follow any one path and calls everything into question. A photographer takes a picture of a girl who escapes an explosion in a war-torn country. A writer is re-traumatized by this photo. A group of artists decides to find this girl. A girl is already found, already an artist. One person escapes brutality, another person is aroused by brutality, another person profits from brutality, and another needs brutality to make art. Lidia Yuknavitch tightly intertwines sex and violence and gender and art and war, showing how these elements are written on the body. The book's discursiveness demands your attention and shakes you out of your anesthesia.

Exposure to violence is central to human development. Parental aggression and neglect, bullying, sexual abuse, torture, terrorism, and war trauma are extremely prevalent, both across an individual's life-span and worldwide. Traumatic exposure can be life altering. Clinically, interpersonal violence is the worst form of trauma. More than other traumatic events, interpersonal traumas are often intentional, cruel, and painful. Studies have repeatedly shown that enduring interpersonal trauma, particularly in the form of violent relationships, disrupts human development, impairing sense of trust, justice, and fairness. Moreover, violence may carry over across generations. Some even suggest that people exposed to violence early in life may subsequently develop violent behaviors as adults.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

***WOMAN AT POINT ZERO: A FICTIONAL ANAMNESIS OF  
TRAUMA***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**NIVYA PRAKASH**

**Register No: DB18AEGR010**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Aleena George

February 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “*Woman at Point Zero: A Fictional Anamnesis of Trauma*” is a bonafide work of Nivya Prakash, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Aleena George

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Nivya Prakash, hereby declare that the project work entitled “*Woman at Point Zero: A Fictional Anamnesis of Trauma*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Aleena George of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Nivya Prakash

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DB18AEGR010

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Nivya Prakash

## Table of Contents

	Page no.
Introduction	1
Chapter One	
Trauma Theory: An Overview	3
Chapter Two	
Anatomizing <i>Woman at Point Zero</i>	13
Chapter Three	
Manifestation of Trauma in <i>Woman at Point Zero</i>	25
Conclusion	36
Works Consulted	38

## INTRODUCTION

Literature has always been a medium for authors to express themselves, their beliefs and the ideologies they acquire from their communities. While for the authors of the marginalized races, literature is the weapon through which they defend themselves and make their voices heard and the mirror that reflects their suffering. A trauma novel demonstrates how a traumatic event disrupts attachments between self and others by challenging fundamental assumptions about moral laws and social relationships that are connected to specific environments.

This project will examine trauma from a psychological perspective in the novel *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal El Saadawi. The objective of this research paper is to explore the mental conflicts faced by the main character, Firdaus in the light of trauma theory put forwarded by the famous psychoanalysts including Sigmund Freud, Cathy Caruth, Van der Kolk, Roger Luckhurst. In this project I contend how Firdaus becomes a victim of childhood trauma and how this trauma affects her in future.

Usually, traumatic characters are those who are submissive, obedient and simple characters in the first phase of their being traumatic, as in the case of Firdaus. I seek to prove that abjection is a kind of filter, the trauma victims exploit in order to free themselves from the burdens represented by the symptoms of trauma. Their use of abjection will lead to the actualization of the self and the construction of the aspired identity.

The project is divided into three chapters. The first chapter, “Trauma Theory: An Overview” deals with trauma theory. It marks the milestones in the development of trauma theory and establishes its connection with literature. To effectively trace the scope and scale of trauma theory in the literary context, the project will be employing the ideas of psychoanalysts as well as eminent thinkers in the field of trauma; such as Sigmund Freud, Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Van der Kolk and Roger Luckhurst, to name a few.

The second chapter, “Anatomizing *Woman at Point Zero*” discusses about the novel, *Woman at Point Zero* by the Egyptian writer Nawal El Saadawi. In this novel, central character Firdaus is sentenced to death in an Egyptian jail for murdering her pimp. This chapter contains the information about the author, her famous works and common themes presented in those novels, and other critical evaluations of the novel.

The third chapter, “Manifestation of Trauma in *Woman at Point Zero*” studies the novel in the view point of trauma theory. This chapter proves how the central character’s actions in her life, is related to the traumatic incidents that occurred in her childhood and her previous living with the men including her uncle, her husband, lover etc. As well as, this chapter discusses how Firdaus’ past experiences paved the way for her to kill a man.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Trauma Theory: An Overview

This chapter examines the theoretical foundations and developments in trauma studies, specifically exploring how Freud's psychoanalytic theory of trauma has influenced the concept of trauma in literary criticism. The concept of trauma, itself a source of critique, is generally understood as a severely disruptive experience that profoundly impacts the self's emotional organization and perception of the external world. Trauma studies explore the impact of trauma in literature and society by analyzing its psychological, rhetorical, and cultural significance.

The role of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities is the central concern that defines the field of trauma studies. The word 'trauma' stems from the ancient Greek root word 'tere' that means 'a wound, a hurt; a defeat'. Trauma can be said as an extreme experience and its effect upon identity and memory. It is characterized by psychological excess which either represses the memory of the event or superimposes it over the individual's present, manifesting in unpredictable moments.

Psychoanalytic theories on trauma paired with additional theoretical frameworks such as post-structural, socio-cultural, and post-colonial theory form the basis of criticism that interprets the representations of an extreme experience and its effects upon identity and memory. Trauma studies explore the impact of trauma in literature and society by analyzing its psychological, rhetorical, and cultural significance. Traumas can be divided into three types: Acute trauma, which results from a single stressful or dangerous event; Chronic trauma, which results from repeated and prolonged exposure to highly stressful

events like domestic violence, bullying, child abuse etc.; and Complex trauma which results from exposure to multiple traumatic events.

Childhood trauma is complicated since children have fewer mental capacities to construct a coherent narrative out of traumatic events. Researchers investigating maltreated children have repeatedly found that neglected or abused children in foster and adoptive populations manifest different emotional and behavioral reactions to regain, lost or secure relationships and are frequently reported to have disorganized attachments and a need to control their environment. Such children are not likely to view caregivers as being a source of safety, and instead typically show an increase in aggressive and hyperactive behaviors. These children have apparently learned to adapt to an abusive and inconsistent caregivers by becoming cautiously self reliant and are often described as glib, manipulative and disingenuous in their interactions with others as they move through childhood.

A definition of trauma given by Cathy Caruth is, “trauma is an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (Caruth 11). Drawing on LaCapra’s studies, Cathy Caruth argued that trauma should be considered as a possibility of experience.

Trauma in many fiction deals with memory and trauma particularly based on Freud’s concept of “talking cure” for which LaCapra’s term is “working through” traumatic experience. A trauma victim cannot overcome his trauma in one day. Instead, a trauma victim has to go through different phases in order to overcome his trauma. The

greater the resistance, the more extensively will acting out (repetition) replace remembering. However, sometimes for the trauma victim to go through the stage of acting out and working through is not so easily reached because “those traumatized by extreme events, as well as those empathizing with them, may resist working through because of what might almost be termed a fidelity to trauma, a feeling that one must somehow keep faith with it” (LaCapra 164).

According to LaCapra, in order to overcome one’s trauma one has to go through the process of “acting out” and “working through.” In the process of acting out the trauma victim remains stuck in the past, because he or she keeps on repeating the aching events in the form of nightmares or compulsive behavior. “Working through” the trauma, on the other hand, means that the trauma victim is overcoming the traumatic aftereffects of the catastrophe. During this stage, the trauma victim gets ready to accept his or her trauma as a part of his/her life and because he or she recognizes this trauma as his or her own, he or she starts to lament and learn to live with it.

Trauma studies first developed in the 1990s and relied on Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether. Psychoanalytic theories regarding the origins and effects of trauma arose in the nineteenth century. However 20<sup>th</sup> century is known as the age of traumas. All the traumatic experience of life can be seen in the art of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The term trauma is first appeared in Cathy Caruth’s work *Unclaimed Experiences: Trauma Narrative and History*. According to Cathy Caruth, trauma is “a shock that appears to work very much like a bodily threat but is in fact a break in the mind’s experience of time” (Caruth 32).

The history of the concept of trauma is filled with contradictory theories and contentious debates, leaving both psychologists and literary scholars the ability to work with varying definitions of trauma and its effects. Some alternative approaches start with a definition of trauma that allows for a range of representational possibilities. Alternative models challenge the classic model's governing principle that defines trauma in terms of universal characteristics and effects. Beginning from a different psychological starting point for defining trauma than that established in the traditional approach thus allows critics a renewed focus on trauma's specificity and the processes of remembering. Understanding trauma, for example, by situating it within a larger conceptual framework of social psychology theories in addition to neurobiological theories will produce a particular psychologically informed concept of trauma that acknowledges the range of contextual factors that specify the value of the experience.

Traumatic experiences always affect our mind so we can say that this theory has some psychological Connections. This theory tempts on Freud's work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *Moses and Monotheism*. This theory links the experiences of trauma to evolutionary heritage of human beings. Even though this theory has evolved in the 20<sup>th</sup> century we can apply this theory in the works of any period. One of the famous American critic writer Shoshana Felman called "21<sup>st</sup> century as a century of traumas"(Felman 171). She wrote many texts on testimony and trauma especially her subject was about holocaust and collective traumas.

The boundary between inside and outside is important as a measure of one's ability to regulate one's own internal affective states. Victims of trauma have trouble with such regulation. Studies prove that the victims of trauma might be expected to distance

the events, to try to move away from it and to put other things between it and to put other things between it and themselves. Freud suggests that play and repetition are means of dealing with trauma by controlling it. One issue in trauma is how a trauma victim represents the world in his or her own mind. Trauma can lead to disturbances in mental representation that can be dangerous but that can also be exploited to attain control over traumatic experiences.

This theory mainly investigates about how traumatic experiences appear in work of arts and also how traumatic experiences of authors or of the persons known by the authors reflects in their work. Cathy Caruth initiated the contemporary field of trauma studies in literature, and argues for this notion of trauma stemming from the “structure of experience” of an event that comes back to haunt the victim. Thus, her theories are based on punctual trauma, which is trauma that stems from a singular event. Theorists like Laura Brown and Maria Root have challenged this limited definition of trauma, and have developed the concept of “insidious trauma.” This theory is a feminist model that stems from the need to describe the trauma of women who suffer from abusive situations that, while part of their everyday life, were nevertheless traumatic.

Nancy van Styvendale argues that traditional trauma theory’s claim that the traumatic event lies in the past prevents the recognition of what she calls “trans/historical trauma,” trauma that continues into the present or for a long period of time. The idea of the “trans/historicity” of trauma is that trauma does not come only from one single event, but can instead be intergenerational and insidious. However, it can also include more definable events of trauma as well. Van Styvendale describes trans or historical trauma as “cumulative, collective, intergenerational” trauma that is not fixed in one single event

even as it demands our attention to historically specific atrocities. Her idea of trans/historical trauma differs from theories of collective or cultural trauma; while those theories focus on how people in the present are *affected* by the past trauma of their ancestors, trans/historical trauma pertains to those who still suffer from traumatic incidents that she describes as “ongoing domestic colonization” or “neocolonial oppression”.

Roger Luckhurst’s *Mixing memory and desire: psychoanalysis, psychology and Trauma Theory*, describes trauma as “something that enters the psyche that is so unprecedented or overwhelming that it cannot be processed or assimilated by usual mental processes. We have, as it were nowhere to put it, and so it falls out of our conscious memory, yet is still present in our mind like an intruder or a ghost” (qtd in, Waugh 499). The Freudian idea of trauma uses the military metaphor of infiltration. He suggested that trauma was an experience whose magnitude penetrated the “stimulus barrier” cultivated by the ego to negotiate reality.

In the wake of a traumatic event a victim's emotional state is volatile, to be sure, as she undergoes intense personal suffering, but this is only one side of the aftermath of psychic trauma-the shattered self. The other side is the shattered world view the consequence of trauma on the survivor's belief/about the world". after a traumatic event a survivor experiences a kind of cognitive dissonance as she is faced with a whole new set of beliefs that have cropped up, often very suddenly, which are inconsistent with previously held beliefs.

The compromising of the mental processes is the key factor in determining the traumatic experience. It entails a rent in the fabric of normalcy which cuts out the normal avenues of grief and mourning, simply because it defies understanding. Trauma is characterized by psychological excess which either represses the memory of the event or superimposes it over the individual's present, manifesting in unpredictable moments. Not only is the individual stranded in a freshly alien universe, she also has to move on in a world that has not gone through the same paradigm shift. She has to 'carry on'; a telling phrase since she not only carries the burden of her knowledge but is also required to fall in with the accepted norms of society and propagate the same while suffering from intense alienation.

The crucial milestones in the development of trauma theory have a direct influence on the way it is presented to and recognized by the public forum and on its literary understanding and representation. It is only since the 20th century that trauma has achieved the dubious recognition of institutional labeling. And, like any reaction to violence, the interest in trauma waxes and wanes with the urgency of the motivation. Most of the radical transformations in the saga of trauma theory have risen from social revolutions and political movements. For example, the feminist movement has a definite stake in the promotion of trauma studies in the context of abuse.

Kali Tal's *Worlds of Hurt Reading the Literatures of Trauma* is a contribution to the growing body of interdisciplinary work on the relationship between trauma, memory, narrative and culture. Tal asks many questions at the beginning of her first chapter like what is the connection between individual psychic trauma and cultural representation of the traumatic event? What does the act of testimony, of "bearing

witness” means to an individual survivor, to a community of survivors? How are the testimonies interpreted by different audiences? What does the designation “survivor” mean, and who has the right to confer that title? The traumas she analyses are the Holocaust, the Vietnam War, and the sexual abuse of women and children. She has found it difficult to decide how far these traumas can be discussed in the same terms, and this result in considerable confusion.

According to Van der Kolk, trauma is the result of exposure to an inescapably stressful event that overwhelms people’s coping mechanisms. Figley defines trauma as the response rather than stressor; in his excellently edited volume, *Trauma and Its Wake*, he uses the concept of trauma to represent “an emotional state of discomfort and stress resulting from memories of an extraordinary, catastrophic experience, which shatter the survivor’s sense of invulnerability to harm”(Figley 18). According to Bonnie Green, a psychologist, there are three variables to define trauma: an objectively defined event, the person’s subjective interpretation of its meaning, and the person’s emotional reaction to it.

Freud used the word trauma, metaphorically to emphasize how the mind too can be pierced and wounded by events, giving graphic force to his description of the way in which the mind can be thought of as being enveloped by a kind of skin, or protective shield. To Freud, it is the outcome of the development of a highly selective sensitivity in the brain to external stimuli. This selectivity is often crucial: “shutting out excessive amount and kinds of stimulation is even more important, in terms of maintaining a workable equilibrium, than is the capacity to receive or let in stimuli” (Garland 9).

Sigmund Freud, the famous Austrian psychoanalyst has played a major role in describing trauma theory. His studies were on the soldiers who suffered at the war. His concept was “Return of the Repressed”. He was influenced by the works of Jean Charcot, who was a French physician working with traumatized women who suffered violence, rape, and sexual abuse. ‘Trauma’ is a central theme to Freud’s work at both its start and end. Trauma appears as a crucial concept in his 1900s studies on hysteria. Freud attributes the emergence of hysteria to sexual experiences that a subject goes through in childhood, which appear later in the guise of the aforementioned symptoms.

According to Freud, hysteria is a result of sexual denotations represented by some experiences take place in childhood and stored in memory. The surfacing of these memories is a catalyst for hysteria whereby the subject’s behavioral tendencies border in unmanageable emotional excess. Hysterical symptoms according to Freud are only “psychical traumas” and subsequently “any experience which calls up distressing affects such as those of fright, anxiety, shame or physical pain may operate as trauma of this kind”(Breuer and Freud 4). Herein, Freud demonstrates the connection between the psychical trauma and the neurotic defense. Hence, the psychical trauma works as the catalyst for the appearance of hysterical symptoms. According to Freud, that does not cause the symptom rather, it acts as an irritant, a foreign body, an invading alien utilizing the invaded body’s own defensive responses.

In his book, *Studies on Hysteria*, published in 1895 with Joseph Breuer, Freud claimed that hysteria is a consequence of sexual trauma: all the cases that he had treated proved their hysteria was a result of sexual molestation, incest or repression of desires. Freud’s theory expounds the emergence of reminiscences and memories of some form of

sexual harassment, as mental traumas. These reminiscences become repressed in the unconscious mind, only to surface years later, manifesting as symptoms. According to Freud, these symptoms appear in response to certain triggers that seemingly unleash hysteria. This form of repression centers on all matters sexual, as predicted by Joseph Breuer and confirmed by Freud. Freud held the belief that sexuality was the basis of every problem and it is the repressed memories of sexual assaults, molestation and incest, inflicted in childhood that create hysteria and such violations lead directly to serious, complex psychic trauma. This is the Freudian perspective which will be the basis of analysis in this study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *Anatomizing Woman at Point Zero*

Discrimination against women have continued for ages .Women have suffered from unequal treatments in connection with prospects, privileges, rights and status in numerous socio-economic and cultural spheres of society. But in comparison to the women of other religious community, Muslim women enjoy the least status in every realm of social life. Nawal El Saadawi was one of the feminist writers who boldly pursued the women rights and demanded to change the status and the image of the Arabic women. She was born, in Kafr Tahla, a small village located in Qalyubia Governorate, Egypt, in 1931. She was known as the ‘Godmother’ of Egyptian feminism. Other than a feminist writer, she was an Egyptian secularist, humanitarian, activist, physician and psychiatrist. She was famous for writing books about liberation of women, subservient roles of Arab women enforced by the patriarchal society. She pointed out the connection of women’s sexual oppression to women’s social and political oppression.

Her, most well-received works include her study of Arab women *The Hidden Face of Eve* (1977), *God Dies by the Nile* (1985), *Fall of the Imam* (1987), *A Daughter of Isis* (1999), *Walking Through the Fire* (2002).As an Arab nationalist and Marxist feminist, Saadawi’s writings are a part of a broader agenda for the construction of a modern secular, democratic and socialistic Arab world. Her “writings reflect a rebellion against a biology considered destiny, medicine, science and the physician are placed in a dialectical relationship with the feminist problematic of gender and power”(Ali 35).

A feminist from an early age, Saadawi blackened her teeth to ward off potential suitors when her parents tried to marry her off at ten years old. In her semi autobiographical book, *The Hidden Face of Eve* Saadawi exposed the brutal treatment of children and women in Arab world. In this book, she deals over a host of topics, from sexual aggression against children and the circumcision of young girls to prostitution , sexual relationships, marriage and divorce. She chronicled her own traumatic experience with genital mutilation when she was six years old in this book.

Saadawi was the first Arab woman who openly talked about female genital mutilation in *Women and Sex*. It was her first non-fiction book and it was banned in Egypt for nearly two decades after it was first published, and when it did finally appear, in 1972, it resulted in Saadawi, who had a degree in medicine, losing her job as Director of Public Health at the Ministry of Health. Saadawi has been imprisoned and exiled from Egypt, and put herself forward as a candidate for presidential election there in 2004. All of Saadawi's writings were banned for eleven years under Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and her books were censored in Jordan, Libya, and Saudi Arabia.

Though ninety percent of the population of Egypt is Islamic, Nawal El Saadawi's family was not religious. Her father's mother was an inspiration to Saadawi and she would say that God is justice, and we know him by our mind. And in this vein, her father taught her to read the Quran but think with her mind. From a young age, Saadawi was taught to think creatively and critically. Although her family was relatively progressive, still she was subjected to female genital mutilation, which impacted her beliefs.

Female genital mutilation, also called female circumcision, was a practice that was accepted by almost everyone at that time, and was specifically associated with Islam. Almost every young girl in the village was circumcised and it was something that was not questioned. Female genital mutilation was a regular practice that her parents had made Saadawi go through it without questioning. This experience led her to realize from a young age that female genital mutilation was the product of a patriarchal system and that it needed to change. Many death threats were issued against her by religious groups.

Saadawi's works can be used as an excellent example of self-reflexive questioning that can make feminist criticism sensitive to the way scholarly discourse names "the other woman" and appropriate her voice. *Woman at Point Zero* itself is the appropriation of another woman's story by a scholar whose research on female offenders brings her into close contact with the painful experiences of an extraordinary woman. Saadawi's another major work is *God Dies by the Nile*. It is a powerful allegory about Zakeya, a peasant farmer, and her shocking act of revenge on corrupt village elders. "People have become corrupt everywhere. You can search in vain for Islam, or a devout Muslim. They no longer exist" (Saadawi 16).

Nawal El Saadawi has spoken about many issues considering women in the Arab world. The powerful account of the oppression of the women remains as shocking today as when she wrote *The Hidden Face of Eve*, a classic modern Arab writing. It is part autobiographic and part polemic. She has written this out of a powerful sense of violence and injustice which permeated her society. Her experience of working as a doctor in villages around Egypt, witnessing prostitution, honor killing and sexual abuse, including female circumcision, drove her to give voice to this suffering. She went on exploring the

causes of the situation through a discussion of the historical roles of Arab women in religion and literature. Saadawi argued that the veil, polygamy, and legal inequality are incompatible with the essence of Islam or any human faith. Many of the reporters have criticized her and asked to ban her books as they challenge the fundamentals of their religion.

Kafr El Teen is a beautiful, sleepy village on the banks of the Nile. Yet at its heart it is tyrannical and corrupt. The Mayor, Sheikh Hamzawi of the mosque, and the Chief of the Village Guard are obsessed by wealth and they use and abuse the women of the village, taking them as slaves, marrying them and beating them. Resistance, it seems, is futile. Zakeya, an ordinary villager, works in the fields by the Nile and watches the world, squatting in the dusty entrance to her house, quietly accepting her fate. It is only when her nieces fall prey to the Mayor that Zakeya becomes enraged by the injustice of her society.

Not only issues faced by women but the violence and abuse against children are also mentioned in *Woman at Point Zero*. Along with Firdaus, her siblings are suffering too in their childhood. Her father's self centeredness results in the starvation, malnutrition and eventual death of these children. As a child, Firdaus' uncle used any opportunity he has to exploit her sexually. While she is kneading dough to bake for family use, her uncle, under the guise of reading a book, rubs her thighs and gradually moves upwards to her private part. He only stops when he hears a sound or movement.

Child marriages are common in Africa. This practice enables a girl's family to get rid of her because she is regarded as an unnecessary liability. At the tender age of sixteen, Firdaus was forcefully married off to Sheik Mahmoud, an old rich widower by her uncle. This arrangement is masterminded by her uncle's wife who complains that they cannot bear the expenses of Firdaus as she eats a lot. This is in spite of her obvious importance to the house in assisting with the daily domestic chores. Later she realizes that the society does not have a safe haven for children who lack parental love, care and security and whose human rights are violated. She later suffers physical, emotional and verbal abuse in her marriage.

*Woman at Point Zero*, combines biography with autobiography, memoir with fiction, and philosophy with literature. The plot is a fictionalized account of an interview Saadawi conducted with Firdaus, a woman on death row in Qanatir Prison in the 1970s. Firdaus walks into death with dignity and grace and she refuses to sign appeals on her behalf. Her contempt towards death symbolizes her new found freedom. Firdaus is free from all the traps that, she asserts, further the trafficking in women: within the confines of marriage, employment, religion, family, and even nationalism, women have to compromise their integrity. To drive this point home, the narrator's story encompasses all the injustices females may suffer anywhere: female circumcision, cruel parents, a sexually abusive uncle, suppressed homoerotic desires, domestic abuse, rape, and forced prostitution. It is remarkable that one character could suffer so much in the span of one book, but Saadawi's goal to expose the fake moralistic values that subjugate women is important than the plausibility of the plot.

Saadawi's works work often has a hypnotic, incantatory quality which draws the readers into its world. Her struggles in *Woman at Point Zero* to come to terms with Firdaus, the real woman whose story she tells, testifies to her efforts to elevate this case study to the status of an exemplary narrative of female oppression and emancipation, in other words, to give universal appeal to the story of this Cairo prostitute who is awaiting execution in Qanatir prison for the murder of her pimp.

Firdaus's story arises from silence, from her initial refusal to speak. She recognizes, like Frantz Fanon's native intellectual, that "to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" (Fanon 17). She believes that Saadawi is one of "them", one of the repressive figures implicated in her hanging. Firdaus' silence resonates with strength and dignity and nags at Saadawi. The power of Firdaus' silence reverses the hierarchical relationship between the doctor and the prisoner, placing the doctor in a position of uncomfortable and compelling her to relinquish her authority in order to approach Firdaus' story. When Firdaus finally agrees to speak, perhaps she believes that the doctor is not entirely other. Firdaus' voice is authoritative and urgent. She commands the author to let her speak without any interruption.

Mother is cast as an instrument of the patriarchy, as the means by which femininity is initially reproduced, thus allowing the system to perpetuate its hold on each generation of girls. For Firdaus, the betrayal of the mother and the loss of intimacy is represented through the metaphor of two eyes, "two rings of intense white around two circles of intense black. In which each color grows more intense and more engulfing" (Saadawi 17). Firdaus is overcome by the gaze that is linked at first to her mother's enveloping and supportive presence. Later this gaze is evoked when she meets Iqbal, a

school teacher, and the feeling is one of intense, nameless pleasure. This deep distant pleasure is articulated as a “memory”, as the trace within the body of something remembered intangible, yet real, a loss of physical being that motivates her later denunciations of the familial, social, and political structures that maintain sexual oppression.

In her author’s preface, Saadawi states that *Firdaus* is the story of a woman driven by despair to the darkest of ends. This woman, despite her misery and despair, evoked in all those who, “like me, witnessed the final moments of her life, a need to challenge and to overcome those forces that deprive human beings of their right to live, to love and to real freedom” (Saadawi 4). Here she is emphasizing generally unproblematic values, but these values could hardly be taken for granted in Anwar Sadat’s Egypt. What makes her story compelling is the highly personal tone, the erosion of distance between the authorial self and the narrating “I” of *Firdaus*. Indeed, though Saadawi is first drawn to *Firdaus*, because of her exceptional nature, the focus soon shifts to their shared experience of oppression as women in a patriarchal culture. What the text puts in motion is a strategy of displacement and identification between two women who are objectively very different from the point of view of their respective social classes, their education and profession but whose intimate experiences as women in a particular culture is the same.

*Firdaus*’ ability to manipulate the roles she is cast in by those more powerful than her is evident in her embracing of prostitution as a method of liberation. She insists on a high price for her body, rejects men who are dirty, and resists by making her body passive, inert, unfeeling in these sexual encounters. After her own experience as a wife, prostitute, and office worker, she characterizes all women as prostitutes who sell

themselves to the others. In her outcry against male dominance, she exposes the multiple forms of hypocrisy and control uses to gain authority over women. For example, she states, “the men I hated most of all were those who tried to give me advice, or told me that they wanted to rescue me from the life I was leading. They thought they were better than I was. They saw themselves in some kind of chivalrous role” (Saadawi 96).

Firdaus is the extreme representation of a woman’s struggle for emancipation. In this novel, literature is thus transformed into a tool for the ‘subjugated’ woman to become a conscious political subject. Nawal El Saadawi uses the evocative power of literature to inspire women to action. She uses literature to take the struggle from the street to the homes of the oppressed women, using the written word as a revolutionary tool. The vivid symbolism that emerges throughout the novel is nothing but a means to that end: an instrument to show the sources of oppression in society.

Foucault argued that power becomes dominant by means of its invisibility. The main principle for power to be effective is to be “absolutely indiscreet, since it is everywhere and always alert but absolutely discreet, for it functions permanently and largely in silence” (Foucault 177). Invisibility allows power to reproduce political oppression: when the source of power is unidentified, oppression is hard to resist. In this context, cliterodectomy, arranged marriages, sexual exploitation and the strong visual images that Saadawi uses, such as the representation of her husband as a “dog”, or the description of the tumor on his lip, are tools to make power visible and recognizable to her readers.

In *Woman at Point Zero*, the readers can see the desire for intimacy. Saadawi develops a strong need to be close with Firdaus, to understand her and be accepted by her. The decision to write the novel is an attempt to deal with this interest and fascination which had developed during the interviews Saadawi carried out in the prison cell. She felt like Firdaus vibrated within her until she writes her life story. By writing down and giving back the other woman's life, Saadawi assumes control over the obsession that had consumed her. But Firdaus, too, yearns for intimacy.

When she meets Sharifa Salah el Dine, the woman who becomes her mentor, or when she talks of her love for Ibrahim, a co-worker, it is in terms similar to those used by Saadawi, "the sky over our heads was as blue as the bluest sky and it was as though I held the whole world captive in my hands. It seemed to grow bigger, to expand, and the sun shone brighter than ever before. And everything around me floated in a radiant light" (Saadawi 89). The repetitions form a leitmotif which interweaves Saadawi's subjectivity with Firdaus'. Both voices have merged into one: both bodies experience the same feelings of loss and detachment from surrounding reality with occasional and fleeting experiences of fulfillment. Past and present, self and other mirror each other, and the narrative accentuates the interchangeability of speaker and listener as intimate and private experiences point to a common sense of loss and betrayal deeply rooted in their memory.

Saadawi's use of the novel as a vehicle for her feminist discourse has a problematic implications. On the one hand of the novel, as a literary genre with a specific set of requirements, must be adjusted to suit her purposes, and on the other, as a popular medium for exploring the human condition, it disseminates information of great

significance regarding the womanhood in the Arab-Islamic world. The balance between the clarity of political discourses and the complexity of human experiences is rarely easy to obtain, however such a balance is not impossible. In Saadawi's novels, greater weight is given to the objectives of her feminist discourse, and consequently the projected human condition of the Arab-Islamic world is distorted. Her distortions unfortunately seem to confirm "Western" stereotypes of "Eastern" men and women, and add fuel to the already raging fires of East-West cultural dialectics.

To infer a parallel between the act of writing and the act of murder allows us to further the comparison and identification between Saadawi and Firdaus. There is dissymmetry between the act of writing, which is an act of creation, and the act of murder, which is a form of suppression, but there is also symmetry of the movements of the hand which moves the pen on the paper or the knife into the flesh. To write and to kill are both forms of social transgression which lead to jail. Firdaus' fundamental transgression is that she reverses the traditional social roles on a symbolic as well as a real level. She trespasses on male sexual territory by using the knife. Similarly, Saadawi's inscription of a woman's text on masculine fabric of Egyptian culture is a form of trespass which deserves punishment because it interferes with the culturally acceptable codes of femininity.

In Saadawi's polemical works that question gender based inequalities, she uses the image of the operation theater in an attempt to freeze and display the violence acted out on women. In response, the language remains rebellious, violent and ripping. Saadawi recognizes the panic that will emerge at the site of the dominant discourse when faced with the threats of minorities who are not afraid of "words written by a pen sharp as a

scalpel that cuts through tissue to expose the throbbing nerves and arteries embedded deep in a body; a body that is yearning for an expression that it fears to experience” (Saadawi 3).

Through her portrayals of various male-male, male-female and female-female relationships, Saadawi warns that both men and women are victims of patriarchy. The world built on patriarchal principles encourages rivalry and therefore violence among men and reduces the status of women to that of a commodity: in marriage they are reproductive vehicles, the primary purpose of which is to perpetuate male lineage. Additionally, they must serve as sexual and decorative objects, their subjectivity completely denied.

Sadaawi, through her writings, has shown a deep concern about certain subjugating conditions that women undergo. In her concern these writings are the attempts to evoke those subjugating circumstances of women in order to arouse our pity for them and then to emancipate them from such conditions. In the end, what emerges is a positive vision of women different from what has been in existence in the societies that informed the background and setting of the novels.

Since the preface and the first and last parts of the narrative relate the author’s personal reaction to Firdaus and situate the middle part as a retelling, in the first person, of Firdaus’ oral confession, to read the novel is to be twice removed from the original story, which is retold by in a way that preserves the flavor of the oral exchange. The almost obsessive use of repetition as a narrative device allows the reader to take part in an organic process of storytelling, in which it becomes impossible to separate the story teller

from the tale. Saadawi or Firdaus tells a story that unmask an ancient truth about patriarchy, that women need not to fear what enslaves them, that freedom and “reciprocal responsiveness” is possible. Even if the outcome is death, the story is a posthumous lesson in courage.

Nawal El Saadawi’s symbolic narrative is an instrument to help the reader identify the oppressive nature of patriarchy in Egypt. In the author’s intent, literature has thus a precise political function to make power visible to isolated women and “uplift” the veil from their minds. Like the postcolonial intellectual gives voice to the silent ones and makes visible the invisible, Saadawi uses literature as an instrument to liberate women and inspire them to resist oppression.

*Woman at Point Zero* is thus not merely a novel. It is a more effective and convincing denunciation than many pragmatic or political treaties because it allows the reader to enter into the subjective processes of the individual to adopt Saadawi’s stance. It is a message of resistance for all women and a message that compels women to see that they are not alone, for in such solidarity they may find the courage to “end oppression and to achieve justice and freedom for themselves and then for the whole society” (Saadawi 21).

## CHAPTER THREE

### Manifestation of Trauma in *Woman at Point Zero*

*Woman at Point Zero* captures feelings of a woman under trauma. It is the story of Firdaus, a woman who has been sentenced to death by hanging for killing a man. The story is a combination of nonfiction and fiction that is framed through the author listening to Firdaus telling her life story as the pair sits on the floor of Firdaus' jail cell. Firdaus has refused to talk to most people, but ultimately decides to frantically tell the author her story just hours before she is to be taken away to her death. The story starts slowly but seems to frantically speed up as more and more details are added, giving readers the impression that there is less time between each of Firdaus' thoughts. She recounts a life time of betrayal and abuse. She is an orphan who was passed from one abusive guardian to another, and her tale shows how trust is tested and finally erodes, leaving behind only fear and alienation. The person who has been deprived of the ability to trust lives on the margins of society; she is only barely human. Such a person lives by instinct, without calculations beyond the immediate need to survive the moment.

This can be connected to the study of Bessel A. Van der Kolk and Rita Fisler, on children. In their work "Dissociation and the Fragmentary Nature of Traumatic Memory", they opine that, children have fewer mental capacities to construct a coherent narrative out of traumatic events. They argue that more research is needed to explore the consistent observation that adults who were chronologically traumatized as children suffer from generalized impairment of memories for both cultural and autobiographical. They say that five of their subjects who claimed to have been abused as children were, even as

adults, unable to tell a complete narrative of what happened to them. Firdaus has been in the situation that she could not tell anything to Saadawi until a few hours before her death. Before that she was reluctant to share her traumatic past to anyone else, neither at the time when those events happened, when she was a child, nor as an independent lady.

Another theory that immediately pops up when it comes to analyzing this novel is Sigmund Freud's theory recognition of the prevalence of violence against women and children (rape, battering, incest). *Woman at Point Zero* can be looked upon as an example of trauma theory in the light of the happenings in the life of the protagonist, Firdaus who was a victim of sexual assault from the men in her life and turned out to be a prostitute. We can also relate this situation with the arguments put forwarded by Shoshana Felman. According to her, majority of childhood trauma is a consequence of sexual molestation, abuse and rape. Moreover, Firdaus never gets proper love and care in her childhood. Her father was an abusive man and at a young age she was restricted to play with other children of her age, especially the boys. From her childhood onwards she gets stressed. Her bitter experiences in the childhood are the basis for her self destruction.

The willingness of the interviewer to experience the trauma of Firdaus, jolts the main narrator into a time of telling that is, ironically, preceded by a time of silence, not an absence but a pregnant form, reshaping itself in the fertile environment of imagining the unimaginable. The silence that precedes confession is followed by the readiness of the interviewer to enter the time of trauma experienced by the main narrator. Studies prove that the trauma victims are reluctant to share their past. Even though they are ready to share everything, they cannot completely tell what happened to them. This is the most decisive moment of encounter in which the self of the narrator and the interviewer would

probably be lost in the act of facing the catastrophic consequences of living in a decadent society governed by a medieval morality and corrupt patriarchal ethics that despise women.

Fridaus was a victim of cliterodectomy. Cliterodectomy is the partial or complete removal of the clitoris, a traditional practice in some African, Middle Eastern, and Southeast Asian cultures. The cutting usually is performed between the ages of one week and fourteen years. The procedure is performed by non medical personnel without benefit of anesthesia or sterile conditions. The most common procedures are removal of the clitoral prepuce, excision of the clitoris, removal of the labia minora and sometimes most of the labia majora. The two sides may be sutured together to occlude the vagina. Possible immediate complications include infection, tetanus, shock, hemorrhage, and death. The possible long-term physical and mental disabilities include chronic pelvic infection, keloids, vulvar abscesses, sterility, incontinence, depression, anxiety, sexual dysfunction, and obstetric complications.

The psychiatric studies show that almost eighty percent of the women who had undergone female genital mutilation met criteria for affective or anxiety disorders, with a high rate (30.4%) of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), while only one of the uncircumcised women fulfilled the diagnostic criteria for an affective disorder. Freud's perspective on hysteria centers on sexuality as the basis of all neurotic diseases from which hysteria emanates, irrespective of whether these are real acts or mere fantasies and visualizations. According to Freud, only "physical traumas" and consequently "any experience which calls up distressing effects such as those of fright, anxiety, shame or physical pain may operate as a trauma"(Breuer and Freud 4). Fridaus has experienced it.

The physical trauma caused by the circumcision proved its influence on Firdaus and her fellow sisters who also suffered the same fate. This act had a long term effect on the subject which, according to Freudian theory, would trigger hysteria at a later stage of life. The loss of this part of her clitoris as a result of circumcision refers to the Lacanian castration and more specifically, hints at Freudian hysterical anesthesia which explains the psychological anguish over physical loss of part of her body. The actual clitoral removal from the body renders the subject unwholesome; the loss of her identity and wholesomeness stems from this bodily excision which causes real mental and physical trauma. This disconnection between body and psyche, this psychological disorientation and hysterical anesthesia, all result from alienation and loss of control over her body.

Mary Daly, in her book *Gyn/Ecology* (1978), explains the psychological state of girls who suffer circumcision as: “Those who physically survive these atrocities live their entire lifetimes, from early childhood or from puberty, preoccupied by pain” (Daly 170). This is the pain which Firdaus suffers and which eventually leads her down the path of self-destruction. After circumcision, a subject “suffers depression, psychosis, self-mutilation and spiritual death” (Sadehi and Talif 63). Studies prove that women suffer from psychological anxieties and fears about their sexuality and bodies. These psychological anxieties are instantly linked to memories of horror and pain, bloodshed and submission which the subject suffers from while she is circumcised. This anguish is manifested outwardly in Firdaus’ narrative. She talks incessantly about her ordeal, namely the aftermath of circumcision. She speaks ostensibly on hysterical symptoms when she narrates.

The memory of her cliterodectomy terrorizes her whenever she recalls the moments she spent with her playmate, Mohammedain. The memory of Mohammodain and how he touched her body is like an illusion to her. She is never able to explore the sexual pleasure when she was with him after the cliterodectomy. This recollection, induces fits of weeping and moaning in her “sleep as though it was something she was losing now, a loss she was experiencing for the first time and not something she had lost long ago”(Saadawi 26).

Now it is clear that Firdaus might have faced some traumatic troubles with this cliterodectomy. Also, author of this novel Nawal El Saadawi was subjected to this bizarre ritual, female genital mutilation or circumcision like every other girl in that village as well as molestation when she was a child. So it is obvious that it may be Saadawi's trauma that has returned while she was writing about Firdaus.

Sexual molestation often triggers hysterical symptoms. Firdaus experiences sexual molestation at the hands of her playmate. She narrates how he used to pinch her under water and follow her into the small shelter made of maze stalks. They used to play ‘bride and groom’. The sexual pleasures derived at a young age later transforms into feelings of guilt. Therefore, the memory of sexual seduction is the triggering incident to mental trauma and suffering. Here in, lies a strong argument relevant to Firdaus' sexual experiences with Mohammodain. This feeling of pleasure later turns torturous because of the pain of the circumcision that removes all sensation of sexual pleasure.

Molestation and harassment play a pivotal role in initiating traumatic experiences that could live as long as the subject is alive, as in the case of Firdaus. She narrates a harrowing account of molestation by her uncle which results in hysterical symptoms ranging from weeping to aphasia to trembling and other symptoms. This brings to attention the case of Dora (Ida Baur) whom Freud had treated in 1900. Dora's case was similar to Firdaus', in that she suffered sexual molestation by her neighbor which eventually led to hysteria. Such molestation is classified under the sexual experiences which according to Freud, were predisposed to hysteria.

Hysteria is a consequence of traumatic events. Here, hysteria has also contributed to Firdaus' bouts of amnesia. According to Freud, this too is related to the sexual factor. Freud explicates in his *Studies on Hysteria* that, "alongside sexual hysteria we must recall hysteria due to the fright- traumatic hysteria proper- which constitutes one of the best known and recognized forms of hysteria" (Breuer and Freud 185). This element of fright as theorized by Freud constituted to the major part of trauma that Firdaus endured throughout her life and that fear was manifested in the form of hysteria until her death. Since early childhood, there were many frightful incidences that had made her life a living hell.

Firdaus' predicament is deleterious because the source of her fear is her uncle with whom she shares a sexual relationship. This echoes Freud's claims that the source of female hysteria is more often a father, uncle or brother according to the many case histories he had treated and documented. Firdaus' hysterical situation is attributable to her uncle who was a seducer and molester. These sexual experiences had so discolored her perception of men that she had developed an almost psychotic need to destroy them

all. She narrates an instance of the horrific atmosphere she lived through in close proximity with her uncle: "I held my breath and pretended to be asleep, waiting for his fingers to reach out at me. An eternity seems to pass without anything happening" (Saadawi 22). From her standpoint as a victim of sexual abuse, it is obvious that Firdaus' state of hysteria manifested through fits of crying whenever her traumatic experiences are awakened by a triggering event.

Furthermore, her trauma also brings on other hysterical symptoms which leave her mute, unable to speak or express herself a symptom indicative of aphasia. Freud had termed aphasia as a hysterical figuring symptom. Firdaus' aphasia is the result of cumulative sexual molestation since her childhood. Her feelings towards her uncle are ambivalent. She wanted to tell him that she loved him. But something stopped her from telling that to him.

Firdaus has repressed her memories of pain and suffering from consciousness. Especially the erotic ones related to her uncle, and transformed its effects, as Freud theorized, into physical sensations of pain. Firdaus is trapped in a marriage to Sheikh Mahmoud, her 60 year old husband. She was only 19 years old when she was married off to this old man who also had a swelling under his lower lip which would sometimes exude blood like drops. Child marriage is a significant health risk for women and girls. It has been proved that the early marriages increase stresses and pressures and early married girls are more prone to marriage problems as their individuality has been interrupted. Psychologically, women married as children are more likely to suffer from symptoms related to post traumatic stress disorder and symptoms of depression.

Roger Luckhurst's *Mixing Memory and Desire: Psychoanalysis, Psychology and Trauma Theory*, describes trauma as "something that enters the psyche that is so unprecedented or overwhelming that it cannot be processed or assimilated by usual mental processes. We have, as it were nowhere to put it, and so it falls out of our conscious memory, yet is still present in our mind like an intruder or a ghost" (qtd in, Waugh 499). The repressed memories would surface much later in her life, culminating in intense hatred which makes her feel like, "destroying all the men I had ever known, one after the other in a row: my uncle, my husband, my father"(Saadawi107). Each male represents a repugnant experience that propels Firdaus into a hysterical vortex. Firdaus' life is exactly how Van der Kolk described about trauma as it is the result of exposure to an inescapably stressful event that overwhelms people's coping mechanisms.

Definitely, any painful experience that the subject undergoes would evoke negative symptoms which either present immediately or at a later time, when unlocked from the unconscious by certain triggers. Sometimes these emotions or feelings can induce trauma. Firdaus experiences much pain and suffering with her oppressive husband. When she leaves him and returns to her uncle's house, both her uncle and his wife delude her about marital norms and abusive husbands. She is made to return to her husband who soon thereafter, disallows her from eating to remind her of her duties and obligations to him. He then becomes violent towards her. She could not even resist. Studies have proved that child abuse can cause traumatic disorders in the victim. Here this act of her husband may be lead her to the mentality of avenging all the men.

When she meets Bayoumi, she got good treatments at first. Bayoumi did something different from any other person that Firdaus loved. Never in her life had anyone put her first before themselves. Her father used to occupy the oven room in the winter and left her the coldest room in the house. Her uncle had the bed to himself when she slept on the wooden couch. When she was married, her husband ate twice as much food as she did. But Bayoumi was so different and he was the first person who really cared about Firdaus. However, a good person is not always good all time. Bayoumi has changed and it reminds Firdaus of her bad past experience, treatments and violence that she got before. Actually she wanted to forget her past because it hurts her so much.

According to La Capra, in order to overcome one's trauma one has to go through the process of "acting out" and "working through." In the process of "acting out", Firdaus remains stuck in the past at a point, because she keeps on repeating the aching events in the form of compulsive behavior. "Working through" the trauma, on the other hand, means that Firdaus is overcoming the traumatic after effects of the catastrophe. During this stage, the trauma victim, here, Firdaus gets ready to accept her trauma as a part of her life and starts to lament and learn to live with it.

The process of "working through" can be seen when Firdaus speaks with her friend, Wafeya. Firdaus did not say anything about her past. She only talks about the future and the hope she wants to achieve. The conflict that exists in Firdaus herself is an inner conflict about her childhood. She preserves her ego by deliberately removing unwanted thoughts or memories of the past because it is not in accordance with her wishes.

Unfortunately, Firdaus falls down to the same hole both in past and present. She becomes befriended to a prostitute named Sharifa and join with her in prostitution but she never thinks to be a prostitute or being a high class prostitute. All she wants is to take control over men and take revenge against them. However, she is taught to be a prostitute but she is not aware about that. It can be seen from her experiences since her childhood until she met Sharifa. It is after that she kills her pimp without any particular reason. Like, Felman said in her *Juridical Unconscious*, it is one's grief and sorrow that turns into anger which leads to the resolution. It was Firdaus' grief and the hurtful incidents that she experienced in her life that made her kill someone and this, gradually leads her to the denouement, death.

We can also relate this act to Cathy Caruth's definitions of trauma theory in her *Unclaimed Experiences*, since Firdaus kills her pimp out of an overwhelming emotion that has no control. The traumatic incidents created by all the men in her life were deeply buried in her unconscious mind and the response to those catastrophic events she suffered was delayed. But all her emotions suddenly burst out into anger and she is forced to kill that man.

Firdaus narrates her life story to the psychiatrist, uninterrupted, as per her request. In so doing, she is able to exorcise herself of buried experiences and absolve herself of repressed trauma. Firdaus wanted her life story to be told to women across the world in order to raise awareness on how her society treats women. She, until the very end, refuses to sign an appeal against her murder conviction, opting instead to be executed. She dies as a free woman, after having absolved a burden she carried for long years. We can assume that she was not ready to carry her traumatic past with her whole life as a burden.

Because, she might be realized, the horrific experiences that she has gone through will remain in her mind as long as she is alive. Nancy van Styvendale claims that, the trauma caused by any past events can continue to the present or for a long time. By considering all these incidents, we can say that *Woman at Point Zero* is a fictional anamnesis of trauma.

## CONCLUSION

By extending the enquiry to individual fictional protagonist of *The Woman at Point Zero* analyzed here, the worldviews fragmented by traumatic and painful events she endures is revealed. The project attempted to highlight that trauma and pain can be wider crisis than envisaged. Silences, pretence and lack of confidence become the virtual reality that she constructs to come to terms with her various traumas. In this make-believe world that she inhabit, skewed memories and hurtful narratives of the past play a vital role. The past is selectively constructed and burdened by forgotten or half remembered multiple remembrances. The bearing of burden falls on the victim who carries her secrets by trying to forget.

Firdaus, as a central character, recounts how a lifetime of betrayal and abuse. She is an orphan who was passed from one abusive guardian to another, and her tale shows how trust is tested and finally erodes, leaving behind only fear and alienation. Nawal El Saadawi provides sufficient narrative space for her subaltern protagonist to speak and tell her own story. By the end of the narrative, she is located in a position to rebel the forces of oppression and exploitation. She is not powerless anymore contesting and confronting an entire tyrannical system.

We can say that, it is through narration that the traumatic victims can overcome the dilemma imposed by a distressing memory. Many may be open to the idea of narrating and re-narrating the traumatic events to themselves or someone whom they can trust. Their life stories are attempts to retrieve and decode the enigmatic event from a state of collapse of understanding. In *Woman at Point Zero* one can see, gradually,

Firdaus is doing the same by narrating her life stories to Saadawi. In doing so, she is able to exorcise herself of buried experiences and absolve herself of repressed trauma. She narrates a harrowing account of molestation which results in hysterical symptoms ranging from weeping to aphasia to trembling and other symptoms.

Based on the analysis conveyed, it can be concluded that, Firdaus murders her pimp because of her childhood experiences with the men who sexually assaulted her and rape her. In depicting the trauma that the character faces, this novel takes up the scenario of a victim of trauma who has become a perpetrator. Here, surviving through trauma and painful events happens in this novel through a fusion of memories and memory gaps. Thus Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero* is a fictional anamnesis of the trauma.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**A PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY OF MCEWAN'S**  
***ATONEMENT***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**RANYA RANJ**

**Register No: DB18AEGR011**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

March 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “**A Psychoanalytic Study of McEwan’s *Atonement*”** is an authentic record of bona fide work carried out by **Ranya Ranj** under my supervision and guidance at the Department of Studies in English, Aswathi Krishna, Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Angadikadavu, Kannur University.

**Sarath Krishnan**

**Dept. in Charge**

**Aswathi Krishna**

**Project Supervisor**

### **Declaration**

I, Ranya Ranj, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**A Psychoanalytic Study of McEwan’s *Atonement*”** has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Aswathi Krishna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

**RANYA RANJ**

**DB18AEGR011**

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**Ranya Ranj**

## CONTENT

<b>Sl. No.</b>		<b>Page no.</b>
1	Introduction	1
2	<b>Chapter One</b>	<b>4</b>
	Psychoanalysis: Exploring Freud and Lacan	
3	<b>Chapter Two</b>	<b>14</b>
	Reflecting a Deeper Darkness of Mind in <i>Atonement</i>	
4	<b>Chapter Three</b>	<b>22</b>
	<i>Atonement</i> : A Psychoanalytic Study	
	Conclusion	28
	Works Cited	30

## Introduction

The beginning of psychoanalysis can be traced back to 1890's in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The theory began to draw more attention under the discoveries of Sigmund Freud who is considered as the father of Psychoanalysis. The theory of psychoanalysis is often discussed in the field of psychology and literature. This theory focus on theory of organised formation of personality and the changing nature of personality that guide psychoanalysis. It is said that the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis is widely deployed in academic field of literary criticism or literary theory. Psychoanalysis is used to treat mental disorders by the effective interaction of conscious and unconscious elements of mind. Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Erik Erikson, Carl Jung are the main proponents of theory of psychoanalysis. This psychological interpretation is used as a mechanism to find out the hidden meaning of a literary text.

The main objective of this thesis is to point out Psychoanalytic views of Freud and Lacan in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. The research paper attempts to explore the effects of unconscious mind on one's action and focuses on how language helps to shape reality. The thesis also examines how the psychoanalytical theories on the relationship between language and reality allow broader understanding of the concept of vulnerability. It also exposes the discursive dimension of language, knowledge and social relation as the locus of determinations on emotional life.

Ian McEwan is one of the noted postmodern writer, novelist and screenwriter. *First Love, Last Rites, The Cement Garden, The Comfort of Strangers* are the major works of McEwan. These works are written in a realistic style in order to convey a sense of ordinariness. His work often focuses on themes of time, history and

knowledge, as well as the exploration of twisted interiors. *Atonement* is one such work of McEwan which is widely regarded as his best. It is a symphonic novel of love and war, childhood and class, guilt and forgiveness. In second World War England, 13-year-old Briony Tallis misinterprets her older sister's love affair with their family's gardener to be something much worse than what it is. Her innocence and partial understanding of the world begins a chain of events that tears the family apart and alters the course of the rest of the girl's life. The most important theme of *Atonement* is the way an individual's perspective inevitably shapes his or her reality.

Many studies and thematic researches have been carried out with regard to *Atonement*. For instance, "In Search of True Identity : The Mutual Relationships of Human Beings in Ian McEwan's *Atonement* and *Enduring love*" by Zohre Ramin and Fatemeh Masoumi analyse as an evidence on the basis of theories in narratology and psychology and finally drawing on both theories , a new form of character representation is manifested on identity and self-recognition . Arrested Pre Oedipal Development in Briony's Psychological Complexity: A Psychoanalytic Analysis on Ian McEwan's *Atonement*" is another study on the novel and it attempts to present how psychological complexity of *Atonement's* main character, Briony, is influenced by an arrested pre oedipal.

When compared with all these theoretical studies, this thesis seeks to investigate the novel with a different perspective. The thesis attempts to point out Psychoanalytic views of Freud and Lacan in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. It explores the influence of unconscious mind on one's action by analysing the main characters of the novel .The research also focuses on how language helps to shape reality basing the novel's central character as an example.

The thesis is divided into five chapters including an introduction chapter and a conclusion chapter. The introduction chapter introduces the relevance of the topic. It explains the main objective of the thesis and gives background information of the same. The first chapter introduces psychoanalytic theories focusing mainly on Freud and Lacan. The second chapter introduces Ian McEwan and his novel based on which the thesis is carried out. The third chapter attempts to explore the psychoanalytic elements in the novel. It concentrates on the unconscious drive of the main characters in the novel and the importance of language in shaping reality. In the final chapter is the conclusion is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out in the third chapter.

## **Chapter One**

### **Psychoanalysis: Exploring Freud and Lacan**

The beginning of modern psychology is marked by early 20th century and with the pace of modern psychology the psychological analysis of literary texts evolved. Psychoanalysis is one of the modern theories existing. This theory focuses on theory of organised formation and the changing nature of personality that guide psychoanalysis. It is said that the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis is widely deployed in academic field of literary criticism or literary theory. Taking into consideration, all the critical approaches in literature, psychoanalysis has been one of the most controversial and least appreciated. In spite of that, psychoanalysis is regarded as one of the most fascinating approaching theories in the application of interpretative analysis. This psychological interpretation is used as a mechanism to find out the hidden meaning of a literary text.

Tracing back to history of psychology, we find that psychoanalysis started from the medical profession. Then venturing into psychology, it spreads into other fields of studies and finally permeated literary studies as one of the different approaches to literature. In psychology, Psychoanalysis is used as a therapy which aims to cure mental disorders by investigating the collaborative working of conscious and unconscious elements in the minds. Psychoanalysis examines the articulation of our most inner anxieties and meanings to culture and gives us a perspective on them as cultural formation. The idea of psychoanalysis revolves around the concept that people's actions and defences are influenced by their restored ideas of the recurrent events. Psychoanalysis focuses on early interaction and its influence on our action. These thoughts not only influence the development of functioning of psyche but also

shape the content of the individual. According to Monte (1977), “Psychoanalytic theories assume the existence of unconscious internal states that motivate an individual’s overt actions”.

The Methods of "reading" employed by Freud is adopted in psychoanalytic criticism and further used by theorists to interpret texts. It points out, like dreams, literary text also expresses the hidden unconscious desires and anxieties of the author, that is, a literary work is a manifestation of the author's own neuroses. One may analyse a particular character on psychoanalytic basis within a literary work, but they are assumed to be the projections of the author's psyche. In the contemporary understanding of reading, meaning and the relation of literature to culture, psychoanalysis plays a great role. In literature, this modern theory has two accepted meanings. Firstly, psychoanalysis is interpreted as method of treating people’s mental disorders. Secondly, it refers or means the theories on human mind and its various complexities. With this, one can say that Psychoanalytic literary criticism aims on the following: A. The author: The theory can be applied to analyse the author, his life and work in literature. B. The characters: This theory can analyse one or more of the characters in a literary work. The characters’ behaviours, desires and motivations is understood by using psychoanalysis. C. The audience: The theory clarifies how appealing is a work to the readers. D. The text: It also analyses the role of language and symbolism within the work.

There are many theories foregrounding psychoanalysis. But the main theories related to Freud, Lacan and Psychoanalytic concept have influenced many writers and readers which are reflected in the character of the work and their minds. This critical method used the concepts put forward by noted sociologists, including

Alfred Adler and Otto Rank, Carl Jung and above all Sigmund Freud. Psychoanalysis was first progressed as a method of therapy for treating mental disorders by Freud, but as time passed, it widened its scope and underwent further developments and practices in the history of civilizations including religion, warfare, literature, mythology and other various field of study.

Psychoanalytic theory was propounded by Sigmund Freud, an Austrian neurologist. Freud was originally a medical doctor, a physiologist, a psychologist who was engaged in the study and treatment of patients in his clinic and also an influential thinker. His genuine devotion to concerned sector makes him observe mental disease of his patients. Gradually he developed more interest in the study of psychology, particularly in the psychology of the unconscious mind. Through this method of psychoanalysis, he tries to unpack or resolve the knot of unconscious conflict based on the dreams and fantasies of patient and by the method of free association where the uncovering of the unconscious content takes place. His findings and theories on personality, child sexuality, unconscious, libido, and ego were the most influential concepts in academics in the 20th century. Freud's innovative treatment of human actions, dreams, study of human mind and indeed of cultural artefacts possess implicit symbolic significance and have been used in variety of fields including psychology, anthropology, semiotics, and artistic creativity and appreciation. However, Freud's claim of inventing the science of the mind with psychoanalysis is still a topic of critical debate and centre of controversy.

According to Freud, our mind has three distinct regions. Firstly, the psychology of psychoneurosis, dreams, jokes and what he called the psychopathology of everyday life, such as slips of the tongue, of the pens. The second is a system of pre-conscious and a third a system of conscious. His ideas were first presented in *The*

*interpretation of Dreams (1900)*. It has often been assumed that the evidential basis for these theories came from his study of dreams. It is the mind in which all our pleasant and unpleasant experiences are recorded, accumulated, organised and summarised.

He described three levels of human mind using an analogy or conceit of an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg that remains above the water represents conscious part of mind where thoughts that are centre of attention or focus now is held. It's a storage of small mental activities we know about. The preconscious or subconscious part of mind include all that can be redeemed from memory. It stands for stored memories and knowledge. These are things we could be aware of if we desired. The third part that is submerged in water is the most significant region, unconscious. The real causes of our behaviour and attitude processes here. It reserves our violent motives, sexual instincts, irrational wishes, fears, and immoral urges, shameful and traumatic experiences.

Sigmund Freud highlights the importance of the unconscious mind, and Freudian theory primarily assumes that the unconscious mind drives a person's behaviour to a greater extent than they suspect. In psychoanalytic theory of personality, the unconscious mind is defined by Freud as a carrier of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that are far away from conscious awareness. Unconscious thoughts, beliefs, and feelings can potentially cause a number of problems including: Anger, bias, distress, uncontrollable behaviours, difficult social interaction, and relationship issues. Freud believed that early circumstances or events in our childhood have a great impact on our adult lives in moulding our personality. For instance, anxiety originating from traumatic incidents in a person's past life is hidden from consciousness, and may cause problems in future.

“The unconscious is the larger circle which includes within itself the smaller circle of the conscious; everything conscious has its preliminary step in the unconscious, whereas the unconscious may stop with this step and still claim full value as a psychic activity. Properly speaking, the unconscious is the real psychic; its inner nature is just as unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is just as imperfectly reported to us through the data of consciousness as is the external world through the indications of our sensory organs.” (Sigmund Freud, *Dream Psychology: Psychoanalysis for Beginners*)

Freud stated that “the unconscious is destiny”. This means that unconscious activity determines the majority of your actions. The idea of things outside of conscious acknowledgement has existed for long years. The "unconscious" was first coined by Friedrich Schelling, a philosopher, in the late 18th-century and was later translated to English by poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In the field of psychology, the notion of unconscious influences was explained by thinkers including William James and Wilhelm Wundt, but it was with Freud’s popularisation of the idea that made it a central component of his psychoanalytic approach. The Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung also believed that our unconscious mind had great impact in shaping our actions and behaviour. He believed that there was a personal unconscious that conserved individual’s suppressed thoughts, urges which he referred to as collective unconscious. The collective unconscious was said to contain inherited ancestral memories common to all of humankind.

The unconscious is that part of the mind that lies outside the somewhat uncertain and out of consciousness and is constructed by the repressed thoughts or

memories of which is too painful to remain in consciousness. The unconsciousness considers what is called by Freud as Laws of transformation. These are the principles that govern the process of repression and sublimation. In general, one can say that the unconscious serves as a link the theoretical function of making the relation between childhood experience and intelligible adult personality. Even when many ideas of Freud have fallen out of favour, modern psychologists continue to discover the impact of unconscious mental processes including related topics such as unconscious bias, implicit memory, attitudes and non-conscious learning.

Jacques Marie Emile Lacan is one of the most controversial psychoanalysts of the twentieth century. He is sometimes called “The French Freud”. French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan has reinterpreted Freud in structuralist terms, bringing the theory into the second half of the Twentieth century. He is a prominent figure in the history of psychoanalysis. His findings and innovations explore the significance of Freud’s discovery of the unconscious both in the theory and practical application of analysis itself as well as connect with mass range of other disciplines. Over the course of more than past fifty years, Lacanian ideas have become central to the various receptions of things, especially psychoanalytic in Continental philosophical circles.

“I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object. What is realised in my history is not the past definite of what was, since it is no more, or even the present perfect of what has been in what I am, but the future anterior of what I shall have been for what I am in the process of becoming.”(Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*)

Lacan says “Unconscious is structured like language”. With this aphorism, Lacan inaugurates his return to Freud and the project of analysis taken from the perspective of linguistics, structural anthropology, set mathematics and topology. It is also one of the most influential contributions to psychoanalysis. Fink argues that the Lacanian unconscious is not only structured like a language but is itself a language, as it is language that forms the unconscious. This involves us in renewing, what we mean by language. Language, for Lacan, designates not simply verbal speech or written text but it includes any signifying system that is based upon differential relations. The unconscious is structured like a language in the sense that it is a signifying process that include coding and decoding. The unconscious comes into being in the symbolic order in the gap between signifier and signified, through the sliding of the signified beneath the signifier and the failure of meaning to be fixed. In nutshell, the unconscious is something that signifies and must be deciphered.

Lacan thought language is fragilly acquired via identification. But the libidinal effect (of loss, gaze, and voice so on) gives rise to compensation for loss that Lacan called as desires. The triad of loss, anxiety and desire introduces a temporal dimension into language that pushes human to annual loss and inconsistency, such that even language itself serves to fill up the gap between wanting and being. Moreover, Lacan views language as acquired in series of temporal conjunctions and disjunctions. The necessary condition that renders human animal capable of becoming speaking being subject of desire, that is the union of a proper name with an image of body joined to a sense of corporal consistency or satisfaction. The symbolic (word) binds the imaginary (image) to the real in a seeming totality, in a supposed unity we call “mind”. But semblance of wholeness is paradoxical as symbolic mediates

between false fullness of visible image and the traumatic effect of the real as an impossibility inscribed on the body, introducing a lack there.

When the functioning of the linguistic structure allows one to communicate an idea, it is the linguistic structure, the symbolic order, the Other or the unconscious, which allows one to communicate the idea, and one's presence or existence as a speaking subject is negated. It is a trace or gap in language; one's absence in language reveals the presence of the unconscious in absence, the presence of the other into which one is inserted in the symbolic order. His or her imaginary ego in conscious thought, identification with one's image and images in general, prevents one from seeing oneself as an absence in language, prevents one from experiencing his or her unconscious. This type of production in language was labelled by Lacanian "signifiance," as opposed to significance or signifying, a type of production in language which does not cross the bar, the point of resistance, between the signifier and the signified in language, from the Saussurean models. Signifiance contains the presence of the irrational and the unconscious, and the absence of the signified, and thus the absence of the subject, and the absence of being, though it is predicated on the presence of that absence.

According to Lacan, language should not be confused with the "various psychical and somatic functions that serve it in the speaking subject –because language its structure exist prior to the moment at which each subject at a certain in his mental development makes his entry into it" (Ibid. 90). He connects unconscious with the language and writes that beyond the speech "what the psychoanalytic experience discovers in the unconscious is the whole structure of language" (Ibid. 190). The subject appears to be the slave of

language and the unconscious cannot survive without the language. It is language that distinguishes human sciences from the natural sciences. Lacan alters Saussure's theory of signifier and signified and maintains that signifier does not have the capacity to convey meaning. It is in the chain of the signifier that the meaning 'insists' but that none of its elements 'consists' in the signification of which it is at the moment capable. The signified slides from the signifier; no signification can be sustained other than by reference to another signification. Language cannot cover the whole filled of the signified. The signifier suggests only an illusion of the signified. If the signifier yields meaning, it is in relation to the object and not thing. As a result the relation between the signifier and the signified is not one of parallelism. Lacan gives an example of two identical doors of toilets in train. "Ladies" and "Gentlemen" were inscribed over these two doors. Though the function of these two doors are the same, the signifier "Ladies" does not merely point to a signified that somehow is already there, outside of it; here "signifier enters the signified, namely, in a form which, not being immaterial, raises the question of its place in reality" (Ibid. 192). Each signified is the same country traversed from different points of views; the different point of view creates a difference in the signified. Meaning is seen at the particular point of time and place. None of the element in itself consists of meaning. Meaning is always postponed, paused, stands upon another element. Meaning is not stable. Lacan calls this chain of signifier as "rings of a necklace that is a ring in another necklace made of rings".

The language is, thus, a great force that shapes everything from what we do to how we process experiences to how we behave. Language is a strange yet amazing thing. It both contextualizes and provide us with ability to share our experiences. By

widening our linguistic capabilities and vocabularies, we broaden our cognitive universes — and so deepen our understanding of the world, each other and ourselves.

## Chapter Two

### Reflecting a Deeper Darkness of Mind in *Atonement*

The British novelist, short story writer, and screenwriter Ian McEwan was born in Hampshire, England. Being an army officer's son, Ian spent some of his childhood living abroad like Singapore, Germany, North Africa, and Libya while his father was on military campaigns during the Cold War. McEwan graduated with distinction from the University of Sussex. On the MA Creative Writing course, he became the first student established at the University of East Anglia by Malcolm Bradbury and Angus Wilson. He is a Fellow of both the Royal Society of Literature and the Royal Society of Arts, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and was awarded the Shakespeare Prize by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation, Hamburg, in 1999. He was awarded a CBE in 2000.

*First Love, Last Rites* (1975) were his first collections of short stories and won the Somerset Maugham Award. *Between the Sheets* was the second volume published in 1978. These stories are claustrophobic tales of childhood, deviant sexuality, and disjointed family life and were remarkable for their formal experimentation and controlled narrative voice. His first novel *The Cement Garden* (1978), followed by *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981), set in Venice, are tales of fantasy, violence, and obsession. In addition, he has written plays for television, radio, and film screenplays, including *The Ploughman's Lunch* (1985), an adaptation of Timothy Mo's novel *Sour Sweet* (1988), and an adaptation of his own novel, *The Innocent* (1993). In fact, there are film adaptations to his own novels like *The Cement Garden*, *The Comfort of Strangers*, *Atonement*, etc. His early work exhibits an interest in the macabre, in violence, and inhuman perversity. These works are written in a realistic style in order to convey a sense of ordinariness. His work often focuses on themes of time, history,

and knowledge, as well as the exploration of twisted interiors. As a postmodern author, McEwan is self-referential in much of his work, and many of his characters are some form of writer.

Today, Ian McEwan continues to surprise his readers churning out literature. McEwan's writing style follows a richly detailed and descriptive literary style, every single page of his novel is flooded with the use of colourful imagery with instantly draws readers' attention and leaves them cliff-hanging yearning for more. His novel *Saturday*, *Atonement*, *On Chesil Beach*, shares a unique style and features a brilliant literary voice. McEwan's novels consist of highly developed characters and usually writes in third person. Since the characters are not the narrators, he develops a deep character description to familiarize their personalities. This enables the reader to build a connection with each and every character and also adds credibility to his characters.

Widely regarded as one of the best works of Ian McEwan, *Atonement* is shortlisted for the 2001 Booker Prize for fiction. In 2010, Time Magazine named it in its list of the hundred greatest English language novels since 1923. *Atonement* is a 2002 British Meta fiction novel written by Ian McEwan concerning the understanding of and responding to the need for personal atonement. It is set in three time periods 1935 England, Second World War England and France, and present-day England. It covers an upper-class girl's half innocent mistake that ruins lives, her adulthood in the shadow of that mistake, and reflection on the nature of writing. It is a symphonic novel of love and war, childhood and class, guilt and forgiveness. A 13-year-old girl Briony Tallis misinterprets her older sister Cecilia's love affair with their family gardener Robbie Turner to be something much worse than what it is and derives at her own conclusion. Assuming that he is forcing Cecilia into a sexual encounter and later intercepting a letter Robbie sends to Cecilia declaring his lust, Briony decides Robbie

to be an evil beast or sex maniac. When her cousin Lola is mysteriously attacked, Briony wrongly points finger at Robbie accusing him, who is then arrested and jailed. The novel then follows Robbie, after five years later in the army, now exposed to the horrors of Dunkirk evacuations. In the final part, Briony comes to terms with her guilt over what she did to Robbie and Cecilia, now finally together. At last, McEwan portrays Briony as a dying novelist and the reader shockingly learns that she is the author of the book, sections which are untrue and fictionalized, that is the happily ever after ending of Robbie and Cecilia is an atonement to cover up the ugly mistake she did. The novel is not just about atonement but is the atonement itself. Her innocent mind and prejudiced understanding of the world begins a series of events that rip the family apart and alters the course of the rest of the girl's life. The most crucial theme of *Atonement* is the way an individual's frame of mind certainly shapes his or her reality.

Several studies has been made based on this novel with different perspectives. In the study “Arrested Pre-Oedipal Development in Briony’s Psychological complexity: A Psychoanalytic Analysis on Ian McEwan’s *Atonement*” by T Apriyanti, attempts to present how Briony, the central character of the novel *Atonement*, psychological complexity is altered by an arrested pre-Oedipal. It highlights the consequences of going through an arrested pre-Oedipal stage for Briony. Object relation theory of psychoanalysis explains that interpersonal relationship between mother and child influences the embodiment of the self .This thesis points out that lack of gratifying maternal care can deliberately destroy the characters manifestation of self .The body of the thesis also discusses and focuses on the presentation of each character’s mind as presented by McEwan in the novel. It attempts to address the novel’s psychological issues that provide a picturisation of

Briony's psychological complexity. The study of this thesis aims to read *Atonement* from a psychoanalytic feminist perspective. The thesis applies the principle concept that Briony's psychological state has its root in her experience in the pre-Oedipal stage. As the interpretation of the novel, this thesis engages in feminist psychoanalytic criticism. And also enables the readers to seize the meaning of the text.

Another study held on this novel is "Childhood's trauma in *The - Go Between* and *Atonement*: An analysis of children's psychosexual development in the novels" by L. P. Hartley and Ian McEwan. This is a comparative study between the two novels *The -Go Between* by L.P.Harley and *Atonement* by Ian McEwan. This study analyses childhood trauma and its impact using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories. Firstly, the central character of both novels; Briony's and Leon's fantasy motif is examined in which both the children are looking for a wish of fulfilment. Then the focus shifts to children's personality and psychosexual development. The study emphasizes on the unconscious and how it controls children's behaviour using Freudian theories of three elements of personality: id, ego and superego to analyse characters' psyche and also, a discussion of the theory of psychosexual development focuses on the importance of parents and fixation of the various stages. Briony and Leo do not resolve the phallic stage successfully and their fixation guides to catastrophe. Furthermore, to cope with the sense of misconduct, Briony uses sublimation as a defence mechanism: she sublimates her guilt into fiction and lives through a sense of guilt all the time. On the other side, Leo represses his memory and desires, as the trauma in childhood shaped his perceptions of sexuality. This paper also explores how trauma in childhood has an effect on the children's future life.

Similarly, an interesting viewpoint of the novel is explored in the article "A Freudian Psychoanalytic Criticism: Briony Tallis Process of Sublimation in *Atonement* by Ian

McEwan". This research aims to discover the motivation for Briony's false accusation by analysing her mind. Two methods have been used to analyse Briony Tallis' character. First, the writer uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach with the three elements of personality- id, ego and superego, to analyse the motivation behind Briony's action. Furthermore, the theory of sublimation has also been used to analyse the psychic development of Briony Tallis. By Freudian psychoanalysis theory, it's clear that Briony has experienced the process of sublimation: a process of turning one's repressed feelings into a nobler thing or into a work of art. The sublimation first happens when Briony gives up her chance to continue her study to college. She chooses to be a war time nurse. The second sublimation happens when Briony writes a novel about her experience." The writer of the article approaches Briony's mind in two levels using Freudian psychoanalysis.

Apart from these, one can think of element of postmodernism in this novel. The novel talks about three time periods, 1935 England, Second World War England and France, and present-day England and also *Atonement* employs several characteristics of postmodernism in its narrative techniques that focus the conflict between differing perceptions of truth and the elusiveness of memory. *Atonement* questions not only authorial authority but also the consciousness of the mind, which distorts truth and history. The structure of the narrative centres the conflict on the different perceptions of truth, facts and beliefs, and truth and illusion. It reflects on a smaller scale, the similarly written, similarly-constructed history of the Second World War. *Atonement* is a Meta fiction and that itself marks a postmodern concept. As Meta fictional writing developed in the postmodern period and received mixed responses. McEwan seems to be interested in the interrelationship connecting reality and imagination, history and fabrication in the process of writing, which is one of the themes related to postmodern

metafiction writing. In his writing practice he adopts the postmodern intertextuality. Intact those postmodern concerns and strategies confirm his position as a postmodernist which is employed in the novel *Atonement*. Even though *Atonement* centres on the tale of Briony Tallis, it not only revolves around her but also talks about other lives through her: "The very complexity of her feelings confirmed Briony in her view that she was entering an arena of adult emotion and dissembling from which her writing was bound to benefit. What fairy tale ever had so much by way of contradiction?"(55)

Thirteen year old young girl Briony is gifted with the art of writing. She lived in her own world of imagination, stories and writing. She is a petulant child, both unsophisticated and certain of her understanding. Being at a transposition stage of life, she was too young to understand the world around her and misapprehend the motives and intentions of adult behaviour that set her in the shadow of guilt for the rest of her life. Her passion for writing is aware of the power of pen. In the novel, one finds that the conclusion of the novel is fictionalised and narrated by Briony in an attempt to atone for the damages she has caused and rectify the falsehoods she spread.

Throughout the novel, one sees the deep representation of the psyche of the character Briony. Through storytelling, novel deals with genuine events and false views of those events by different characters. Analysis of the psyche can be implemented because Briony is odd and her subconscious mind misinterprets the truth. Briony is shown still immature and unable to comprehend love, through the stories of the play she creates. The contrast between the understanding of the fountain scene between Cecilia and Robbie and what really happened is supported by Freud's explanation that Briony's subconscious affects her actions. And when she hides digging her own deeds, it's writing that helps her to atone and ease out what she has

been holding for years. She escapes guilt through her atonement and fictionalises the happy ending of Robbie and Cecilia which was turned into a disaster in real life by the mistake she owned.

Even at the age of thirteen, Briony engages herself in the world of writing and could represent the world in five pages. She knew the power of imagination and how it adds life by converting them to words. Moreover as a writer, she understands that she has completed autonomy to spoil and restore lives and is aware that she has completed freedom to command the lives of the character. She understands the credibility of words. But in the beginning of the novel, she is too young to understand the difference between reality and fictional plot. She presumes that she has power over real people like her characters. Writing allows her to exert her power over the characters and circumstances and she is able to create stories in her favour.

This quality of Briony shatters her in the past. But the same power helps her to shape reality and break free from the sense of guilt. Briony portrays her own character as having undergone years of torturous guilt and attempts to atone that have culminated in frustration using language. Therefore, *Atonement* also points out the power of language in shaping the reality. With the power of being a writer, Briony tries to change her reality by giving fictional happiness to Robbie and Cecilia, instead of the veristic tragedy they both endured, and moreover, she tries to change the actions of her fictionalized self.

"A world could be made in five pages, and one that was more pleasing than a model farm. The childhood of a spoiled prince could be framed within half a page, a moonlit dash through sleepy villages was one rhythmically emphatic sentence, falling in love could be achieved in a single word--a glance. The

pages of a recently finished story seemed to vibrate in her hand with all the life they contained."(7)

## Chapter One

### *Atonement: A Psychoanalytic Study*

*Atonement*, one of the best novels of Ian McEwan, begins on joyous gossamer wings and descends into an abyss of loss and tragedy. It opens in an English house between the wars that are sort of a dream of elegance, then a 13-year-old girl Briony Tallis sees something she misunderstands tells a lie and destroys all possibility of happiness in three lives, including her own.

It is a symphonic novel of love and war, childhood and class, guilt and forgiveness. Briony Tallis the central character is a literary, self-centred teenager who lives in an English country estate in 1935. Her cousins, 15-year-old Lola Quincey and a pair 9-year-old twins Jackson and Pierrot Quincey, are coming to stay in the Tallis house because their parents are at the verge of divorce. Meanwhile, Briony's older sister Cecilia holds tangled romantic feelings for Robbie Turner, the Tallises' gardener.

The intention of the third chapter is to analyse the psychoanalytic approach in Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement* and also focus on the role of 'unconscious' as described by Freud by analysing the characters in the novel and their perceptions based on the influence of the unconscious. Taking the viewpoints of Lacan on language, this chapter also explores the importance of language in shaping reality taking instances from the novel. The ultimate aim of the chapter is to apply psychoanalytic views of Freud and Lacan into Ian McEwan's *Atonement* by exploring the world of the character Briony and elucidate the psychological growth and flaws of the character and also other characters of the novel. The chapter, in general, analyses the effects of the subconscious mind in a person's action and also examines how the

psychoanalytical theories on the relationship between language and reality allow broader understanding of the concept of vulnerability. It also exposes the discursive dimension of language, knowledge, and social relation as the locus of determinations on emotional life.

*Atonement* is a novel of postmodern era that centres around the character Briony Tallis, the main protagonist of the novel. As the title of the novel means “action of making amends for the wrong”, Briony tries to atone her wrongdoings through the process of writing. Throughout the novel, one sees Briony as a thirteen year old girl, middle class girl and also an aspiring writer. Her imagination is full of stories that can distort her image of reality. Briony is odd and her unconscious influence misinterprets the truth of events. The novel begins with focus on Briony, a curious writer and her eagerness to get her *The Trials of Arabella* finished so that she could present it before her brother Leon once he returns home. Though the play has intelligent wordings, it has clearly showcased her immaturity, unable to comprehend love or her incomplete understanding of love and relationships.

“At the age of eleven she wrote her first story—a foolish affair, imitative of half a dozen folktales and lacking, she realized later, that vital knowingness about the ways of the world which compels a reader’s respect. But this first clumsy attempt showed her that the imagination itself was a source of secrets: once she had begun the story, no one could be told. Pretending in words was too tentative, too vulnerable, too embarrassing to let anyone know. Even writing out made her wince, and she felt foolish, appearing to know about emotions of an imaginary beings. Self-exposure was inevitable the

moment she described a character's weakness: the reader was bound to speculate that she was describing herself." (6)

The contrasting understanding of the fountain scene of Briony to that of Cecilia and Robbie and what really happened is supported by Freud's explanation of influence of unconscious mind in action. Briony's false interpretation of the fountain scene is the outcome of her father away from home and her mother not openly nurturing or speaking of her relationship and therefore only understanding love through books. In Briony's point of view, she watches out Cecilia and Robbie's encounter and smells something wrong. She is further startled when Cecilia undresses herself and jump into fountain in search of vase and then storm back to the house after the awkward stare between Cecilia and Robbie.

Here Briony's unconscious drive into focus, this is what Freud explains "part of the mind beyond consciousness which nevertheless has a strong influence upon our actions or thoughts". Briony thinks of the scene in a fairy-tale perspective in which the heroine is to be saved, this is based on her own upbringing and lack of proper maternal care. This may be also understood in Freud's repression, 'forgetting or avoiding inner conflicts, unadmitted desires or traumas in the past events so that they are pulled out of their conscious awareness and into the realm of the unconscious again due to her own parents crisis ridden relationship Briony's subconscious maybe bringing up imaginations of what constitutes a good marriage.

Furthermore, scenes like the wrong letter handed over to Briony and the sexual encounter between her sister and Robbie seems to be a turn in her life as she now realizes 'what power one could have over the other, and how easy it was to get everything wrong'. Robbie sends Cecilia a note to apologize for breaking the vase, he

writes this out after several trials but ends up typing a note saying, “In my dreams I kiss your cunt, your sweet wet cunt. In my thoughts I make love to you all day long” but he accidentally hands over the draft note to Briony to pass it to Cecelia. Here in Freudian view, it can be seen as a ‘Freudian slip’ and this is where repressed elements in the unconscious discovers an outlet through such everyday phenomena as slips of the tongue, slip of words or unintended actions’, therefore his passionate interest for Cecilia subconsciously made him write the draft note without even knowing about what he was writing and secondly he had subconsciously given the note and carry out actions. Therefore his subconscious again influence his actions.

Taking the idea of Lacan, Terry Eagleton in his *Literary Theory: An Introduction* says “Language, the unconscious, the parents, the symbolic order: these terms in Lacan are not exactly synonymous, but they are intimately allied. They are sometimes spoken of by him as the ‘Other’ — as that which like language is always anterior to us and will always escape us, that which brought us into being as subjects in the first place but which always outruns our grasp. We have seen that for Lacan our unconscious desire is directed towards this “Other”, in the shape of some ultimately gratifying reality which we can never have; but it is also true for Lacan that our desire is in some way always received from the “Other” too. We desire what others — our parents, for instance — unconsciously desire for us; and desire can only happen because we are caught up in linguistic, sexual and social relations — the whole field of the ‘Other’ — which generate it.”

The content written in the note can also cause the psychoanalysis development in the form of the language used. Lacan views into language to analyse the subconscious in which he states, ‘how could a psychoanalyst of today not realise that his realm of truth is in fact the word’ and that language ‘is a matter of contrast

between words and other words... there is a wall between signifier (the word) and the signified (what is referred). When focused on the term 'cunt' used by Robbie in his letter to Cecelia, the signified that Robbie intends it to be is the vagina of a woman, however when Cecelia decodes the term, she believes it signifies the unnoticed love between them 'a simple phrase chased around in Cecelia's thoughts. Briony interprets this word to mean that Robbie is a sex maniac.

This explication shows how each of the characters' subconscious has affected the meaning of the word 'cunt', through Robbie's inclination for Cecilia, and Cecilia's acknowledgement of love, to Briony's analysis that he is mad and insane for using the word. It is this small word that inevitably changes the life of three forever, as now Briony interprets Robbie to be a 'maniac' and threat to her sister and women in her family she then wrongly accuses Robbie of raping her cousin Lola when the twins go around missing. In doing so, she believes she is protecting Cecilia from him therefore her lie is buried away in unconscious: "I always speak the truth. Not the whole truth, because there's no way, to say it all. Saying it all is literally impossible: words fail. Yet it's through this very impossibility that the truth holds onto the real."(Lacan). To put in McEwan's words:

"There was a crime. But there was also the lovers. Lovers and their happy ends have been on my mind all night long. As into the sunset we sail. An unhappy intervention. It occurs to me that I have not travelled very far after all, since I wrote my little play. Or rather I have made digression and double back to my starting place. It is only last version that my lovers end well, standing side by side on a South London pavement as I walked away. All the preceding drafts were pitiless."(175)

In the end of the novel readers learn that it is Briony who has written this whole story out of guilt and repentance. Instead of living the desired life at Cambridge, in which she was intended she follows the footsteps of her sister Cecilia and turns into a nurse. Briony's regret feeling subconsciously caused her to become a nurse. Here, she helps out a French soldier who has been wounded and it is here "she learned a simple, obvious thing she "that a person is, among all else, a material thing, easily torn, not easily mended". Based on this Lacanian viewpoint, one sees that it is language that helps her to shape her reality, she is able to confess the truth or reality and also find an escape from guilt. Through the fictionalised account she is able to gift happily ever after ending of Robbie and Cecilia which is an atonement to cover up the ugly mistake she made in the past. To carry out redemption she turns to rewrite the past.

## Conclusion

*Atonement*, one of the best novels of Ian McEwan, undoubtedly relies upon the psychoanalytic concepts. The trace of psychoanalytic theories put forward by Freud and Lacan are undeniably present in the novel through its characters. When analysed through the main theme of the novel, this thesis finds out that the essence of psychoanalysis is evidently present in the novel.

Psychoanalysis was found by Sigmund Freud and is a theory which analyses a person's subconscious mind to find out the source of their psychological problems. This type of analysis can be implemented to the central character Briony of *Atonement* as she is odd and her subconscious thoughts misrepresent the truth and implement Lacanian psychoanalytic view of how language helps out Briony to figure out reality. Also, *Atonement*, with respect to Lacanian triplet orders, is allocated to the elucidating to the psychological growth of character. It is divided into three subsections that is "retrospection of Briony and Cecilia to the imaginary order, the trap of subsection to the symbolic order and beyond representation the trauma of the real.

The contrasting understanding of the fountain scene of Briony to that of Cecilia and Robbie and what really happened is supported by Freud's explanation of influence of unconscious mind in action. Furthermore scenes like the wrong letter handed over to Briony and the sexual encounter between her sister and Robbie all these explication shows how each of the characters subconscious has affected the meaning of the word 'cunt', through Robbie's inclination for Cecilia, and Cecilia's acknowledgement of love, to Briony's analysis that he is mad and insane for using the word. It is this small word that inevitably changes the life of three forever, as now

Briony interprets Robbie to be a 'maniac' and threat to her sister and women in her family she then wrongly accuse Robbie of raping her cousin Lola when the twins go around missing. In doing so she believes she is protecting Cecelia from him therefore her lie is buried away in unconscious. Based on this Lacanian viewpoint one sees that it is language that helps her to shape her reality, she is able to confess the truth or reality and also find an escape from guilt. Hence, based on the study carried out in the third chapter, this thesis declares that the novel *Atonement* undoubtedly relies upon the psychoanalytic concepts.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

***MIRRORING OF PSYCHOANALYTIC TRAUMA IN***

***PERFUME, THE STORY OF A MURDERER***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**SNEHA ANIL P P**

**Register No: DB18AEGR012**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Sarath Krishnan April 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “**Mirroring of Psychoanalytical Trauma in Perfume, The Story of a Murderer**” is a bonafide work of Miss Sneha Anil P P, who carried out the project work under my supervision at the Department of Studies in English, Sarath Krishnan, Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Angadikadavu, Kannur University.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Head of Department

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Sneha Anil P P, hereby declare that the project work entitled “ *Mirroring of psychoanalytical trauma in Perfume, The story of the Murderer*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Sarath Krishnan of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College. I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Sneha Anil P P

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## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter One: A Peep to Psychoanalytic Trauma Theory	2-12
Chapter Two: Framing the Words of the Novel	13-23
Chapter Three: Mirroring of Psychoanalytic Trauma in perfume, The Story of a Murderer	24-34
Conclusion	35
Work Consulted	36

## Introduction

The main purpose of the project titled *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* is to find out the relevance and importance of the psychoanalytical theory in the world of literature and arts. For that the detailed analysis of Patrick Suskind's novel *Perfume, The Story of a Murderer* is included. The whole project is divided into three chapters.

The first chapter deals with the origin, history and development, characteristics and features in the field of Psychoanalytical theory, psychoanalytical trauma and trauma and literature.

The second chapter is about the analysis of the novel 'Perfume, The Story of a Murderer'. In this chapter, analysis of the novel, details about the author, character analysis and elements of magical realism is included.

The concluding chapter discusses the relation of theory and about the novel of in art forms in literature.

## CHAPTER 1

### A Peep to Psychoanalytic Trauma Theory

This is one of the most popular tactics to personality. It focuses on change, development, and conflicts in people's lives. This view owes generally to the contribution of Sigmund Freud. It is definitely one of the most popular theories that have influenced equally the minds of frequent men as properly as pupils from different disciplines.

Freud was once a physician, and he developed the idea in the path of his scientific practice. Freud is famous for his modern use of free affiliation (a technique in which a person is asked to overtly share all the thoughts, feeling and ideas that come to his/her mind), dream analysis and evaluation of blunders to decipher the internal functioning of mind.

Psychoanalytical idea refers to the definition of character agency and the dynamics of character that underlie and guide the psychoanalytical and psychodynamic psychotherapy, called psychoanalysis, a medical technique for treating psychopathology. First laid out by means of Sigmund Freud in the late 19th century, the psychoanalytical concept passed through many refinements on the grounds that his work. The Psychoanalytical idea got here to full prominence in the closing third of the twentieth century as part of the glide of imperative discourse related to psychological remedy after the 1960s, long after Freud's loss of life in 1939, and its validity is now extensively disputed or rejected. Freud had ceased his analysis of the Genius and his physiological research and shifted his focal point to learn about of the idea and the related psychological attributes making up the mind, and on therapy the use of free affiliation and the phenomena of transference. His learn about emphasized the attention

of childhood activities that could doubtlessly have an impact on the intellectual characteristic of adults. His examination of the genetic and then the development elements gave the psychoanalytic principle its characteristics. Starting with his booklet of *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1889, his theories started out to achieve prominence.

Through the scope of a psychoanalytic lens, human beings are described as having sexual and aggressive drives. A Psychoanalytical theorist believes that human behaviors are deterministic. It is governed by using irrational forces, and the unconscious, as well instinctual and biological drives. Due to this deterministic nature, psychoanalytic theorists do no longer accept as true with in free will.

The phrase “trauma” is used to describe experiences or stipulations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that crush people’s capacity to cope, leaving them powerless. Trauma has once in a while been described in references to conditions that are outside in the realm of human experience. Unfortunately, this definition doesn’t always keep true. For some team of people, trauma can often show up and grow to be part of the accepted human experience. A tense day trip can additionally of course be on the macro scale, but is extra often a synergetic accumulation of repeated anxious micro experiences. These cumulative annoying micro experiences lead to the symptom, which can additionally moreover take the structure of a dysfunction of the capability to think or to trip emotions. The bother is normally a take note of the share or disproportion between the parts of feel information and proto-emotions to which an trip furnish upward shove and the capacity or the incapacity of the instruments available for transforming the inputs received into thinkable experiences. What is not thinkable is either evacuated or encysted pending thinkability.

Trauma, which means “wound” in Greek, is regularly the result of an overwhelming amount of stress that exceeds one’s potential to cope or combine the thoughts concerned with that experience. An annoying event involves one experience, or repeating event with the feel of being overwhelmed that can be delayed by weeks, years, or even many years as the individual struggles to cope with the instantaneous circumstances, sooner or later leading to serious, lengthy -term bad consequences, regularly unnoticed even by way of mental fitness professionals: “If clinicians fail to seem to be via a trauma lens to conceptualize consumer troubles as associated possibly to modern or previous trauma, they might also fail to see that trauma victims, younger and old, prepare a great deal of their lives round repetitive patterns of reliving or warding off demanding memories, reminders, and affects”.

Trauma can be precipitated by means of a large range of events, but there are a few common aspects. There is a regularly a violation of the person’s familiar thoughts about the world and their human rights, inserting the person in a nation of intense confusion and insecurity. This is also considered when institutions are depended on for survival, violate or betray or disillusion the person in some unexpected way.

Psychologically disturbing experiences frequently includes physical trauma that threatens one’s survival and feel of security. Typical causes and risks of psychological trauma consist of harassment, sexual abuse, employment discrimination, police brutality, bullying, domestic violence, indoctrination, being the victim of an alcoholic parent, the hazard of either, or the witnessing of either, specially in childhood, life-threatening scientific conditions, medication-induced trauma. Catastrophic nature disaster such as earth quacks and volcanic eruption, conflict or different mass violence can additionally reason psychological trauma. Long-term publicity to situations such as

severe poverty or milder varieties of abuse, such as verbal abuse, exist independently of physical trauma but nonetheless generate psychological trauma.

However, the definition of trauma differs among humans by means of their subjective experiences, now not the objective facts. People will react to similar events differently. In other words, now not all people who experience a potentially stressful event will virtually grow to be psychologically traumatized. This discrepancy in chance charge can be attributing to defensive elements some folks may additionally have that enable them to cope with trauma. Some examples are slight publicity to stress early in life, resilience characteristics, and active looking for of help.

Some theories suggest childhood trauma can extend one's hazard for psychological disorders including PTSD, depression, and substance abuse. Childhood abuse tends to have the most complication with long-term effects out of all forms of trauma due to the fact it takes place at some point of the most sensitive and fundamental tiers of psychological development. It ought to additionally lead to violent behavior, perhaps as severe as serial murder. For example, Hickey's Trauma-control Model suggests that "childhood trauma for serial murderers may additionally serve as a triggering mechanism resulting in an individual's lack of ability to cope with the stress of positive events."

People who go through these kinds of extraordinarily demanding experiences frequently have certain signs and symptoms and troubles afterward. How serves these symptoms are relies upon on the person, the kind of trauma involved, and the emotional help they get hold of from others. Reactions to and signs and symptoms of trauma can be wide and varied, and fluctuate in severity from character to person. A traumatized individual can also journey one or quite a few of them.

After a demanding experience, a character may re-experience the trauma mentally and physically, consequently averting trauma reminders, also called triggers, as this can be uncomfortable and even painful. They can also turn to psychoactive supplies consisting of alcohol to attempt to escape the feelings. Re-experiencing signs are a signal that body and mind are actively struggling to cope with the traumatic experience.

Triggers and cues act as reminders of the trauma, and can purpose nervousness and different associated emotions. Often the man or woman can be completely unaware of what these triggers are. In many cases this may also lead a person struggling from nerve-racking problems to have interaction in disruptive or self-destructive coping mechanisms, regularly except being completely conscious of the nature or motives of their personal actions. Panic attacks are an instance of psychosomatic response to such emotional triggers, which can once in a while lead to serve-case psychosis.

Consequently, excessive feelings or anger may also regularly surface, occasionally in inappropriate or surprising situations, as the threat may also usually appear to be present, as an awful lot as it is real present and skilled from past events. Unsettling memories such as images, thoughts, or flashbacks may additionally hang out the person, and nightmares may also be frequent. Insomnia can also happen lurking fears and insecurity preserve the person vigilant and on the lookout for danger, each day and night. Trauma doesn't only reason modifications in one's day by day functions however could additionally lead to morphological changes. Such epigenetic modifications can be passed on to the subsequent generations, as a result making genetics as one of the elements of the motive of psychological trauma. However, some people born or later strengthen protecting factors such as genetics and sex that help decrease their risk of psychological trauma.

The man or woman might also now not consider what surely happened, whilst feelings experienced at some stage in the trauma may additionally be re-experienced barring the character to grasp why. This can lead to the tense events being continuously skilled as if they were occurring in the present, preventing the subject from gaining point of view on the experience. This can produce a sample of prolonged periods of acute arousal punctuated via periods of bodily and intellectual exhaustion.

In time, emotional exhaustion might also set in, main to distraction, and clear wondering may be difficult or impossible. Emotional detachment, as well as dissociation or “numbing out”, can frequently occur. Dissociating from the painful emotion includes numbing all emotion, and may also seem emotionally flat, preoccupied, distant, or cold. The character can grow to be careworn in regular situations and have memory problems.

Some traumatized human beings can also experience completely damaged when trauma signs do no longer go away, and they do no longer believe their state of affairs will improve. This can lead to feelings of despair, loss of self-esteem, and regularly depression. If necessary elements of the person’s self and world understanding have been violated, the character may name their very own identification into question. Often notwithstanding their fine efforts, traumatized parents may have challenge in assisting their child with emotion regulation, attribution of meaning, and containment of post-traumatic worry in the wake of the child’s dramatization, main to damaging penalties for the child. In such instances, it is in the activity of the dad and mom and baby for the parents to are searching for consultation as well as to their infant get hold of terrific mental health services.

Freud maintained that our wishes and our unconscious conflicts give upward jab to three areas of the idea that wrestle for dominance as we grow from infancy, to childhood, to adulthood: id is the region of the drives or libido, ego is one of the principal defenses against the energy of the drives and home of the defenses listed above.

superego - the region of the unconscious that houses Judgment (of self and others) which begins to form all through childhood as a end result of the Oedipus complex"

Psychoanalytic criticism originated in the work of Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, who pioneered the approach of psychoanalysis. Freud developed a language that described, a model that explained, and a principle that encompassed human psychology. His theories are without delay and not directly worried with the nature of the unconscious, which is the section of the thought beyond attention that has a robust impact upon human actions. Later he suggested a three-part mannequin of the psyche.

The ego which is rational, logical, mostly conscious part of mind, regulates I'd and comes to phrases with incredible ego and is pushed through truth principle, the fantastic ego which is an inner censor however is derived from societal manage and driven to fulfill needs of morality principle, and the I'd which is imational, instinctual, vital. Unconscious (contain our seeret desires, darkest needs extreme fears and is pushed to fulfill wishes of pleasure principle. The ego is said to be the battleground for forces of the superego and the id. Several other terms also concern the psychic techniques Oedipus complex the childhood wish to displace the dad or mum of one's own intercourse and take hin or her place in the affection of the guardian of the opposite sex is closely related with this. Repression is unother thinking which is the

forgetting or ignoring of unresolved conflicts, in admitted desire or demanding previous events or the suppression from focus of painful or unpleasant ideas, memories, feeling and impulses. Another instance of important Freudian terms is the dream work, the system through which real activities or desire are modified into dream images. For instance, displacement capacity the switch of an emotion from the object about which it was once in the beginning skilled to some other object and condensation refers to the representation of two or extra ideas, memories, feelings, or impulses with the aid of one phrase or image, as in wit, puns, Freudian slips of tongue allegories, and, of course, dreams.

The brains of young people who are uncovered to continual trauma and stress and wired differently than youth whose experiences have been more secure. When experiencing stress or threat, the brains 'fight or flight' response is activated through elevated manufacturing of the powerful hormone cortisol. While cortisol production can be protecting in emergencies, in conditions of persistent stress its degree is poisonous and can damage or kill neurons in a crucial region of the brain. Especially damaging is the ride of stressor that happens in an unpredictable trend (e.g. neighborhood violence, domestic violence). In severe cases, this persistent publicity to trauma causes a kingdom of hyper arousal or disassociation. Hyper arousal is characterized by an accelerated heart rate, slightly accelerated body temperature, and regular anxiety. Disassociation entails an internalized response in which the infant shut down, detaches, or "freezes" as a maladaptive way of managing overwhelming thoughts or situations. The younger the child is, the greater in all likelihood he/she will reply with disassociation. Children are greater inclined to post-traumatic stress due to the fact in most conditions they are helpless and incapable of both "fight or flight". A country of learned helplessness can pervade children's improvement as they learn,

through the repeated ride of overwhelming stress, to abandon the kingdom that they can affect the path of their lives effectively. When trauma or neglect occurs early in lifestyles and is left untreated, the injuries sustained reverberate to all ensuing developmental stages.

Trauma and literature is used to describe something from creative writing to greater technical and scientific works however the time period is most commonly used to refer to work of the creative imagination consisting of work of poetry drama fiction and nonfiction literature represents a language or a humans way of life and way of life however literature is greater important than simply a historic or culture artifact literature introduces new world of trip usually most people have their very own ideas of what literature is in a literary work the creator will introduce some characters to the reader the characters are the imagination of the creator they determine the nature conduct and how the persona to be literature approves humans to develop new thoughts and ethical standpoints and can help individuals to present themselves as trained members of society literature is a form of artwork it is successful of bringing about differing emotions and a well-known experience of spiritual well-being some human beings study literature for their own pleasure additionally it also allows us to recognize and examine rituals beliefs superstition and way of life of their religions and improve a secular approach toward it growing illiberal strategies to different religions castes community companies countries and so forth is the need of the hour in today's world and understanding their literature helps us in doing it in a better.

In basic or any different sort of literature there is sensible fiction. But in some instances the author makes his/her work has entirely fiction, so the literary work will be thought and feelings of that precise person, he is growing the plot, theme, story and many others in action. Ever inexperienced classics in literature, those books are the

work for each time now not only for a precise period. Writers existing their work with unique topics and characters, the total characters will not be imagined they select the characters from their day to day existence experiences. Literature is motivating the humans who are dwelling in the society, who are beneath the custody of policies and legislation around the society.

Literature is a physique of written works. The name has historically been applied to those imaginative works of poetry and prose exotic by the intentions of their authors and the perceived aesthetic excellence of their execution. Literature may be classified in accordance to a variety of systems, such as language, country wide origin, historical period, genre, and situation matter.

For historical remedy of a number literatures within geographical regions, see such articles as African literature; African theatre; Oceanic literature; Western literature; Central Asian arts; South Asian arts; and Southeast Asian arts. Some literatures are treated one at a time by language, by nation, or by means of extraordinary difficulty (e.g. Arabic literature, Celtic literature, Latin literature, French literature, Japanese literature, and Biblical literature).

“Writings having excellence of shape or expression and ideas of everlasting or universal interest.” The nineteenth century critic Walter Pater referred to “the matter of imaginative or inventive literature” as a “transcript, no longer of mere fact, however of truth in its infinitely assorted forms.” But such definitions expect that the reader already is aware of what literature is. And indeed its central meaning, at least, is clear enough. Deriving from the Latin *littera*, “a letter of the alphabet,” literature is first and most important humankind’s complete physique of writing; after that it is the physique of

writing belonging to a given language or people; then it is individual portions of writing.

But already it is crucial to qualify these statements. To use the word writing when describing literature is itself misleading, for one may additionally talk of “oral literature” or “the literature of preliterate peoples.” The art of literature is not reducible to the phrases on the page; they are there totally due to the fact of the craft of writing. As an art, literature may be described as the company of words to provide pleasure. Yet via words literature elevates and transforms experience past “mere” pleasure. Literature additionally features extra largely in society as a means of both criticizing and affirming cultural values.

Literature is a form of human expression. But no longer the whole thing expressed in words-even when organized and written down-is counted as literature. Those writings that are chiefly informative-technical, scholarly, journalistic-would be excluded from the rank of literature via most, even though not all, critics. Certain forms of writing, however, are universally regarded as belonging to literature as an art. Individual attempts inside these forms are said to succeed if they possess something known as creative merit and to fail if they do not. The nature of inventive advantage is less convenient to define than to recognize.

## CHAPTER 2

### Framing the Words of the Novel

Patrick Suskind was born in Ambach am Starnberger See, shut to Munich in Germany on 26 March 1949. His fathers name is Wilhelm Emanuel Suskind, who was a writer and a journalist. His mom was once a sports trainer. In 1981, he had his leap forward with the play *Der Kontrabab* {The Double Bass}, which used to be at the start conceived as a radio play. In the 1980s, Suskind used to be profitable as a screenwriter for the T V productions *Monaco Franze* {1983} and *Kir Royal* {1987}. For his screenplay of *Rossini*, directed with the useful resource of Helmut Dietl, he received the Screenplay Prize of the German Department for Culture in 1996. His well-known literary movement was the use of magical realism in his first novel, *Perfume, The Story of a Murderer*, in 1985. His famous works are *the Pigeon* {1988}, *The Story of Mr Sommer* {1991}, *Three Stories and a Reflection* {1996}, *On Love and Death* {essays, 2006} etc.

The novel *Perfume* is all about the protagonist Jean Baptiste Grenouille, who has a gifted nose. Grenouille is born to a fishwife mother in Paris in the early eighteenth century. He is delivered in the again of his moms fish stall and is immediately deserted to die. The child who quite has no scent, cries out and is saved with the aid of ability of onlookers. His mom is done for this attempt and for her beforehand profitable infanticides. He is added up in a kind of home orphanage, tended together with various exclusive orphans with the aid of potential of an emotionally broken lady named Madame Gaillard. At the age of eight he is given in apprenticeship to a tanner, Grimal the place he is almost labored to death. After having survived anthrax and consequently turning into greater useful in a tannery, he is dealt with marginally higher and is given some slight freedom. Grenouille roams the metropolis of

Paris, searching for new scents, due to the fact he has the most gifted nostril in the world.

On one of his olfactory jaunts round the city, Grenouille finds the most scrumptious scents, due to the truth he has ever encountered, that of an adolescent girl. He finds her scent from a long distance, and he follows it until he is very close to her in the dark. She senses him, and as she turns spherical to see him he strangles her. He then takes the opportunity to odor her scent to his hearts content. It is the happiest he has ever been. He leaves the physique and feels no remorse. One night time he promises some goat pores and pores and skin to Baldini, the perfumer. He begs the historical man to let him work for him, after showing the hold close that he has a super nostril and an splendid memory for mixing perfumes. Baldini so impressed with the scent that Grenouille creates that he buys his apprenticeship from Grimal. While working for Baldini, Grenouille makes the fantastic scents Paris has ever smelled and Baldini will come to be very rich. Grenouille falls sick again, but he survives as soon as Baldini tells him there are one-of-a-kind approaches to distil and hold scents to be observed in the south of France. Eventually he leaves Baldini to go have a look at distillation methods in Grasse.

On the way to Grasse, Grenouille make a detour for seven years to a mountain cave, the area he ponders the scents he has recounted in his existence therefore far. Descending from the mountain searching like a wild man, he is rehabilitated with the aid of way of a barely mad pseudo scientist nobleman who believes that he is a prime instance of a sufferer of fluidumletale. After a farce of a scientific proof is enacted, Grenouille slips away and goes to Grasse. There he works in a small perfumery, gaining information of one of a variety strategies of distillation on the other hand especially bloodless enfleurage. He has placed a scent too wholesome the female he

killed in Paris, any other red right here in Grasse named Laure Richis. He devises plan to create a scent of her essence, but he needs different scents to buoy up and lengthen her scent, to make it in reality wonderful.

Grenouille, An Absurd Protagonist : Patrick Suskinds Jean Baptiste Grenouille, a assassin and the foremost protagonist of Perfume, is a manifestation of arrogance, misanthropy, immortality, wickedness and so serves as a pejorative standpoint on mankind and an extreme embodiment of the formidable will to strength theorised through the precursor of existentialist philosophy. This literary trait permits a keen exploration of existentialist and absurdist elements of mans existence. Grenouille is existential importance is extra often than not derived from he significance of the fleeting realm of scent, with the olfactory world as Grenouilles universe. Only Grenouille is in a role to apprehend and extract which potential from smell and by way of his supernatural olfactory abilities. Existentially, this isolates him from mankind and simultaneously makes him the focal factor of his universe, so Grenouille is compelled to turn to himself for all direction in forming his essence.

Grenouille makes the remaining existential choice to forge his very personal essence by way of capability of concocting his private divine scent, in accordance within the existentialist declaration that human existence precedes human essence and that the latter is moulded by using way of our action or inactiveness at some point of our existence. However it may additionally be argued that the structure of the textual content itself contradicts existentialism, as Grenouille is delivered in the opening as one of the most talented and abominable personages, his essence is reputedly hooked up before his existence, which is bodily introduced afterwards with Grenouilles delivery on the most putrid spot in the total kingdom. Conversely his odourless essence normal

in the direction of childhood and incapability to smell himself culminates in his try to create his real olfactory essence and identity.

Suskind can additionally moreover discover the absurdity of language, arguably an artificial collect to give structure to the chaos of our existence, through Grenouilles epistemological boundaries in that area. With phrases designating non smelling objects he had the biggest challenge and everyday language would rapidly show insufficient for designating all the olfactory notions that he had gathered interior himself. Even thru a supernatural experience of smell, Grenouille is unable to interpret his sensory trip empirically or speak this grasp to others; the that means that Grenouille can extract from scent is totally subjective and as a result a private discourse. If conversation is improper to the aspect of being futile, one can draw nihilistic conclusions.

Isolated from humanity with superhuman senses, Grenouille exhibits no loyalties to human beings or moral systems, an outlook that sees eye to eye with nihilism; then again he exploits other individuals to in addition his personal futile ambitions. It can additionally be argued from an existentialist standpoint that Grenouille is subsequently loyal to himself; however this arguement is per chance weakened by way of his eventual suicide in response to the absurdity of the universe, an absolutely nihilistic response and mindset as Grenouille fails to assemble his very own meaning out of life due to misanthropic despair. The predominant protagonist remaining sacrifices in response to the hopeless absurdity of existence have convinced this reader that the philosophical theme of the novel.

Grenouille as a outcome proceeds to kill twelve teenage female in the location of Grasse and he distils their scent with the useful resource of cold enfleurage. Finally he murders and obtains the scent of his prize, the wonderful smelling girl, Laure. He is

caught for his crimes but, by means of the usage of the master scent he has created, he is believed innocent by using all and released. Feeling depressed and suicidal due to the fact there are no expanded scents to be observed or distilled. Grenouille goes to Paris to die. He douses himself with the hold close scent and is then devoured by means of using a mob.

Emotionally or mentally inadequate people : Madame Gaillard, who was once as soon as brain-damaged through a blow from her father in her childhood, is totally incapable of emotion. She is additionally unable to smell anything, so Grenouille's lack of private scent does now no longer trouble her. Thus she raised him for years, and with her as a position model, Grenouille did no longer have heaps threat to analyze to journey regard for human beings or to have a everyday emotional development. Already hampered via way of the horrors of his birth, his peculiar fascination with his feel of smell, and his regrettable looks, he was once once now not cared for with any form of love or affection. His vital wishes had been taken care of (as if he had been a domestic animal), and Madame Gaillard gave him away as an apprentice to Grimal as quickly as the parish stopped paying his room and board. Thus, Grenouille used to be once by no means taught that he used to be once a treasured human being, and therefore his psychotic inclinations had been magnified.

Grimal the tanner also treats Grenouille no better than a domestic animal. The tanner locks Grenouille in a closet to make sure that he would not run away. While Grimal does now not actively attempt to damage Grenouille, he does now no longer deal with him a excellent deal like a human being either. The tanner additionally appears to feel no remorseful about over how he treats Grenouille, even after Grenouille shows himself to be a top worker and survives anthrax. When Baldini is

inclined to take him off of Grimal's fingers (for a unique price), Grimal cannot wait to get rid of Grenouille.

Baldini, too, has serious personality deficiencies, even although he sincerely is kinder than both Madame Gaillard or Grimal. Baldini treats Grenouille completely as a source for fragrance invention, and he feels extraordinarily uncomfortable in the presence of the youthful man, however he is too worried with appearances to deal with Grenouille cruelly.

Yet another mentally confined persona is the Marquis, whose ridiculous theories about fluidumvitalre reduce every and each human end result to invisible vapors. This man, whose intellectual conceitedness continues him out of contact with reality, treats Grenouille as a proof of his theories. Surrounded by means of human beings with deficiencies and socially negative himself, Grenouille learns that the only motive all people will notice him is that they consider they can get some element from him.

Hatred of humanity : Grenouille's hatred of humanity, whilst not beautiful (considering his upbringing and early adulthood), is so total that he retreats to the farthest factor he can to get away from the scent of human beings. This takes the form of a seven-year hermitage on the top of a volcano in the Massif Centrale in what quantities to solitary confinement. He retreats so some distance into himself that the completely issue that things to him is his private very pathological delusion life. To identify this a hatred of humanity is an understatement; Grenouille tries to be the only personality in his world. Once Grenouille has concocted his closing scent, which is the scent that inspires love from all different human beings, Grenouille finds that he has no use for this love. It does no longer fulfill him. Since he has no greater "(scent) worlds to

conquer"--as Alexander the Great was referred to to weep when there had been no more global locations for him to overcome and add to his empire--Grenouille is geared up to die. Nothing in this world one of a kind than the pursuit of scent has any attraction for him; no human being holds any recreation or love for him (or he for any of them different than scents to collect), so he decides to die. His ultimate rejection of humanity and lifestyles goes past a hatred for human beings and extends to himself. Grenouille is possibly the exceptional misanthrope.

Grenouille as agent of death : It is now not completely the murdered victims who suffer at Grenouille's hands; the most important actors in Grenouille's existence have a tendency to come to bitter or sticky ends, and the novelist usually tells the reader of these ends certainly as that actor is leaving Grenouille's life. Madame Gaillard, who raised Grenouille thoroughly to the age of eight alternatively gave him no love or affection of any variety (because she used to be as soon as incapable of it), dies in whole indignity in a public hospital, which used to be her greatest fear. Grimal, the tanner, who had handled Grenouille abominably via way of making him do very difficult labor and locking him in a closet to sleep, died on the night time he "sold" Grenouille's apprenticeship to Baldini. The science-obsessed Marquis, after Grenouille leaves him, decides to go to and sit down at the top of a 9,000-foot height for three weeks to exhibit his fluidumvitale theories, and also to return himself to the age of twenty--leaving his companions in a blizzard, never to be determined and most in all probability to die from exposure. Baldini the perfumer, too, dies when his residence falls into the river after the bridge collapses, the very night time after Grenouille leaves him.

This trope suggests that Grenouille consists of a curse. He is practically inhuman and nearly a demon, scentless, unloved, and friendless. It is authentic that he

presents to the world his extraordinary perfumes, the one type of blessing he can ably bestow. Everything else he touches withers or dies. Grenouille, a actually man or woman except sympathy for or from everyone previous his childhood, is a profound force of demise and destruction.

Theory of the sovereignty of scent : This novel takes as a premise that scent controls a huge element of human behavior, generally on an unconscious level. It is essential to note this premise, for the whole interior plot (but not always the exterior plot of Grenouille's social actions) turns on this idea. It is no longer only his supernatural experience of smell that is the center of attention of Grenouille's life, however the wondering that humans' scents are necessary to their humanity. Grenouille is subhuman, every in his personal thinking and, at least unconsciously, in the minds of others, due to the fact he has no non-public odor. When he discovers this private attribute in his hideout in the Massif Centrale, he is stunned and extremely horrified. He has in no way met some different human being with no smell; that he cannot scent himself, regardless of his awesome nose, seems top notch to him--demonstrating why he looks big to every man or woman else.

A corollary to the premise that scent is almost tyrannical--determining a wonderful deal of how humans deal with each other--is that adolescent ladies have the first-rate scents. This thought is similarly sophisticated with the grasp that beautiful women have higher scents than one of a kind girls, and with these of the red-haired type having the finest. It is moreover maintained that these teenage female scents are alluring to everyone, now no longer surely heterosexual males. This closing thinking is perchance the most fantastical thought of all. It creates the chance of the ending, in which Grenouille, soaking wet with the scents of the useless girls, turns into so captivating that the Paris mob eats him.

Seeing others' lives as mere snippets. The tiny chapter divisions damage the plot into very small pieces, reminiscent of some of Thomas Mann's works. This is possibly the most setting formal function of this novel. These small chapters often, on the other hand no longer always, comply with the plot of the vignettes that incorporate the novel as a whole. That they are so short implies that the human beings described therein are trivial. In some cases, they are dealt with in a quick vignette and then by using no skill referred to once more in the book (such as the story of Jeanne Bussie). These little snippets of existence serve infinite purposes, one of which is to poke exciting at the commonly pompous, self-important, or woefully inadequate characters who populate this book.

The snippets additionally red meat up Grenouille's egoism. Nothing which does no longer situation Grenouille, and the gratification of his journey of smell, things to him. Therefore, the conditions of the humans spherical him are no longer defined fully, for they be counted solely in how they affect Grenouille's life. For many, entirely their scent and their attractiveness matter. That the story of the sorry loss of life of the giant actors in Grenouille's life (especially the merciless or ridiculous, such as the story of Grimal's death, besides Madame Gaillard and the Marquis) are related, after Grenouille has left their lives for good, solely enforces this feeling of egoism.

It is a refined gadget used with the aid of the usage of a appropriate writer, then again it moreover mimics many of our very own interactions in true life. Many human beings play only bit components in our lives, and we never apprehend them totally or inquire into the story of their lives. The small chapter divisions with the presence and remedy of these "bit players" stimulates this phenomenon.

Grenouille eventually brings no genuine to anyone, and he is the major actor of the story. After he has passed out of a existence which he has touched, that existence usually ends horribly, or at least in despair. This, also, serves to distance the reader from the other characters in the novel (and, noticeably with disgust, to draw us greater towards Grenouille). We can't suppose about the other characters going on to stay prosperous lives; the evil Grenouille destroys all he touches. He consequently guidelines all our attention and, if no longer our sympathy, then our fascination.

Elements of Magical Realism in Perfume : Magical realism in other phrases potential that pronouncing actuality via fantasy. The fundamental theme discussing in the novel Perfume, the story of an assassin is magical realism. Grenouille, the protagonist in the novel itself is a magical personality, or we can say that an absurd character. The author Patrick Suskind tried to exhibit his theme in most components of the novel. In that the foremost scene was once the start of Grenouille. Grenouille used to be born in pre-revolutionary France. The social heritage was once worse in that time. The human beings who have been living in France lacked morality, social values, and also they were very poor. The church and the monks have the authority on these people. Grenouille used to be born as a sufferer of his mothers immoral life. After the transport his mother had thrown him to the slum. But she obtained hanged for the infanticides. Grenouille used to be a child with a supernatural electricity ie with his excellent nose he can scent everything. With his nostril he ought to become aware of the things or the events that taking vicinity in his surroundings.

Grenouille is a variety of personality who is always in search for the new varieties of smell. He additionally desired to preserve the scent of all objects so that he could in no way lose it. The factors of magical realism got greater precedence in his search for smell. One day he got here to fell the worlds top notch smell, which was

from a teenage girl. But lamentably she died when Grenouille tried to give up her from screaming and he realized that after the demise the scent never stays. The other magical scene was that from a single smell Grenouille tells Baldini about the ingredients in the fragrance Amor and Psyche. And additionally when he remaked it for Baldini, the scene will become a magical reality. Gradually Baldini taught Grenouille how to hold the scent and for his help Grenouille gave him about hundred formulas for distinct perfumes. The most fascinating element in this novel was once that, when Grenouille leaves someone, on the very subsequent second the death of that person happens. For example, Baldini bought Grenouille from Grimal and when he left him, Grimal died due to neck flip and head injury. Similarly when Grenouille left Baldini at that night time the constructing fell down and Baldini additionally died.

Grenouille then went to Grasse, from here the horrific, mysterious and magical practical elements commenced to lead the story. In order too make worlds excellent fragrance Grenouille murdered twenty 4 teenage ladies and he preserved the scent of them as liquid. By mixing them in proper volume he made the best fragrance ever in this world. At the time of his punishment, he uses that perfume and modified the temper of the people so that they started out to say he is no longer murderer, he is an angel. This magical fragrance made them to love every other unconditionally. Finally Grenouille realized his mistakes and ended up his life with the Perfume that he had made.

## CHAPTER 3

### Mirroring of Psychoanalytic Trauma in perfume, The Story of a Murderer

The study is aimed to exhibit the ambition of Jean Baptiste Grenouille, the essential personality in Patrick Süskind's *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer*. The objective is to learn about this lookup to analyse the novel primarily based on its structural elements and the ambition of Grenouille that offers with id, ego and superego the use of a psychoanalytic approach. The essential information supply is taken from the novel *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* written through Patrick Suskind in 1985. While the secondary records sources are different substances taken from literary books, criticism, essays, articles, journal and web related to the study. Both data are collected via library research and analyzed via descriptive analysis. The result of the study shows the following conclusions. Firstly, primarily based on the structural analysis, it suggests that the character and characterization, setting, plot, style and theme of the novel are related into strong unity. Secondly, primarily based on psychoanalytic evaluation the novel tells that the primary character, Jean-Baptiste Grenouille has psychological problems. The psychological hassle of the essential personality encounters reasons the warfare of his mental condition. Then, it develops to become an ambition and influences him to murder 26 virgins. His exceptional ambition to be a master perfumer leads him to be a murderer.

People in the world have hassle in their lives. Most of the trouble that is confronted via human beings can be caused by way of ambition. Ambition is the desire for non-public achievement. It provides the motivation and determination vital to achieve desires in life. Ambitious humans are seeking for to be the excellent at what

they choose to do for attainment, energy and superiority. Ambition can also be described as the object of this sleekness. Ambition is an excellent value in leaders. One of the key features of a leader

They give concept to the others with their zeal, self belief and energy.

Perfume: The Story of a Murderer is a novel which is made in 1985 by way of Patrick Süskind. It has 230 pages which consists of fifty one chapters interior it. This novel tells about Jean-Baptiste Grenouille who has incredible journey of smell cease up so thirsty with human physique smell after he finds a woman with stunning scent that he has in no way smelled before. He receives his destiny of life, he wants to create an wonderful perfume that will supply him the magical essence of identity. He also desires to be the world's greatest perfumer. It drives him to the homicide of sweet innocent virgins. Perfume: The Story of a Murderer is a captivating novel.

There are 4 reasons why the author is involved to study this novel. The first is because the plot and the troubles of the characters which are unusual, particularly the main personality Jean-Baptiste Grenouille. The novel tells about a dreadful examination of what takes place when one man's satisfaction in his greatest ambition and passion -his feel of smell- leads him to be a murderer. It can be stated that the story of the novel is one of a kind from different horror stories. The 2nd reason that makes this novel fascinating is that Perfume: The Story of a Murderer is a novel of education, which tells the story of Grenouille who is born into a putrid spot of 18th century France. Despite being left of his mom at start and being rejected from society because he has no bodily odour, but Grenouille can live on and will become a grasp perfumer with his tremendous feel of smell. He can separate every scent into its tiniest components. The motive is the creator of the novel Süskind's preference of putting is

mainly interesting. *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel is set in the 18th century, a length which is known as The Age of Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was a time of rationalization and common sense in which theories of divine proper and herbal regulation were introduced. These theories suggested that everything on earth used to be ordered via a lifelike God. From my grasp of the Enlightenment period, for Grenouille to be positioned in such an environment, further suggests his segregation from a society which would fighting to include such a skill that should not be justified with logical reasoning. The ultimate is the principal character, Jean-Baptiste Grenouille is depicted as an uncommon assassin who kills his victims with the aid of hitting their heads and shaving all the victims hairs and wrapping their lifeless bodies in order to take their odour.

He struggles in making his very own perfume that is his private odour, so that he can be commonplace using society. Grenouille's ambition to create the ultimate fragrance drives him to the murder of sweet harmless virgins. Thus, it appears that Jean-Baptiste Grenouille psychological problem is a very interesting subject to be researched. Based on the history of the study, the researcher formulates the problem statement of the study is "How is the ambition of Jean Baptiste Grenouille as the important persona mirrored in Patrick Süskind's *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel?".

Dealing with the this problem, the goals of the find out about are to analyze *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel based on its structural factors and to analyze *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel by using a psychoanalytic approach.

*Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* as the object of the study tries to analyze the essential character's personality functions to analyze the novel using psychoanalytic

approach. Then, the type of the information and the information supply are divided into two. Firstly, Primary records source that is called as the important data got from all the words, phrases and sentences in the novel itself, Patrick Süskind's *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel Secondly, secondary Data Source, it is the assisting records taken from literary books, criticism, essays, articles and journal sources associated to the novel. And the method of collecting facts in this lookup are as follows: first studying the novel again and again and appreciation the content material second reading some different assets associated to the novel third giving marks to specific components in the novel, which are regarded important for the analysis fourth taking notes for important parts both in most important and secondary information sources fifth classifying the data into classes and creating them into a excellent unity. The final is technique of the facts analysis is descriptive analysis technique. The researcher will describe the structural elements of the novel the usage of psychoanalysis principle by way of Sigmund Freud. The accumulated data will be interpreted and analyzed in element via psychoanalysis idea of literature in this case by showing the impact of Jean-Baptiste Grenouille's ambition in *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel: a psychoanalytic approach. Then drawing conclusion based totally on the analysis.

*Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* is a novel written by using Patrick Suskind. The novel tells us about Jean-Baptiste Grenouille who is one of the most proficient personages in that era. But his title has been forgotten today, it is certainly now not because Grenouille fall short of those greater well-known blackguards when it comes to arrogance, misanthropy, immorality, or more succinctly, to wickedness, however due to the fact his gifts and his sole ambition are constrained to a domain that leaves no traces in history: to the fleeting realm of scent.

From the personality in his novel Suskind issues with the foremost character 'Grenouille' who is told as an unusual individual besides bodily smell but has high-quality nose in smelling the scents of everything round him. He is a hard employee and tough. He has to live to tell the tale his lifestyles since he is at the age of eight; he becomes an apprentice of a tanner, Grimal. He treats like an animal however he can live on his existence till he meets with a master perfumer, Giuseppe Baldini. After being an apprentice in Baldini perfume shop, he learns the whole thing about the odors. He shows that he has properly capacity in remembering each ingredient identify of fragrance and isolating it into small parts. But in view that he finds an amazing scent of a teenage girl, then he receives the destiny of his life. He wants to be a master perfumer. He additionally wants to make an brilliant fragrance from the scents of younger girl body that will provide him the magical essence of identity. His ambition drives him to be a murderer. He thinks that the solely way to seize a dwelling being's scent is by using killing that being. Grenouille kills 26 lovely younger women for their scent. He cuts their hair and takes their clothes with him.

Although the novel is written in 1985 however the novel tells a story that occurs in Eighteenth century. Eighteenth century is additionally recognised as The Age of Enlightenment. The Enlightenment used to be a time of explanation and good judgment in which theories of divine right and herbal regulation have been introduced. These theories suggested that the whole thing on earth used to be ordered by means of a lifelike God. From my perception of the Enlightenment period, for Grenouille to be positioned in such an environment, similarly suggests his segregation from a society which would battle to embrace such a ability that ought to now not be justified with logical reasoning. It is used as the placing of time. Every actions and occasions manifest

in that time. While, France is used as the putting of place. Every moves and activities additionally occur in round Paris, France.

Organizing the story of this novel, Suskind makes use of frequent or everyday plot. Traditional plot is divided into three parts, from the beginning, the center and the give up of the story. Suskind composed the plot into lovely and exquisite way. He makes the action of the story from putting out to the grant up actions quit up an increasing number of systematically, respectively and moment-by-moment, which makes the story of the novel comprehensible for the readers.

The factor of view is told from the author's factor of view that is as an omniscient outside voice, watching the moves of all the characters and witnessing their inner thoughts. Using this point of view, it allows Süskind to shortly show the characters' motivations, and to describe events that are now not without delay witnessed through the foremost characters.

Suskind additionally supports his primary thinking in the novel using his personal style in telling the story. He tells the story in a simple figurative language in order to make the reader effortless to recognize the story of the novel. We can locate some phrases which are seldom used of every other writer however it makes the sentences of the story greater beautiful. All parts of the novel are arranged systematically well. Each components of the novel guide the main idea or theme, human ardour or ambition problems. It takes place because the author thoughts are built nicely and all of part of the novel supports every other. Based on the structural analysis, all of the factors can be associated one every other becoming stable unity.

The putting the novel is in 18th century French. The creator of the novel, Patrick Suskind wants to exhibit that fragrance is first of all created in French.

Although in the first section of the novel, Grenouille is born in putrid spot in French. But French also has a city that is referred to as a middle of modern trend in that era, named Paris. According to the description of Suskind on the novel, Paris is the region where fragrance is born. The author additionally wishes to show that women as a lovely creature, has a different component that is uniform such as smells, act, and femininity side. The novel *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* focuses on the stunning smell of ladies through the essence of the woman's body.

*Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel describes how ambition and passion of the principal character, Jean-Baptiste Grenouille to make the terrific perfume drives him to be a murderer. It is the fact that ambition and ardour can make a hassle with any person's personality, specifically Grenouille which is told in the story. His capacity that Grenouille has psychological problems. There are three structures of persona mirrored in *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* novel. They are id, ego and superego. The three words id, ego and superego and many conflicts in his lifestyles are brought on by means of his ambition. Trauma is also experienced by Grenouille while he was a child. He was away from his mother and forcefully had to come across all the hard labour. Hence, he has very less moral values and trust towards the society. The experience of labour and torture will lead to a messed up mindset. It's also hard to trust new people or situations. Negative memory becomes more salient than positive ones.

The identification of Grenouille is the identity as a human being that human beings need love, people choose to be happy, humans also sense sad, fear, curiosity and surprise. Grenouille also feels the feelings cited above, such as:

When he catches a far-off scent, Grenouille follows the scent; the scent comes from a teenage lady of about thirteen or fourteen years old. He feels very curious with

her smell. Then Grenouille feels fear or anxiety. It appears almost unconsciously, he wishes to stop her from screaming or crying out, he covers the girl's mouth and strangles her. Grenouille realizes that he has killed the plum girl; he feels scare.

Another Grenouille's severe worry is when he shuts himself in the cave to maintain the distance from human scents that he considers as a disgusting scent that is he supposed to avoid them. This is a area the place he builds his own world. The worry appears when he goes out to find some food. He feels as if he is haunted via the existence of human scent, so all the each day enterprise must be carried out in a hurry. The next id seems in a structure of happiness. After, he finds the superb scent of a plum girl. He goes domestic and feels that he is now genuinely happy. He also feels blissful when he has observed a herbal tunnel main returned into the mountain, the air he breathed used to be moist, salty, and cool. Grenouille can scent at once that no living creature had ever entered the place. As he takes possession of it, he is overcome via a sense of something like sacred awe. He sense blessedly wonderful. He feels so happy. The ultimate identification seems is when Grenouille feels sad. It takes place when Grenouille perceives that all odor is now not adequate due to the fact he can't love himself. He cannot know who he certainly is. With this lack of self-knowledge, the world and himself have no meaning. Then it appears when Grenouille feels no wish to go back to his solitary cave. He feels that he can no longer stay either with human beings or except them. The world suffocates him. He plans to go to Paris to die.

The ego of Grenouille continually appears when he finds a new scent from a younger lady that he meets. He murders anytime and somewhere he finds remarkable scent of a girl. Nobody can cease him, from his ardour on perfume. Grenouille has one purpose; he needs to create the final heady scent fragrance from the younger and

stunning woman. He will do something to get a new scent, even by using killing the complete woman. In

Grenouille's superego appears when Grenouille agrees to be the son of Antoine Richis after Grenouille has killed his daughter, Laure Richis. Although Grenouille does not favor to be Richis' son however after sees Richis' face, in the end he agreed. It means that Grenouille has a suitable side. He does not prefer to make Antoine Richis upset by means of refusing his associated with love.

Perfume: The Story of a Murderer novel is a novel written via Patrick Süskind in 1985. He is one of the most celebrated youthful writers in German literature. The novel units in Eighteenth century of Paris, French. From the characters, Patrick Suskind worries with Jean

Baptiste Grenouille. The plot of the novel tells about the trip of Grenouille in a form of exposition story. Based on psychoanalytic approach. Perfume: The Story of a Murderer novel represents Jean Baptiste Grenouille's psychological issues who killed 26 younger lady to fulfill his ambition in making exquisite perfume. Grenouille's personality is divided into three, namely id, ego and superego. The id seems in the structure of sadness, depression, fear, curiosity, anxiety. The ego of Grenouille appears when he finds a new scent from a young female that he meets. He murders each time and somewhere he finds superb scent of a girl. Nobody can quit him, from his passion on perfume. Then, Grenouille's superego appears when Grenouille agrees to be the son of Antoine Richis after Grenouille has killed his daughter, Laure Richis. Although Grenouille would not choose to be Richis' son however after sees Richis face, in the end he agreed. It means that Grenouille has a properly side. He would not desire

to make Antoine Richis upset through refusing his provide after killing his daughter. It proves that Grenouille nonetheless has a right aspect associated with love.

The Story of a Murderer is a high-quality novel to be read. The persona and the theme are very attracted. The structural factor of the novel is additionally presented in a precise relation of work in building the story. But, this research is some distance from the perfect due to the fact of the researcher's limited know-how and perception on the literature. But the researcher tries to make it exceptional with the trust sources. The whole evaluation represents the researcher understanding of the novel based on a psychoanalytic approach. It's counseled to the other researchers who use this novet they can also use right and distinctive processes such as Maslow humanism concept and Adler character psychological theory. The both theories explain about the private needs, favor and strive. With humanism theory, the different researcher can analyze the fives factors persona such as: physiological needs, safety and security needs, belongingness and love needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. While the usage of individual psychological, they can analyze the striving of the fundamental personality Grenouille based on the sixes element, striving for superiority, inferiority feeling, fictional finalism, creative self, social activity and fashion of life. The persona of Grenouille in the novel, never a ways from the humanism and person psychology, so it will give difference result which hope to be higher then the find out about analyzed through the researcher.

The study is aimed to exhibit the ambition of Jean-Baptiste Grenouille, the predominant persona in Patric ok Suskind's Perfume: The Story of a Murderer. The object of the learn about of this lookup is to analyze the novel primarily based on its structural elements and the ambition of Grenouille that offers with id, ego and superego the usage of a psychoanalytic approach. This lookup is qualitative research. Type of

facts of the find out about is textual content taken from two information sources: main and secondary. The fundamental records source is taken from the novel *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* written with the aid of Patrick Suskind in 1985. While the secondary data sources are other substances taken from literary books, criticism, essays, articles, journal and internet associated to the study. Both statistics are accrued via library lookup and analyzed by descriptive analysis. The effect of the study indicates the following conclusions. Firstly, based totally on the structural evaluation , it shows that the character and characterization, setting, plot, fashion and theme of the novel are associated into strong unity. Secondly, primarily based on psychoanalytic evaluation the novel tells that the predominant character, Jean-Baptiste Grenouille has psychological problems. The psychological problem of the predominant personality encounters motives the battle of his mental condition. Then, it develops to become an ambition and influences him to homicide 26 virgins. His magnificent ambition to be a master perfumer leads him to be a murderer.

## Conclusion

The main aim of the project is the detailed study on Psychoanalytical theory in the novel *Perfume, The Story of a Murderer*. We also have explored Magical realism which means 'saying reality through fantasy'. In this project there were discussions on the topics like the magical realism, trauma theory, psychoanalytical trauma and trauma and literature its features, its characteristics, and the author Patrick Suskind and also to know the relevance and importance of this theory in literature . Complete analysis on the novel *Perfume, The Story of a Murderer* is included. From the discussions it came into a conclusion that psychoanalytical theory has great impact and that the genre "magical realism" has its importance mainly in literature only. As it is originated from the paintings and drawings still it has its importance in that field.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**BREAKING THE PATRIARCHAL CONSTRUCT OF**

**WOMAN BY MAN: A READING ON *SUGHANDHI***

***ENNA ANDHAL DEVANAYAKI***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**SONA GEORGE**

**Register No: DB18AEGR013**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mrs. ANSA GEORGE

June 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Breaking the Patriarchal Construct of Woman by Man: A Reading on *Sughandhi Enna Andhal Devanayaki*” is a bonafide work of Sona George, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Mrs. Ansa George

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Sona George, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Breaking the Patriarchal Construct of Women by Man: A Reading on *Sughandhi Enna Andhal Devanayaki*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Ansa George of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

SONA GEORGE

8-06-2021

DB18AEGR013

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SONA GEORGE

## Table of Contents

	Page no.
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	2
An Overview of Feminism	
Chapter Two	16
A Review on T.D. Ramakrishnan's <i>Sughandhi Enna Andal Depanayaki</i>	
Chapter Three	27
Breaking the Patriarchal Construct of Woman by a Man: A Reading on Sughandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki	
Conclusion	43
Works Consukted	44

## **Introduction**

Feminism is both theory and political action. Definition is impossible, but feminism can be summarised as exploring the oppressive power of dominant norms, particularly those relating to sexuality, and the immiseration they cause to those who cannot, or do not wish to, live according to those norms. This established gender research and analysis enables us to examine and challenge social norms around what it means to be a woman or man in society, and to pursue justice and equality for all, which should be fundamental facets of development *Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki* is a novel written by T D Ramakrishna which is based on the death of Tamil human rights activist Rajini Thiranagama who was allegedly shot dead by Tamil Tigers cadres after she criticised them for their atrocities.

In this project, the first chapter is about Feminism. The second chapter is the summary of the novel .The third chapter is about the application of theory on this work. This project tries to analyze importance of feminism in this novel and gender discrimination.

## **Chapter One**

### **An Overview of Feminism**

Feminism refers to political, cultural, or economic movement aimed at ensuring that women have equal rights and legal protection. Feminism is a movement that promotes gender equality for women and campaigns for their rights and interests, as well as political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference. Although the terms “feminism” and “feminist” did not become widely used until the 1970s, they were already in common usage much earlier; for example, in the 1942 film *Woman of the Year*, Katherine Hepburn refers to the “feminist movement.”

The history of feminism, according to Maggie Humm and Rebecca Walker, can be divided into three waves. The first feminism wave occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the second in the 1960s and 1970s, and the third in the 1990s. These feminist movements spawned feminist theory. It can be found in a wide range of fields, including feminist geography, feminist history, and feminist literary criticism.

Most feminist movements and theories were led by mainly middle-class white women from Western Europe and North America for much of their history. Alternative feminisms have been suggested by women of their races since Sojourner Truth’s 1851 speech to American feminists. With the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and Southeast Asia in the 1960s, this trend accelerated. Since then, “Post-colonial” and “Third World” feminists have been proposed by women from former European colonies and the Third World.

One of the limitations of historical documentations has been the exclusion and marginalization of women and their contributions. This has created the challenge of ascertaining what actually the thoughts of women were over the centuries. The issue of marginalization and subjugation of women does not just stop at the denial of women civil and legal rights; it also extends to the systematic suppression of the intellectual contributions of women and the failure to document many of such contributions within history books. However, it will be a fallacy to say that generally women made no attempts to air out their grievances against these unjust treatments. Some women in history actually spoke out against gender inequality and the practices of marginalization and subjugation of the female sex. Even though they may be no emphasis by historians showing that women in the medieval period stood up for the recognition of their rights, this does not logically imply that there were no such cases. However, the good thing is that there are documented indications that such feminist campaigns existed.

Simone de Beauvoir wrote that "the first time we see a woman take up her pen in defense of her sex" was Christine de Pizan who wrote *Epitre au Dieu d'Amour* (Epistle to the God of Love) in the 15th century.

Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa and Modesta di Pozzo di Forzi worked in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Marie Le Jars de Gournay, Anne Bradstreet and Francois Poullain de la Barre wrote during the 17th.

Feminists and scholars have divided the movement's history into three "waves". The first wave refers mainly to women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (mainly concerned with women's right to vote). The second wave

refers to the ideas and actions associated with the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s (which campaigned for legal and social rights for women).

The third wave refers to a continuation of, and a reaction to the perceived failures of, second-wave feminism, beginning in the 1990s. First-wave feminism refers to an extended period of feminist activity during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States. Originally it focused on the promotion of equal contract and property rights for women and the opposition to chattel marriage and ownership of married women (and their children) by their husbands.

However, by the end of the nineteenth century, activism focused primarily on gaining political power, particularly the right of women's suffrage. Yet, feminists such as Voltairine de Cleyre and Margaret Sanger were still active in campaigning for women's sexual, reproductive, and economic rights at this time. In 1854, Florence Nightingale established female nurses as adjuncts to the military.

The term first wave was coined retrospectively after the term second-wave feminism began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement that focused as much on fighting social and cultural inequalities as political inequalities.

Second-wave feminism refers to the period of activity in the early 1960s and lasting through the late 1980s. The scholar Imelda Whelehan suggests that the second wave was a continuation of the earlier phase of feminism involving the suffragettes in the UK and USA. Second-wave feminism has continued to exist since that time and coexists with what is termed third-wave feminism. The scholar Estelle Freedman compares first and second-wave feminism saying that the first wave focused on rights such as suffrage,

whereas the second wave was largely concerned with other issues of equality, such as ending discrimination. The Indian society trusts that men have the power and social authority in the society. A particular element of the Indian society is that men guard maleness and consider women not masculine which isn't fundamentally human. Women are minimized through social establishments and religious customs. Feminist developments have been going after for evacuation of this underestimation. The solid influx of feminism during the 1970s estimated a lady's talk. A feministically perused content can prompt a superior comprehension of the lady's condition. In this manner the very premise of feminism which is reformist in nature causes women to comprehend their situation in a superior way. In this setting Linda ordon's supposition is that "feminism is an examination of women's subjection to make sense of to transform it merits a mention". The women-focused point of view presently finds explicit ideals in the female experience. This should, thoughtfully, take to a concentrated investigation of feminism in order to put in the best possible point of view whatever is essential about lady throughout everyday life and literature. Ideally this ought to be separated from whatever the 'ism' represents ever of.

"In the present setting, the ascent of women's enlivening and of maturing awareness causes the subsequent battle against a custom framed by male overwhelmed society. However the reality remains that feminism is basically a development social in essentials and socio-political in multiplied measurements, and is principally coordinated against the sufferings of women on account of mischievous men". An old lawgiver of Hinduism, Manu says, "The dad takes care of her during adolescence, the spouse ensures her during youth, and the children deal with her when she winds up old. Lady is never fit for opportunity". This structures Indian perspective on womanhood that relates basically to the Indian texture of living. It is fundamental in this manner, for the feminist to

recollect that the Indian society has given an intricate picture of womanhood. In the modern times we have extraordinary political illuminating presences as Kasturiba, Sarojini Naidu, and Indira Gandhi who took driving part in making India free. Administrations of Tara Bai, Ahalyabai, Razia Begum, Rani Durgaavathi, Jhansi Laxmi Bai and so forth to our country are uncommon and exceptional in nature. Women like Gargi, Mitreyi of old occasions enhanced our profound legacy. They are likewise instances of liberated women.

"Feminism" usually signifies "the conviction that people ought to have equal rights and openings". It is additionally a composed action in help of women's rights and interests. It is a gathering of developments and belief systems went for characterizing, building up and shielding equal political, economic and social rights for women. The undertaking incorporates looking to build up equal open doors for women in training or vocations moreover.

A feminist argues or supports the rights and equality of women. Feminism in India goes for characterizing, building up and safeguarding equal political and social rights just as equal open doors for Indian women. It is interest for following the women's right inside the society of India. Like their feminist partners everywhere throughout the world, feminists in India look for sexual orientation equality, for example, the right to work for equal wages, the right to equal access to wellbeing and instruction, and equal political rights. Indian feminists likewise have battled against socio-social issues inside India's man centric society, such legacy law and the act of widow immolation known as 'Sati'. Feminism in Indian English Fictions, as ordinarily considered, is an exceptionally glorious and over the-top idea dealt with but obtrusively under limited condition. It isn't at all another idea and throughout the years numerous authors and novelists have

effectively raised the issue through their innovative compositions. Indian women novelists and different authors, forming their contemplations in English range from exhibit of essayists like Toru Duff to Kamla Das and from Sarojani Naidu to Suniti Namjoshi, Arundhati Roy to Shashi Deshpande. These female Indian Writers have selected the surprising assortment of subjects in a style that normally poetry and novels are equipped for advertising.

Indian Women Writers have frequently raised their voice against social and social inequality that obliged women's freedom and executed institutional segregation of women. While we cannot conclude that the early feminist movements were solely a European-American affair, we can say that the feminist revolutionary trend was more pronounced in Europe and America at different times. Feminism was more prevalent in Europe during the seventeenth century and the Age of Enlightenment, but it was more prevalent in the United States during the nineteenth century. This has a lot to do with the current political situation on both continents. Of course, the explanation may be anything. America as a continent was often colonised by Europeans, so it's understandable that the seat of international politics was once in Europe, especially in Britain and France. As a result, we can see how feminist struggles in Europe at the time must have progressed more quickly. However, as part of the fight against slavery and the segregation of people of colour, especially blacks, feminism became more prominent in America. In this sense, feminist movements in the United States were part of a broader struggle, such as the fight against slavery or racism.

Many history books divide the evolution of feminism into three waves, but a critical examination reveals that these waves are focused on developments in Europe and the United States of America. We crave indulgence in not revealing what every historical

feminist figure has said on the topic of women's emancipation, so we discover that there are ideas that are similar and recurring from one author to the next as we read through several works on feminism. Furthermore, we did not wish for this chapter to act as a comprehensive history of feminism. However, we have included some historical events to demonstrate that attempts to free women from the social injustices of female marginalisation and subjugation have existed since the beginning. Furthermore, since most feminist works are viewed from a historical perspective, we will undoubtedly refer to historical events as required.

Feminism was coined after the first international women's conference in Paris in 1892 to describe the belief in, and support for, equal rights for women based on the assumption that the sexes are equal or that men and women should be treated equally under the law, according to an article in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. However, as previously mentioned, Bryson points out that the word was first used in English in the 1880s to indicate support for women's equal rights with men, and that its definition has since changed and is still being debated. So, though various scholars may provide differing dates for when the word "feminists" was first used, it appears that the term first appeared in the nineteenth century. The first wave occurred in Europe and the United States from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. The first generation women, according to Lorber, struggled for rights that are now taken for granted. She states that it is difficult to believe that women in Europe were once denied the right to vote (suffrage), own property and capital, borrow money, inherit, hold money gained, initiate a divorce, maintain custody of children, attend college, become a practising physician, argue cases in court, or serve on a jury.

The world is changing for the better these days. Women today have the ability to vote and be elected, to own property and resources, to borrow money, to inherit property, to earn and keep money gained, to initiate divorces, to be custodians of children even after divorce, to have academic qualifications up to doctorate levels, to be licenced lawyers, physicians, and so on. As we have already said, the storey changed sometime in the seventeenth century. The first wave of feminism arose as a result of this. This is why interpreting the three movements of feminism requires a solid understanding of history.

Many people in Africa are unaware that there was a period in Europe when girls were forbidden from attending school or having access to the rights stated in the previous paragraph. When missionaries first founded schools in Nigeria during the colonial period, they were exclusively for boys. According to the anniversary celebrations of Nigeria's oldest schools, girls' schools were founded later than boys' schools, reflecting changes in European girl-child education. While the girls in colonial Nigeria did not have to wait long for their own schools or schools that were unisex, European girls who lived before the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not have the same luck. Since it had not yet arrived, male- female segregation in western education was not a characteristic of typical pre-colonial settings. As a result, we can say that colonial Nigerian girls did not have to wait long for their chance.

Nevertheless, even when the opportunities were officially provided, many traditional peoples were not able to send female children to schools either because of poverty or because of what we may call the male-child preference syndrome that many African feminists like Rose Uchem have cited as an instance of female subordination in Africa. There are still practises oppressive to women in Africa and Nigeria, for example. In the unfavourable cultures that certain communities are unwilling to abandon, different

instances of female abuse lie hidden. For example, in some remote areas of Akpabuyo at Cross river.

State-Nigeria genital mutilation is still practised on the presumption that a woman is likely to be promiscuous without genital mutilation. However, civilization takes root gradually in such areas, but slowly. So, we note here that, while the first wave of feminism is usually presented as events in Europe, this does not overcome the possibility of such historical experiences being absent from other continents, especially in Africa. The fact that African authors have not made sufficient effort to dig out the storey to highlight such problems, or the general problem of the androcentricized elimination of important historical activities of women and their contributions to history, of the African and western male historians are not included in this generally described wave; Mostly women in the west have looked for historical documents to highlight the work of the waves of feminism. The responsibility therefore lies with African women.

The second wave of Simon de Beauvoir's work *The Second Sex* in France began in France in 1949, Lorber said. The second wave began. She also points out, that although de Beauvoir's book was widely read, it was only in the late 1960s where young people began to publicly criticise many aspects of western society that second wave feminism took shape as an organised political movement. She also mentions that around that time, many feminists focused on increasing legal rights for women, political representatives and entry into men's occupations and professions. Lorber says the second wave has added to the feminist fight issues such as race-based, tribal, national, and religious and class discrimination against women. Some issues emerged, such as: multi-racial and multi-ethnic feminism; feminist men's studies; theory of feminism, postmodernism, queer theories; duality-limited and opposition-like issues of female and

male; sexual guidance; lesbianism; homosexuality; heterosexuality; gender, social order and assumptions and judgments of values. Looking at women's riots which took place in colonial Nigeria from 1903 to 1929 and perhaps beyond, in places like Eket, Warri, Calabar and Aba and possibly elsewhere without documents; can we also present those events as part of the 1st wave of feminism that is if Lorber has the correct date for the start of the second wave? Or do we have to classify our own events as belonging to the 1st wave of feminism. In other words, should we have a Nigerian version of feminism since many western scholars have traditionally described the three waves as events in Europe and America?

The above questions are very important questions to be addressed by professional Nigerian feminist historians as well as feminist philosophers. The argument that the 'forms' of feminist struggles are the same, even if the materials differ country by country, gives reasons to consider on the one hand, that we regard the riots of women in Nigeria as plausible, even if they are historically different from those in Europe. What can be said to be the similarity factor between the two categories of historical feminist events is that they were organized by women in a reaction to their marginalization. The fact that women are organised in response to their exclusion is what can be said to be the similarity factors between the two categories of historical feminist events. On the other hand, possible arguments that regard colonial riots in Nigeria and Europe as essentially different still make sense. One could argue that, while the riots of women in Europe were about questions directly affecting the question of the nature of a woman, for example, whether her intellect and her biological constitution qualify her as equal to men; however, in the colonial scenario Nigeria there was simply a riot about the taxes, which had little or nothing explicitly to do with the gender definition and the importance of the ontology of a woman for women in society or the State.

Lorber argues that the third wave in the 1990s began as a movement of young feminists growing up in a social, economic and political world much less gender-distinguished. We will certainly be not mistaken to say that Africans are excluded in the context of 'the world.' The reason is the same as that we explained already. African audiences are not aware of many Western authors who wrote subjects on the history of feminism. Luckily however, African scholars also read their works, some of which we used in this chapter. Clearly, African writers are excluded from the story of feminism. This re-echoed the early Western insinuations of Hegel that Africans do not form part of the history of the world. If Africans are part of the history of feminism, we really must not blame westerners not to write about us or to exclude us for trying to present a book on feminism history. Humans are after all the products of their immediate environments and philosophers although they are primarily feminists, children of their age, culture and environment. They are Africans who ought to have historical information.

Lorber also mentions that the third wave of feminists anchored in other forms of oppression such as racism the gender inequality problem. She says that feminists in the third wave refuse the radical feminist idea that women are oppressed only by men; but they also accuse women of encouraging oppression by concealing them under race, colour, class and status. We believe that Lorber refers to events such as masterfulness of women's marginalisation and sexism, racial separation, class segregation and selfally motivated gullible and shady life-styles, which lead to women's subjugation and oppression, in America and Europe. Here we can provide examples of cases in which women are responsible for the trafficking and the sexual slavery of girls through running brothels that prostitute young girls. Feminism has therefore become an overall fight not only against sexism and the inequality of sex, but also against other forms of repression of the third wave. Valerie Bryson's book *Feminist Political Theory: An Introduction* will be

of great benefit for a more detailed history on the development of feminism. Naturally, other authors have taken various approaches to feminism classification. Some authors don't really bother about the idea of classification as Agassi and Lorber did but go directly to clarify, as we have seen in Pearson, Haralambos and Holborn, and many others, what every strand of feminism does. A comparative analysis of various branches of feminism reveals that certain feminist schools blame society for gender inequality; other schools blame men's activities. Where the society is to blame, some feminists ask women to champion the course of the struggle for their emancipation, and men are asked to give women a chance, as a way offorestalling the gender imbalance. For feminist theories that lay the blame on the activities of men, the radicalization of society or the social institutions is not what is needed; rather what is needed is to deprive men of partial or full control over women - their lives, their careers, their sexuality, their bodies et cetera. Nevertheless, what is obvious is that all the schools of feminism that we have treated deal with the relations between gender and relevant social categories. The proponents of the different kinds of feminism try to negotiate how gender is constructed or should be constructed in the light of some personal or group needs and priorities. We see as genuine, the feminism that avers that both sexes should be allowed to compete without stereotyped constraints on the female. Nancy Mandell observes that the degree of female oppression is so widespread and has been in vogue for so long such that the liberation of women constitutes the hardest struggle since it is rooted in patriarchy. However, she observes that in the struggle to liberate women from such oppression, some radical feminists regarded as female supremacists propose that all forms of patriarchy should be done away with even within the family. In place of patriarchy, they propose matriarchy since they regard men as the facilitators of female subjugation and marginalization. One wonders whether a replacement of patriarchy - a kind of sexism, with matriarchy another kind of sexism, is a good solution to the problem of gender inequality. As we have already explained using

the expositions of Agassi and Lorber, Marxist and Socialist feminism do not attribute women's subjugation and oppression entirely to men nor advocate for the replacement of patriarchy with matriarchy. Marxist and Socialist feminism rather locate the causes of female oppression in the economic situations of the society especially as it concerns the distribution of resources and property. This means that in capitalist societies, the men are the ones who benefit more from paid jobs; the women are mostly not even rewarded by their husbands with monetary income. Liberal feminism as indicated by Haralambos and Holborn, try to differ from radical feminism as well as Marxist and Socialist feminism in that it locates the causes of gender inequality and sexual discrimination in the cultural settings and individual mind-sets and attitudes. In other words, the issue of gender oppression is not an immediate effect of sociological and economic structures but of subjective and communal attitudes. Thus, liberal feminism advocates equal opportunities for men and women in education and work.

There is also the concept of Black feminism, which is not mentioned in any of the classifications we have treated above but is somewhat suggested in liberal and cultural feminism. Black feminism borders on the marginalization and racial discrimination of black women by their white counterparts. For instance, Alice Walker uses the phrase “womanism” in her attempt to expose the oppression of black women and women of colour by their white male and female counterparts. In this regard, the marginalization of black women by white women counters the position that all kinds of female marginalization are patriarchal in nature.

Post-Modern feminism underscores the fact that female subjugation and marginalization exist in broader systems of sexism or political oppression such as racism, classism, tribalism, ethnicism, religious intolerance et cetera. In other words, as Bell

Hooks observes many cases of female marginalization and oppression exist within a larger kind of oppression of which males are also victims and not the perpetrators. She argues that, Feminism, as a liberation struggle, must exist apart from and as part of the larger struggle to eradicate domination in all its forms. We must understand that patriarchal domination shares an ideological foundation with racism and other forms of group oppression, and that there is no hope that it can be eradicated while these systems remain intact. From the foregoing, it becomes plausible to say that the oppression and marginalization of women has a lot to do with other things other than their sex. This is why Elisabeth Spellman observes that it can never be the case that the treatment of a woman has only to do with her gender and nothing to do with her class or race. On this note, patriarchy is not the only reason for the marginalization of women as the radical feminists want us to believe.

However, the common position of the various trends of feminism is that the place of the woman in the society is not and should not only be her marital home. Some authors try to argue that it is not only men that subjugate women, that women also subjugate men. For instance Chinwenzu is of the opinion that women sometimes use babies as “weapons” to subjugate men. His point is that women and men are guilty of oppressing each other; that women have their own ways in which they subjugate and oppress men. He makes reference to the common practice by mothers to use babies as tools of subjecting their husbands to certain conditions that could be described as oppressive. But many years ago, Simeon de Beauvoir, pre-empting such arguments had argued that many mothers resort to the kind of things only when they are treated as things of second value.

The reason why women feature so much in the discussions on feminism is because sexism in human history has dealt more blows to women than to men and there has been a very long history of women oppression, subjugation, marginalization and inequality that have been institutionalized even with the help of Holy Writings like the Bible as well as the writings of celebrated philosophers like Aristotle. However, this does not mean that feminism is entirely about women, but about giving equal opportunities to men and women without their being deprived of their fundamental human rights on the misconception that women are naturally inferior. A feminist is therefore one who shares in this vision and joins in the struggle either from the political angle or from the academic angle.

In summary, feminism is predominantly a reaction to the problem of gender inequality and the avocation of how gender equality can replace the social order of gender inequality. We created some space in this book to explain feminism because as we did mention in the beginning of this chapter, we can appreciate feminist philosophy better when we have a good understanding of what feminism is all about. Literature on feminist philosophy is beginning to increase even though at a slower pace as compared to feminist sociology. In the next chapter, we shall focus on how feminism colours feminist philosophy or how feminist philosophy arises from feminism.



## Chapter 2

### A Review on T.D. Ramakrishnan's *Sugandhi Enna Andal Depanayaki*

T.D.Ramakrishnan is a noted novelist, short story writer and translator. Hailing from Thrissur, he started his career as a railway ticket collector in Salem in 1981. He voluntarily retired as a chief controller in 2016 to focus on writing. He has a close connection with Tamil Nadu. Alpha, Francis Itty Cora, Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki and Mama Africa are the novels he penned. Sirajunnisa is his collection of stories. He has translated into Malayalam the Tamil books "kshobasakthiyude Mm" and "Charu Nivedhithayude Thappu Thalanganal". He is the recipient of Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award, Kovilan Memorial Award, K. Surendran Novel Award, A P Kalakkad Award, Malayattoor Award, E. K. Divakaran Potti Award for best translator in 2007 and Nalli-Thisai Ettum Translaton Award among others.

In Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki Peter Jeevanandam, a script writer narrates his experiences in Sri Lanka during the pre-production work of the movie "The Woman Behind The Fall Of The Tigers" under Transnational picture. T.D. Ramakrishnan's "Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki" is strongly suspected of the great historical accounts.

It's a novel that recently reached a profound chord in popular imagination, yet complicates the narrow line between popular and popular fiction. "Sugandhi Alias Andal Devanayaki" is a daring mix between the mythological, the metaphysical and the historical settings of social and political turmoil and global capitalism in contemporary spaces. It is the political intensity of the novel that is most striking about it.

This postmodern novel in Malayalam has at its core a real life incident from 1989 when Rajani Thiranagama, a prominent Sri Lankan human rights activist was brutally gunned down, reportedly by rebel Tigers. As in any war or post-war mass extinction, those who suffer the most will be the women and children. Men are often cruel but cowards. Thirunagama is named and remembered through the pages by the film-makers and

the activists they meet. Sugandhi is revealed to us through Peter's melancholy memories. The novel begins at 'Divine Pearl 'or DP, secret military camp which is ninety five kilometers away from the Colombo. The most dangerous of the Tamil tigers are housed in the camp. They are terrorists who pose a threat to the society, persons who are immune to all sorts of temptations, personal desires and longings for personal freedom and liberty. They are hundred criminals immune to the feelings of pleasure and pain, trained to withstand the gravest forms of torture. DP was a prison built by British colonizers to house hardened criminals. When the novel begins, a crew of a movie production unit visits the 'Divine Pearl '. The crew comprises the narrator Peter Jeevanandam, the scriptwriter; Christie Alberto, the director; Christie's girlfriend and cinematographer Mary Ann and Tony Bernard, one of the producers. The crew is attempting to make a movie on the death of Rajini Thiranagama, an activist allegedly shot dead by the LTTE in 1989. Rajini Thiranagama was a supporter of LTTE who became disillusioned with the ideology of violence perpetuated by LTTE. She was shot dead in the year 1989, allegedly by LTTE for serving her links with the organisation. The crews are at DP on a pre-production schedule.

The movie's title is "Women Behind The Walls Of Tigers" and is produced with the help of the Sri Lankan government. In the first chapter Colonel D'Silva, the camp in charge explains the procedure of torture followed in the camp. He explains that in DP, torture is practised without using weapons and inflicting wounds. The camp in-charge explains to the crew the physical and mental tortures that are inflicted on the prisoners.

As the novel progresses, the depiction of violence becomes much more graphic than the foresaid description. The crew later meets Thambimuthu, a man affiliated to LTTE and the narrator and his friends are misled by him many ways. The crew has no political motivation in making a movie on the death of Dr. Rajini Thiranagama. For them the movie is just an effort to find out whether LTTE has any involvement in the death of Rajani. Later the narrator and his friends conduct a meeting to discuss the life of Dr. Rajini Thiranagama.

However, they fail to gather any information on the perpetrator of the crime. Every one appeared afraid to speak on the death of Rajini. “The audience too was victims of fear. This is today’s Sri Lanka. Clouds of fear surround us. Nothing is democratic. Everyone is under surveillance.”

Since the first meeting fails to produce any result, the narrator arranges another meeting to know more about Rajini. At the meeting a man named Anbu Chezhiyan starts to reveal the truth about the death of Rajini. However, before he can complete, he is shot dead by a stranger. This incident prompts the narrator to think about the professional assassins of iyakkam and he mentions the name Sivarasan, the master brain behind the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

The history of Sri Lanka is a history of civil war which lasted for twenty five years. In 1983 first Eellam civil war took place, Second Eellam war happened in 1990 and Third Eellam war occurred in 1995. Along with political assassinations and terrorist attacks there was sexual violence against women too. And here the feminist perspectives of objectification prick up ears. In accordance to feminist theory, objectification can be considered as the fundamental concept, where women are usually treated as object that is, objectification occurring in sexual realm. Another term that can use by this theory is instrumentality. Poomani Selvanayakam’s abduction in the novel is an instance to validate this. There is a code to conduct for the women there. She should wear either a light green or yellow saree below the navel with yellow flowers tied around her waist. She is neither permitted to use perfume or any sort of cream. And for him sweat was the best perfume that aroused him.

Pregnancy is the initial course of punishment for women who are afflicted with ailments like human rights or feminism as the army believes that the worst punishment for women is to be robbed for their chastity. An archaeologist is another victim of sexual violence. In her email to the narrator she points out that she also is a victim like Poomani and other women. In the same email she refers to a student leader who was killed by the lion. After getting to know about the stories of these women Christie says that the mythical character Devanayaki in this novel rather shows aliveness of each woman fighter in Iyakkam thus disclosing the compound situation of female empowerment and also the misogynistic stances existing simultaneously.

The heroine of the novel is a victim of this violence. When she appears for the second time in the novel, she reveals the atrocities she passed through. Sugandhi is reintroduced in the novel through a video conference arranged at Gayathri Pereira's house who was the, member of SSF movement. Sugandhi is first introduced as Meenakshi Rajarathinam, who is founder of SSF movement. Meenakshi Rajarathinam's first post appeared on facebook after freedom struggle ended in august 2009. It was titled 'black widow', and it was a cartoon which depicted a cruelly raped, half naked woman called Sri Lanka and a victorious president in military uniform who stood with one leg on her chest. And she captioned it as 'don't you feel ashamed?' and this went viral.

When the situation went unfavourable Sugandhi posted a video revealing her true identity and admits her authorship of everything written in the name of Meenakshi Rajarathinam. She reveals all her writings were typed by two girls named Arulmozhi Nangai and Yamuna Sridhar. She reveals that her arms have been imputed. The girls helped her to type her stories as they were desirous of preserving them. Her face was disfigured by acids. She was captured along with Isai Priya by Sri Lankan military after the last battle. As she was beautiful they wanted to present her to VIPS. She as repeatedly raped for three days in a secret room near temple room as it was on her body that the aristocrats in the government celebrated their victory over freedom fighters. Later she was shifted to Divine Pearl. As she was fairer than other Tamil women fighters, the military leaders had more hunger for her body. She was inhumanly tortured for trying to escape from the high security area.

As a part of trial they decided to burn her face with acids and cut both her hands. They placed before her an offer in order to spare her. She would be set free if she was ready to speak to the media in support of government humanitarian operation; she must speak against Velupillai Prabhakaran and Iyakkam. She must praise the president in detail, and comment positively on his administrative skills. She should say that Mahinda's ideas are the only way for Sri Lanka's Prosperity. But she was reluctant to say it and her face was burned with acid. But in the second chance she acted wisely. She agreed that she will say whatever they wanted her to say. They presented her to the media as a girl who was rescued by the tigers.

However she broke her promise and answered the questions the way she wanted to. Using this opportunity a foreign journalist along with HOPE, a human rights organisation, rescued and moved her to Canada. But nothing was over for Sugandhi. Three months after reaching Canada she was attacked. A guy who was six foot tall and well-built chopped her hands off one by one at the exact spot marked out in Divine Pearl. He took the detached limbs in a bag so that no hospital could rejoin her limbs. The violence in this book doesn't end with Sugandhi. At the end of the novel Arul and Yamuna are arrested and are taken to DP for interrogation, they were tortured at DP. The chief Wickrama Ranatunga orders: "first rape, then question". The sexual violence in the novel thus presents a true picture of the civil war torn Sri Lanka.

Sugandhi Alias Andal Devanayaki is a bold attempt to analyze the civil war between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) as a history of atrocities on the innocent, especially women, with the aid of myth and ancient history suitably embellished with large doses of fiction. It follows a film-making crew in post-war Lanka, ostensibly there to make a film on Rajani Thiranagama, allegedly shot dead by the Tamil Tigers because she criticized their patriarchal, fascist ways. Initially, she had been active in helping the Tamil Tigers but had become increasingly disillusioned by the atrocities committed by the Peace Keeping Force, LTTE and the Sri Lankan army, choosing to voice her discontent at the fast disappearing democratic ideals in the country, in both state and insurgent spaces.

Rajani Thiranagama is the presiding deity of Sugandhi. The novel's plot begins in the present day, when a team of international film-makers, aided by an intrepid but somewhat hangdog Malayali named Peter Jeevanandam, has another motive: arrive in Sri Lanka to make a movie about Thiranagama and to locate Sugandhi, former Tiger and his erstwhile lover during his previous stint in the country who has since then disappeared.

Peter is using the movie as a pretext to look for a young woman named Sugandhi whom he fell in love with on his last visit to Sri Lanka, at the end of the civil war. The making of a Sri Lankan state sponsored Hollywood film on Rajani, the idea of a documentary within the film and documenting for the film, an earlier film that was abandoned due to its subversive script, art within life and the artifices of life are all

plots that make the very act of plotting a ploy to narrate tales without closures. The Rajapaksa regime, which ended the civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009 by suppressing the Tamil liberation struggle, had captured the world's attention. But then it came under the criticism and scrutiny of the nations of the world with its absolute dictatorship and fascist repression. In such a situation, Sugandhi, the goddess of the year, develops through a film production team that comes to justify the government for its anti-Eelam activities with the help of the Sri Lankan government.

The novel, which ends with the president once again winning over those who mourn for human rights, remains an indication that the struggle continues. The novel depicts the pain of ordinary people and women wandering in the midst of civil strife. To confirm these facts, political observers believe that Maithripala Sirisena won by garnering votes from Tamils and other ethnic minorities who were completely ignored by Rajapaksa. Inherent in the novel is the fact that democracy succeeds where violence is defeated.

In the present times of postmodernism, individualism and “auto-modernity”, another trend is slowly raising its head “fascist ideology”. But there are many faces of fascism, not limited to political forces only but enveloping everyday life as well, challenging the very basic notions of “gender”, “identity”, “boundary” and, of course, “freedom”.

T.D. Ramakrishnan, the author of *Sugandhi Alias Andal Devanayaki*, a recipient of the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award and Vayalar Award, is known for his unique narrative style of blending history and myth while presenting contemporary political and social life. With the use of multiple perspectives, he has tried to present the Eelam movement in Sri Lanka, mixing it with the myth of Devanayaki, as is wont.

This political novel, a postmodern narrative of a revolutionary movement, is inspired from a poem, *Andal* by Satchidanandan. Using the technique of “magic realism”, the author has mixed reality with meta-reality and presented the period of struggle for Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka and its aftermath.

Peter Jeevanandam, a member of a Hollywood movie production team, is out on a mission to write a script for a movie, “The Woman behind the fall of the Tigers”, but secretly he is also searching for Sugandhi who was not only an LTTE member but the only true love of his life as well.

Based on a true event and life history of Rajini Thiranagama, a Sri Lankan human rights activist allegedly gunned down by LTTE, a number of historical and political events unfold in the novel and it poses questions related to the motives of such revolutionary movements, political forces, the government and peace keeping forces.

Two stories run together one of history portrayed by Rajini and Sugandhi and another of Devanayaki, a mythological character. Rajini Thiranagama, inspired by her elder sister, Nirimala, who was a member of LTTE, had initially supported the cause of the Iyakkam but, disillusioned by its lack of freedom and democracy, she had raised her voice against it. She even criticised the government and IPKF. In her book, *The Broken Paimyra*, she writes: “Men in battle garb, whether they come with swords or guns, on a horse or in armed cars, the price of conquest seems heightened by the violation of women.” The Iyakkam promoted a patriarchal power structure and viewed all feminists as bad elements. This exploitation was not limited to the Iyakkam and it was not a case of devil and the deep blue sea, rather the country was caught between two devils. Rajini was the prey of both the government and the Iyakkam. So is Sugandhi. In the modern age of patriarchy, pregnancy was regarded as the first stage of punishment and it was the duty of men to “punish women suffering from diseases like human rights or feminism”.

The violation of women seems to be an integral part of every social system since time immemorial. Devanayaki, heroine of a story set in AD 992, who wanted nirvana through happiness, had studied Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* and other treatises on political science but she, like a majority of women, ended up being just a “body” in the hands of powerful men. She felt ashamed of herself when she realised that the king had not seen her knowledge or abilities but was merely attached to her physical beauty. In this patriarchal system,

where chastity was (and still is) regarded as the best form of prayer for women, queens had to wear “chastity belts” and the keys remained in control of the king. Devanayaki, though “stained by sin” and adorned by a title, “Pattavesi” (whore), attained nirvana and became a part of the Arya Devi myth.

It is believed that Devanayaki will come to the rescue whenever the tears of a woman fall and she will take divine birth if the mind and body of any woman is hurt. T.D. Ramakrishnan suggests that Rajini Thiranagama and Sugandhi alias Andal Devanayaki were in fact reincarnations of Devanayaki. Like Devanayaki’s story, women fighters in the Iyakkam “exhibited the complex situation of female empowerment and misogynistic stances existing simultaneously”.

Devanayaki symbolises resistance against the oppression of women. The use of myth, memory and history also interrogates the complex modern world and its various dimensions. The power camps of every type and nature are just machines to repress and crush women. Wearing the mask of progress and development, fascist forces control the masses, reducing them to puppets. The author argues that “the ideology of fascism has been redefined and it comes in the guise of democracy or communism. It speaks of peace and development. It controls the corporate sector. Then, there is academic and intellectual fascism”. The novel is basically an “aesthetic rebellion against fascist structures”, but the author seems to have lost track of the main idea of history. When you try to present too many ideas, there is bound to be confusion. There is a whirlpool of myth, history, ideology, innumerable references to Hitler, Gaddafi, Mubarak, Ashoka, Mahatma Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Salman Khurshid, Che, V.P. Singh, Subhas Chandra Bose, S. Mostofi, Karunaratna Perera, Arundhati Roy, Orhan Pamuk, Noam Chomsky, Bob Marley, etc. and events ranging from Sinhalese myths to Nirbhaya case, acid attacks, child rape, majority versus minority, plight of the Muslims, nano weapons and what not. The reader literally drowns in this sea of events, people and expressions.

The novel is of 242 pages, out of which 115 pages are devoted to myth only. The style of both the portions is so different that it seems two people have written these two versions.

The story of Eelam movement and of Rajani and Sugandhi simply fade away in front of Devanayaki. It is advisable to concentrate on the main course and remember that too much salt will make the meal bitter. A deep suspicion for the grand narratives of history informs T.D. Ramakrishnan's *Sugandhi Enna*

Andal Devanayaki. It is a novel that has recently struck a deep chord in popular imagination and yet complicates the fine line between popular fiction and highbrow literature. On its way to achieve a cult status in the footsteps of his first novel *Francis Itty Cora*, *Sugandhi ...* is a daring mixture of the mythological, the metaphysical and the historical set in contemporary fluid spaces of socio-political unrest and global capitalism. Thus Sri Lanka spills over into Toronto, London and India and vice-versa.

The quest for the modern Tamil liberation activist Sugandhi in the contemporary landscape of Sri Lankan trauma and loss is itself fuelled by tales of the mythical Sugandhi, her archetypal ancestor from a folkloric past, creating a throbbing tension between fiction and reality. As fiction, fact and myth blur, what emerges in the interstices are bodies that pulsate with poignant materiality and spirits that have been bent by power and violence but remain far from broken.

Each attempt to retell the past ends in a crisis, a friction between fiction, reality and myth. Thus the central narrator, who is in fact a scriptwriter, plays with alternative modes of understanding the Tamil Eelam's mythical past, the fraught ethnic history of Sri Lanka and its turbulent political present. Many of the fictional characters are from real life including Velupillai Prabhakaran, while many of the seemingly historical characters and situations are actually fictional. That the centuries-old ethnic strife between the Sinhalese and the Tamils has at its core a small Kerala village is the brilliant twist in the tale that links lands, temporalities, cultures and identities

As the fate of the erstwhile kingdom of Kanthalloor merges with the larger histories of the Pandyas, the Cholas and the Sinhalese, the feminist fable of Devanayaki becomes an underlying thread that offers vital links to histories of violence against women and the archaeology of war, rape and repressive power politics across centuries.

As the myth of Devanayaki blends with the political assassination of Rajani, and the torture and disappearance of the LTTE activist Sugandhi, Ramakrishnan seeks to create a notion of women's histories as alternative voices to official mythical, moral and historical narratives. However the central gaze that lingers on each atrocity committed on women's bodies across the ages is a male gaze that even as it narrates violence is itself violently masculine in its incursions into the feminine.

The magic and mythic transformations of characters in the novel add a touch of magical realism in addition to a richly evocative historical intertextuality. A finely crafted work, it has its flawed moments and yet connects contemporary socio-political histories with mythical landscapes and dystopias of the mind. It resonates with an Orwellian intensity, throbbing and poignant in its apocalyptic closure which probably parodies any sense of an ending and in the process takes the Malayalam novel to new heights and fresh possibilities.

TD Ramakrishnan's *Sugandhi*, the most widely read anthology in Malayalam literature recently, is written in the context of post - Civil War Sri Lanka. The novel points out that the country's government, military and media are completely under the control of the president and that dictatorial rule is taking place there through inhumane repression.

Sugandhi, Devanayaki (the myth and real women), Poomani Selvanayakam, Juliet, Roopavathi, Gayathri Perera, these are all real and powerful women, who even in the midst of crisis show extreme self-will and courage, whereas the men the King Mahinda, Mahendravarma, Sinham, VP, and the military officers, the President Mahinda Rajapakse, all are cruel and cowards, dangerously alike in their cruelty. Peter Jinvanandam became a classic example at the end; running for his life when all other women are ready to sacrifice their lives. The novel portrays the dramatic and cruel life faced by the women during war across centuries. The story doesn't end there, the author also succeeded in revealing the strength of the women to rise as a phoenix bird even after her wings were brutally cut off and dreams were shattered.

The novel amplifies its significance in the current situation, when the war and the crime against women and children are in the raise. The book makes you believe that the world needs Devanayaki, Rajani, Sugandhi and lot many more to bring an end to the dystopia.

It is interesting to see is that both in modern and ancient politics, involvement of women can be seen as both empowering and enslaving at the same time. Devanayaki was welcome in the court only because of her beauty, and she might have made good use of her positions, but she almost always used her body to accomplish her goals. Same goes for women like Rajini and Sugandhi; they were inducted in the Tamil liberation movement mainly to spread its reach to women; but slowly got destroyed by the caustic patriarchal structure of the Iyakkam. They are fundamentally instruments of war and pawns for accomplishment of agendas. Neither myth nor reality can contest or correct this flaw in our society.

The novel gives a detailed idea of the lives and musings of people taking part in war and those who are affected by it. A close look is also given to the history and myths of Tamil Sinhalese wars. A war is not just a fight between right and wrong with one winner. There are much more layers to it and often one is at a loss judging who is right. In parallel, is told the story of Devanayaki, a mythical character belonging to the family of nymphs who was first the queen of Cheras and then the Cholah. Divine in her beauty and unmatched in her wit, she uses both to consolidate her positions as queen, till a tragedy compels her to use these for revenge.

TD Ramakrishnan's Suganthi Enna Andal Devanayaki is still relevant in contemporary politics, as it is strongly discussed the fascism, patriarchy and dictatorial power, the novel's foundation lies on the real life of Rajani Thiranagama, a human rights activist who was shot down by Tamil groups in Jaffna. It's one of the best books I've come across recently, by far one of the best craft in Malayalam literature, hands down! It's premise sets for contemporary socio-political events that told by Mythical landscape of Srilanka, the non-linear narrative and magical realism making it engaging from the word go, the integration of the fiction and reality certainty carrying a breath of fresh air, Devanayaki is a myth but Rajani is the replica of Devanayaki.

## Chapter 3

### **Breaking the Patriarchal Construct of Woman by a Man: A Reading on *Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki***

Women in literature can be identified as women writers in literature and treatment of female characters by male and female writers. T. D. Ramakrishnan, a well-known Malayalam fiction writer, who penned *Alpha*, *Francis Itty Cora*, *Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki* and *Mama Africa* received prestigious Kerala Sahitya Academy Award and Malayattoor award for fiction. He interviewed writers and published it as a compilation entitled *Sambhashanangal*. His works are translated into English and Tamil considering the readership. *Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki* being a mythological historiographic-metafictional novel is female centric by a male writer. It depicts the Sri Lankan diaspora during the Civil War. It depicts the challenges faced by the natives, especially women, connecting the Indian Chera-Chola-Pandya history and myths.

In *Sugandhi* the title covers three characters, that is, *Sugandhi*, *Andal* and *Andal Devanayaki*. And there are characters like *Manju*, *Rajani Tarinagama*, *Poomani Selvanayakam* and *Julie* who plays a vital role in the fiction. Detailed account of each character is made by the first-person narrator *Peter Jeevanandam*. It describes various stages of womanhood through myth, history and real life. Traumas faced by women in Civil War and external aggression and the ordeals women go through various stages of her life are well portrayed. This paper intends to describe the conventionalities of roles of women and traumas in various stages of her life along with the writer's intentional breaking of such patriarchal values in the mainstream. It also discusses motherhood and nationality represented in *Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki*.

There are women's literature by women writers and men writers. However, woman's writings intended to portray the female point of view of life. Men writers at times use women characters

From patriarchal point of view and sometimes women writers write from feminine angle blindly denying the existence of men. Men and women are two different genders and are unique in existence. Each individual possesses different abilities and power, so from a gendered point of view men and women should be treated sensitively. T. D. Ramakrishnan is a well-known historiographic-metaphysical Malayalam writer. He depicts the traumas of the society and the gender imbalances existing within.

Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki narrates the Sri Lankan civil war and the real-life situations faced by the common people. He also depicts the stages of womanhood along with history and circumstance. The political upper hand was vested on men, following patriarchy. Though in the mythical story of Devanayaki, she advised and created orders, her patriarchal owner that is her husband sealed on it. Even in Eelam, though women sacrificed and showed valor the patriarchal Sri Lankan conscience considers women a tool towards the goal and were treated meanly. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) headed by Velupillai Prabhakaran is a militant organization in Sri Lanka against Sinhalese government's autocracy. LTTE aims independent Tamil nationality from Sri Lanka.

In the fiction there are three title characters that confuse the readers with traits, even though the writer explained it with references. Sugandhi, the real character in the fiction, is an LTTE member and Peter Jeevanandam's revisit to Sri Lanka to find her turns the opening of the plot. Reference to a blog connecting Andal Devanayaki by Meenakshi Rajaratnam opens the Andal's tale. Andal, only female Alwar among the twelve staunch devotees is inwardly represented through Devanayaki's myth. In a conversation with the writer he raises his suspicion on the death of and alone female Alwar at the age of twelve. For Ramakrishnan, it is impossible for a child to write versatile and romantic works like Thiruppavaiaand Nachiar Tirumozhiin the tender age. So Devanayaki can be treated as an extended life of Andal in the

imagination of the writer. Through mixture of sentiments the writer created Andal Devanayaki, fictionally capturing various shades of womanhood and the traumas of each stage.

Though women were denied of school education private classes were offered in respective homes on Sanskrit and Carnatic music in south India. Art and literature played a key role in women empowerment. Patriarchal values equipped her and suppress her from freedom of expression. And all her talents were considered as mere ornamentation or possession of men. Andal Devanayaki was educated, witty and well versed in warfare, being the daughter of Periyakoikkan. But such talents of her attracted the ruler and she was married by Mahendravarman's eighth wife. Maheendan had an eye on her and in her whole life; she hated and took revenge on Maheendan, who turns as the anti-hero. Andal Devanayaki faces a lot of traumas in her lifetime. Mahendravarman safeguarded her body with arathali which suppresses her identity and freedom of her own body. It is used in the pretext of protection. But in reality it is a lock of her own body and her identity.

Like Andal, Devanayaki wished to marry Peruman, that is Lord Vishnu. But neither her parents, nor her tutor Srinivasa Satri, who taught her Arthasastra entertained her opinions and she was reassured by Srinivasa Sastri that "Maharaja vaṇuethirth onnum parayaruth Sri Padmanabhanāṇennu sangalpich kannadach sweekaricholu", which means she should not oppose and blindly accept him considering him as god. He was interested in her voice in the Sri Padmanabha temple. The sarcasm of the proposal was that, once he met her in the royal fort with Sastri, Mahendravarman ordered her to join him in the upstairs, without attending the royal meeting. It depicts the weakness of the rulers. Even the metaphors used by her guru "nilamuzhavaṇamvithuvithaykkaṇam" thus translated as "which field to sow and which one to harvest" is a clear hint offered by the writer of the patriarchal superiority and the possessive and authoritative nature of south Indian society and even though there was a huge age gap between

Devanayaki and Mahendravarman. The six qualities of a wife as per Neeti Sara are used within the fiction and discuss the misinterpretation of it.

There are multiple versions of Devanayaki's tale after the defeat of Kanthallursalai by the Chola army in the fiction. In one such version it stated that she died dancing out of anger, which produced lightening and she was vanished and in that she was worshipped as Njanasaraswathy since then. In another version her dead body was carried away by soldiers for looting her ornaments, and while they try to molest her body, she regained consciousness and cried out. Thanumalaya, a descendant of sage Agasthya rescued her and married her. He recited the seventh verse from Soundaryalahari and consider her as Goddess Parvati and named her as Anasooya, since her memory was completely lost. The tricks used by men in the ancient ages are depicted in this version, wherein the spies of Chola visited her as religious wanderers and asked for breast milk. In the tale that imposter was magically turned as a child and she breastfed the child, as a mother, when he insisted on drinking it directly from her, showing ulterior motive towards her body. But there are inner notions within that tale. Such magical conversions are impossible, so it shows how her female body was misused. Pathivrithyam, belonging to the husband in all means, turns as a typical necessity in Indian morale. So, the story might be exaggerated myth for adding superficial elements to cover up the trauma faced by Devanayaki as Anasooya.

In the fiction, through an imaginary record collected from Sri Lanka called Susanna Supina Peter discusses an extended and powerful version of Andal Devanayaki. In Susanna Supinaversion, it is noted that along with kingdom and precious materials, Devanayaki and other royal women are also transferred to the new Chola king. There are only two options for royal women. They either have to accept the conquered ruler as husband or to commit suicide. Devanayaki thus transferred to Rajarajachola, who has fallen for her wit and talents. Rajaraja

never took care of the subjects of conquered land, but Devanayaki's words made him realize his position as a king of the conquered land than a mere plunderer of wealth. He asked her three wishes. Firstly, he asked her to belong only to him for the lifetime in all means, secondly, to provide soldier assistance in defeating Maheendan and thirdly to teach Arthasastra to his subjects in Tanjore. She accepted the two offers and denied to stay with him loyally, since as per custom, the women will belong to the new king, if lost in a battlefield. It hints that like Cheras, Cholas also consider women as possession. And it is also noteworthy that the condition of women under Cholas is better than Chera reign. Cholas trusted their women and never used arathali and key to lock their body. It reassures trust and belief in Devanayaki and she was entitled as Kanthammadeviyar. By calculating menstrual cycle, she announced her pregnancy news to Rajaraja, opening her phase as a mother. Under Rajarajachola, Devanayaki was privileged to make opinions on governance and she was the brain behind warfare. She acted wit fully during attacks, even though she was on rest due to pregnancy. Mangala, the new queen of Rajaraja narrated the Sinhabahu myth. It was a human- lion hybrid incestuous tale of Sinhabahu and Sinhasavali founding Simhapura. The eldest son Vijaya was a troublemaker and along with seven hundred troublemakers he was transported to Lanka and they turn as the first inhabitants of Sri Lanka. As the eighth queen of Rajaraja Chola Mangala was titled as Cholamadeviyar, she stayed in Sri Lanka. Kooveni was the princess of Lanka, married by Vijaya, who committed suicide with her children, due to ill-treatment and luscious behavior of her husband. And her curses turn as the reason of deterioration Sri Lanka, so the child of Devanayaki was named as Kooveni by Rajaraja, inspired by Mangala's tale, in remembrance of his victory over Sri Lanka. Kooveni, the three-year-old child of Devanayaki was brutally raped and murdered by Maheendan's army in Tiruvaroor and written as whore in the heart of the body with colour. She later made an incestuous relation with Rajendrachola, the son of Rajaraja. Rajendra built Njanasaraswatitemple idol, by taking Devanayaki, whom he calls "Akka", as model. She was dedicated herself to take revenge on Maheendan and she used prince Rajendra on purpose. But with shame of facing

Rajaraja, she left the land. But it is also noteworthy that, being a king, Rajaraja doesn't take proper action against his own daughter Kooveni's death. She reached at the hands of Cham, a Chinese trader and pimp. She was brutally harassed and sexually exploited by him and she reached Maheendan through Cham. Sri VallabhaBuddanar's tale of Purnami, the youngest female monkey, for whom all male monkeys fought, received the reflective light of enlightenment attained by Buddha and she was incarnated as Samgamithra, Ashoka's daughter. Maheendan welcomed Devanayaki and he added that the jewel box with route map given to her as the wedding gift with Mahendra varman was a hint for her to join him.

He killed Cham and gifted his head to her. It is possessiveness or psychic love Maheendan had for Devanayaki. Sinhasailam, being the City of Dreams, is prostitution and gambling center. He also killed Devatachan, the court artist, who painted Devanayaki's beauty on the walls due to possessive patriarchal superiority. So, it is noteworthy that male consider female as possession and they mercilessly fight and kill whomever, they feel look closer to their possession. Devatachan, though was professional, he lost his life. Even Maheendan's life was taken by Rajendrachola due to commodification of womanhood. Even Buddanar's view on women seems unreasonable, while the Buddhist principles are taken into account.

Devanayaki took revenge for her daughter by burning Sinhasailam, by installing gunpowder on Buddha statue, around the City of Dreams. After attaining enlightenment from Nissankavajra, Devanayaki turns peaceful. However, Rajendrachola attacked the City of Dreams and fulfilled Devanayaki's revenge. It is an epitome of motherhood, who gambled her entire life, identity and self-respect for her Daughter's unjust and inhuman demise. Sugandhi described her victim state elaborately. In the early morning of the next day, the first half of the punishment was brought out. She was taken into a special room and in the iron bed, she tied naked and Robert Jayawardene, who raped her multiple times, carried out the order of

disfiguring her face with acid. Jayawardene added “if you lie still, only your beauty will be harmed. We will merely brush your face with diluted acid. But if you struggle, the acid will burn your whole body” and he further kissed her saying “let the last kiss you receive be mine” clearly showing the brutality of such men on women. For the autocratic, patriarchal men, women are a product, which he can use for his own needs. And if a woman acts differently the punishment would result in death. For any human, face turns as an identity, and identity is different from beauty. By disfiguring the face, the human identity is challenged. And it is to be noted that, such a torture was not carried out on any men, but only on female prisoners. Like a beautician he dipped the brush in acid with care and touched it on her left hand. It was a last option for her to accept rehabilitation by deceiving LTTE. Jayawardene’s question “female tigers stronger than you have escaped by agreeing to these demands. Now most of them are docile wives to Sinhalese men. Isn’t that more than enough for you women?” raises anti-human attitude. It is forcing a woman to safeguard herself by deceiving herself from her own personal life. And Sugandhi was one among many prisoners, who undergoes the trauma.

Sugandhi with her will power rejected the offer unlike the former victims, who escaped by submitting themselves and their viewpoints mentally and physically for survival. She spat on his face, showing her disagreement. She further added that the patriarchal punishment imposed on her by Iyakkam was to marry Stalin and it was pure hatred bloomed between the couple. Sugandhi in the Skype call added, “I even hated Stalin, my husband. I had to marry him and bear his child as part of Iyakkam’s disciplinary action against me. An uncouth wretch, he would only address me as whore. I had loved only one, but was not fortunate enough to be kissed by him. We can fall in love only once in lifetime. All other relationships are merely glorified prostitutions”. So, the question arises after such a revelation is that, is it because of that hatred with her husband which made Sugandhi forgo her daughter’s existence. By a skype chat a recorded video of Menakshi Rajaratnam was made on two consecutive days and revealed the

real identity as Sugandhi. She reached Peter, while turning as a suicide bomber and they united in all means.

Peter was informed about terror attack through a Facebook post by Meenakshi, bidding a final adieu. She reveals her incarnated identity as Devanayaki through an e-mail. Sugandhi drove the car and blasted CHOGM venue with her amputated hands. Manju escaped with Peter and he saw gigantic Devanayaki in the air, after he boarded in the flight. It might be an extended imagination of Peter's guilt. Manju, Gayathri, Julie, Arulmozhi and Yamuna submitted themselves for survival. Sugandhi was forcefully used and she opposed such sexual assaults. Devanayaki was free willed in certain ways compared to the women in modern society. Even though she submitted to the new royal powers, she had a choice of opinion in her life in certain matters. But she was forced to follow glorified patriarchal rules.

But Julie, who is Peter's girlfriend, who was carrying his child, was at the venue. She was involved in the attack. She introduced herself to him as Poomani Selvanayakam through an email chat. But Julie forged the digital identity of the dead Poomani Selvanayakam and revealed her story of Sinhalese oppression.

Like Sugandhi, she was a soldier's wife in her husband's absence death, she was taken by the, Lion and she submitted herself to him unlike Sugandhi. She bore a child from him, and her parents declined to accept her. So, she was surviving under the mercy of the, Lion and she became an archaeologist through his mercy. She helped Peter and out of love she was conceived from Peter. Peter seems worried about Julie, but he escaped again, all alone. The question arises is regarding the first child of Julie and the unborn baby. Even after knowing the attack, she insisted on joining the CHOGM venue. So, in the fiction those children's life is also put in dilemma. The question generally arises is that being a woman, what should be the priority for

her; nationalism or children. There are four mothers, Andal Devanayaki, Sugandhi, Julie and Meenakshi Rajaratinam.

Devanayaki took revenge for her daughter and she is incarnated in the places where atrocities on women occur. Sugandhi is one such incarnation. Even though Sugandhi offers justice to her daughter, she doesn't know about the whereabouts of Kadalpura, her daughter. Julie risked herself forgetting her first child and the one in her womb for the nation.

The writer sarcastically and indirectly hints the glorified duties assigned by patriarchal society to women and he breaks such conventional writings. Like Sugandhi, Julie's first child from, Lion was not born out of love, but the children are innocent. So, the future of the first child is put on hold and her participation in the attack risked her life as well as the unborn child's life in danger. The fiction retells that, like a man, women also have individual existence, of taking decisions on her own life. Meenakshi set her three children Sugandhi, Arulmozhi Nange and Yamuna Sridhar on their free will. Though she knows the risk, she freed them to participate in Eelam. She adopted Sugandhi in Canada, when Sugandhi's hands were chopped. She was in critical condition and Meenakshi adopted Sugandhi at that point and she left the children to take decisions on their own life. Motherhood and its varying shades are a message to the society. So, women face traumas throughout, including self-protection to motherhood and nationalism.

Hence the decision made by the characters are stronger depending on the circumstances, the fiction sets a new trend in addressing women issues. And the modern society especially Sinhalese autocratic men are more manipulative, oppressively patriarchal and use women as mere physical tools. In the modern society women are climbing the social ladders breaking the glass doors, but at same time insecurities are also increasing.

Rapes and exploitations are increasing along with intensity of cruelty. So, during civil war or militancy, women are ill-treated in all possible manners. Sri Lankan plight of different eras are brought out by T. D. Ramakrishnan in the fiction. So, he produces the untold story of Sri Lankan women, mixing fantasy and myth by signifying the traits of the major and minor characters. Even though the fiction comprises of men, it focuses on the women centric issues and without direct criticisms he sarcastically and with descriptive hints leaves the plotline for the reader's understanding, making it women's fiction. Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled. Any forms of violation, physical, mental or sexual, are human rights violations as it breaks the individual freedom of a person.

Whenever a war occurs it breaks and suspends the human rights and fundamental rights of the people of the particular area. Any form of physical violation is a breach of right to live and when women are abused their right to life is denied. The present paper analyses the human rights violations against women in Sri Lankan civil war as discussed in T.D Ramakrishnan's novel *Sugandhi Alias Andal Devanayaki*. The novel attempts to understand Sri Lankan civil war from a human perspective by exposing the utter realities of the war torn lives, human rights violations and brutalities done against women like rape and murder as part of the Civil War. The study highlights the importance of human rights, inculcation of Social empathy, universal humanism and gender equality. Article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of

Human Rights (UDHR) defines human rights as the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled. These rights include civil and political rights like right to life, liberty, property, freedom of expression, equality before law, right to work, right to education and cultural, social and economic rights etc. The brutalities happened as part of the Second World War gave way to form an international law to prevent the recurrence of those cruelties which led to form United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It affirms the

protection of human rights of each individual even at the time of war or any forms of emergency. Even though there are many administrative bodies to protect the basic human rights, breach of these rights takes place throughout the world especially as part of the war and women become victims to these violations. Any forms of violation, physical, mental or sexual, are human rights violations as it breaks the individual freedom of a person. Whenever a war occurs it breaks and suspends the human rights and fundamental rights of the people of the particular area. Women and children are always affected by war and women's body become like a battleground of war and they are always victimized as part of the war. The United Nations General Assembly, in its 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, noted that violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. According to WHO the nature of violent acts may be categorized as Physical, Sexual, Psychological and Involving deprivation or neglect. Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, injury or harm.

Physical violence includes shoving, grabbing, scratching, choking, biting, burning, hitting, the use of restraints or strength against another person and the use of a weapon like gun or knife. Any form of physical violation is a breach of right to live and when women are abused their right to life is denied. The present paper analyses the human rights violations against women in Sri Lankan civil war as discussed in

T.D Ramakrishnan's novel *Sugandhi Alias Andal Devanayaki*. The novel attempts to understand Sri Lankan civil war from a human perspective by exposing the utter realities and human rights violations occur as part of the Civil War. T D Ramakrishnan's novel, *Sugandhi Alias Andal Devanayaki*, portrays the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka which ravaged the normal lives of people and how it completely devastated the complete existence of civilians in the country. The novel discusses the war inflicted life of Sri Lankan civilians in the Sri Lankan Civil

war between LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) and Sinhalese. This study defends, through the analysis of a novel dealing with the Sri Lankan civil war, that literature narratively constructs the meaning and significance of civil war through its impact on people. The novel uses the religious, economic, ethnic, and cultural tensions among the people of the country and brings out the emotional and psychological consequences of the conflict to realize the multidimensional sufferings of the people as part of the civil war. The novel illustrates the unexpected changes in the lives of citizens by which they may have to adapt to the newly imposed divisions in society which transform their neighbor into enemy. Whenever a war occurs, women and men suffer human rights violations such as indiscriminate killings, harassment and torture but women by their disadvantaged position in the society are subjected to certain abuses more often than men, and they suffer in different ways too. The gender violence against women by the dominant gender in the society is higher than the other violations. The study analyses how the war affected and ravaged the normal lives of women during civil war of Sri Lanka as reflected by the novelist and the study points out the importance of inculcation of social empathy and universal humanism in the lives of human beings to reduce the violence against their fellow beings. Throughout history, women and girls are often been targeted in wartime for violence, especially sexual violence. Even after increased awareness and mobilization at the local and international levels, women and girls continue to face multiple challenges during any war in the world. Violence against women manifests itself as rape, molestation, stripping, eve teasing, kidnapping and abduction, domestic violence, foeticide, female infanticide etc. Violence against women is a global problem which must be recognized as an issue of human right abuse. Violence against women has reached epidemic proportions and the civilians have become the primary targets of groups who use violence and terror as a tactic of war. Men as well as women are the victims of this targeting, but women, much more than men, suffer gender-based violence. Their bodies are treated like the battlegrounds over which opposing forces fight and struggle with each other. Women face various types of

physical, mental and sexual tortures and they are abused than men. Physical violence against women includes rape, torture, imprisonment, trafficking, compelled prostitution sexual assault and murder. War destroys the secured shelter and it may lead to vulnerable exposure to different kinds of exploitation. Poverty and lack of food supplies lead women towards ill health which may end in different kinds of diseases. Women combatants who become captives are highly tortured in specially designed torture camps and all these are violations of human rights provided to any human being. All these tortures and exploitations may result in mental trauma which would follow them throughout their life. Rape is defined as unlawful sexual intercourse without consent of the victim and it is identified by psychologists as the most intrusive of traumatic events. Female body is used as a battle ground to show the enemy's rage and ferocity. Sexual violation of women dissolves the fabric of a community in a way that murderous weapons wipe out the whole area. Rape's damage can be devastating because communal reaction to the violation and agony engraved on entire families. The torment inflicted on a woman by a rapist is an attack not only on her family but also on her culture, as in many societies women are considered as repositories of the cultural and spiritual values of their community. Rape produces many psychological consequences or psychological difficulties over women such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, sexual dysfunctions, dissociative disorders, suicide attempts, and alcohol or substance abuse. Women are raped as a way to mortify or humiliate the men they are related to, who are often forced to watch the assault. In societies where ethnicity is inherited through the male line, women in the opposite group are raped and compelled to bear children in order to fortify their ethnical root. Pregnant women are forced to miscarry through violent attacks and many women are kidnapped and used as sexual slaves. T D Ramakrishnan's Sugandhi alias Andal Devanayaki, portrays rape as a powerful tool to oppress women. The women Human Rights activists who stood up for establishing peace at Sri Lanka are being raped by the army without any ethnic difference of Tamil or Sinhalese. The medical student Poomani Selvanayakam was kidnapped and inhumanly

tortured. She was raped by a higher official in the army whom she murders in the end. But she was not able to escape from the place and later killed by the soldiers. She was kidnapped by the Sri Lankan army for conducting a memorial meeting in the name of Rajani Tiranagama, a human right activist who stood against both Sri Lankan army and LTTE for their ill treatment of the citizens. Juliet a Sinhalese woman who was magnetized towards Rajani's activism was too abducted by the army and she too was cruelly raped and imprisoned by the military and she was compelled to bear the child of the higher official as a punishment. Later she was completely denied by her parents. When she was kidnapped by the army, her husband, an army officer in Sri Lankan army, was brutally murdered in the war. The army officials use rape as a weapon against women journalists, combatants and activists. The harassment of female captives in the army camp is portrayed through the character Tamizholi and Sugandhi. Both of them are cruelly gang raped by the soldiers and they were physically and mentally tortured. Tamizholi is held as captive for many years and they had to face many torturing equipment which were specially designed to torture female captives in the camp. Sugandhi, the Tamil activist lost her both hands and foot and she was disfigured by pouring acid over her face. The two girls Arulmozhi and Yamuna the two helping hands of Sugandhi, who stood against the inhuman torturing of civilians by Sri Lankan army are also gang raped by the army in the guise of interrogation. The novel revolves around the murder of the human right activist Rajani Tiranagama, a medical officer who brought international attention towards Sri Lankan issues. She was killed by LTTE for working against their inhuman treatment of Sri Lankan citizens. Poomani Selvanayakam was murdered for not yielding to the policies of Sri Lankan army. Sugandhi too lost her life in her fight against the army's fascism.

The names of the murdered women in the civil war are being mentioned in an informal meeting of the association 'Women against War' in Poomani's leadership. The names of Kuttimani, Isaipriya, Selvi, Sivaramani and Rajani are mentioned in the speech. Many unknown

women also lost their lives without doing anything against any of these groups. T D Ramakrishnan highlights the murders of human right activists, journalists and social activists who work against both groups, LTTE and Sri Lankan Government, to re-establish peaceful life in the country. Both the groups LTTE and Sri Lankan army work by their own to establish their policies in the country without giving prominence in maintaining peaceful environment for the civilian life and their mutual violence completely destroys the island nation. Almost all the women presented by the writer are suffering from different kinds of mental trauma. The women victims in rehabilitation camps who are victims of gang rapes used to scream at their sleep even after coming back to normal life. Many girls who were gang raped committed suicide or stopped interacting with the outer world and sometimes who were burdened with compulsive pregnancy ended their life in prostitution and death because of sexually transmitted diseases. War, is a kind of entrenchment over the normal life of people and it ends in complete poverty and destruction like collapse of families, social life, loss of health, wealth and secured shelters. Many women lost their husbands children and parents. The association named 'War widows of Sri Lanka' presented in Sugandhi Alias Andal Devanayaki ejaculates the terrible situation of Sri Lankan women life which has completely broken in the civil war. The number of the members of 'War widows of Sri Lanka' is nearly one lakh which itself is an example of the deplorable women life in the war torn island country. Sugandhi, one of the prominent characters, lost her parents and brother in early childhood itself and she had to spend her whole childhood in an orphanage till the arrival of her uncle. War always devastates human life and whatever destroys the peaceful existence of civilians in a country should be wiped away from our life. Governments and countries are created only for maintaining law and order in the country not to oppress people for protecting their personal interests or policies. Human rights should be protected otherwise complete anarchy would exist in the country which would make civilian existence impossible. The victimized women presented in the novel are reflections of the secluded and refugee lives of war torn lives that are completely denied basic human rights.

The women presented in the novel are physically and mentally broken, lost their families, some of them murdered and some of them committed suicide. All of them lost their familial and social co-existence only because of the war. The novelist successfully portrays peoples' subjective experiences and the drastic effects of Sri Lankan civil war on the lives of the normal citizens effectively. The novel highlights the necessity of protection of human rights, tolerance, social empathy and universal humanism through the realistic picturisation of war torn lives presented in the novels which embody complete empathy towards the deplorable condition of humanity in our world.

## Conclusion

This thesis was aimed at analysing the novel ‘Sungadhi Enna Andal Dhevanayaki’ written by T D Ramakrishnan from feminist perspective. Sugandhi Enna Andal Devanayaki narrates the Sri Lankan civil war and the real-life situations faced by the common people. He also depicts the stages of womanhood along with history and circumstance. The political upper hand was vested on men, following patriarchy. Though in the mythical story of Devanayaki, she advised and created orders, her patriarchal owner, that is her husband sealed on it. Even in Eelam, though women sacrificed and showed valor the patriarchal Sri Lankan conscience considers women a tool towards the goal and were treated meanly. The conventional and unconventional womanhood and motherhood are addressed in a traumatic manner, that highlights the plight of women in the Sri Lankan Civil War. Womanhood portrayed in this narrative exemplify the role of women in nation building. The choices made by the female characters ultimately defines their inclination towards motherhood or nationalism.

This novel is an attempt to showcase the different perspectives of womanhood and their bruised self, rather than confining them to typical stereotypes. Through mixture of sentiments the writer created Andal Devanayaki, fictionally capturing various shades of womanhood and the traumas of each stages. Even though the fiction comprises of men, it focuses on the women centric issues and without direct criticisms he sarcastically and with descriptive hints leaves the plotline for the reader’s understanding, making it women’s fiction.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**SOCIAL REALISM IN THE INDIAN FILM**  
***KAI PO CHE***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**JIBIN SUNNY**

**Register No: DB18AEGR014**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

June 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Social realism in the Indian film *Kai Po Che*” is a bonafide work of Jibin Sunny, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Jibin Sunny, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Social realism in the Indian film *Kai Po Che*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

JIBIN SUNNY

08- 06- 2021

DB18AEGR014

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JIBIN SUNNY

## Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One:	
Social Realism in Indian Films	3
Chapter Two:	
<i>Kai Po Che</i> at a Glance	12
Chapter Three:	
Social Realism in <i>Kai Po Che</i>	18
Conclusion	24
Works Consulted	25

## **Introduction**

A film, also called a movie, motion picture or moving picture, is a work of visual art used to emulate experiences that disseminate ideas, fiction, awareness, emotions, or atmosphere through the usage of moving portraits. The words of American cinematographer John Seiz seems to be relevant in the modern world. It indicates the importance in the society. The common problems of the society are portrayed through films.

*Kai Po Che* (2013) movie directed by Abhishek Kapoor, is an adaptation of Chetan Bhagat's best-selling novel "*The 3 Mistakes of My Life*". Three close male friends live through ups and downs in attaining their dream of running a sports shop and cricket academy in the film. Based on a bestselling novel, the film traffics in an energetic form of inspirational and redemptive melodrama that binds the friends' fortunes to real-world events in the early 2000s, such as the Gujarat earthquake.

Once business-headed Govind (Raj Kumar), emotional cricket fanatic Ishaan (Sushant Singh Rajput), and money-attached Omi (Amit Sadh) get their simple store up and running, luck strikes when a Muslim boy falls into their life, displaying enough cricket-batting talent to be the upcoming big star. The story progresses through their lives, their struggles, friendship, success and tragedies portrayed along with real incidents.

Films in terms of the intended effect on the viewers: it give effect that it represents life and the social world as it seems to the common viewer evoking the sense that its

characters might in fact exist and that such incidents might well happen. Social realism, thematizes social, historical and political issues. This project tries to trace out the social realism that is implicit within this film. There are pieces of evidence in the film which prove the same.

## Chapter 1

### Social Realism in Indian Films

The term 'realism' comes from a literary and art movement in Europe and America of the nineteenth century. It was a broad spectrum movement. Realism is the artistic attempt to recreate life as it is in the context of an artistic medium. The artist's function is to report and describe what he sees as accurately and honestly as possible. The realistic artist tries to keep his own preconceived notions out of his art but tries to just report what he sees as accurately as possible. When it came to film, realist films addressed social issues.

It purports to give a direct and truthful' view of the real world' through the presentation it provided through the characters and their environment. The realist film focused on ordinary life; indeed the lives of the socially deprived and the conditions they had to bear. The French film pioneers Lumiere brothers' film Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory was one of the first realistic films ever made because its subject matter was exactly what the title stated.

This was in direct contrast with another French film of the period Trip to the Moon which was an overt fantasy and one of the first science fiction films ever made. Since its inception, the world of cinema has descended from these two progenitor film approaches: realistic films that try to show the world as it actually is, and fiction or fantasy films that try to present the artist's imaginative view of the world in an entertaining manner.

There was a liberating aspect to realism; that films could be made without expensive crews and with elaborate sets: the street could be a justifiable mise-en-scene. This liberating aspect came in the form of Italian Neo-Realistic movement which

influenced films internationally throughout the fifties. It preferred natural setting and it demanded the narrative to respect the actual qualities and duration of the event.

There are two types of realism in film: seamless realism and aesthetic realism. Seamless realism tries to use narrative structures and film techniques to create a "reality effect" to maintain its authenticity. Aesthetic realism, which was first called for by French filmmakers in the 1930s and promoted by Andre Bazin in the 1950s, acknowledges that a "film cannot be fixed to mean what it shows", as there are multiple realism; as such, these filmmakers use location shooting, natural light and nonprofessional actors to ensure the viewer can make up her/his own choice based on the film, rather than being manipulated into a "preferred reading". Siegfried Kracauer is also notable for arguing that realism is the most important function of cinema.

Aesthetic realist filmmakers use long shots, deep focus and eye-level 90 degree shots to reduce manipulation of what the viewer sees. Italian neorealism filmmakers from after Second World War took the existing realist film approaches from France and Italy that emerged in the 1960s and used them to create a politically oriented cinema. French filmmakers made some politically oriented realist films in the 1960s, such as the *cinema verite* and documentary films of Jean Rouch. In the 1950s and 1960s, British, French and German new waves of film making produced "slice-of-life" films.

The infusion of Realism in Indian cinema dates back to as early as 1920s and 1930s. One of the earliest examples was V. Shantaram's 1925 silent film classic *Sawkari Pash* (Indian Shylock), about a poor peasant (portrayed by Shantaram himself)

who “loses his land to a greedy moneylender and is forced to migrate to the city to become a mill worker, acclaimed as a realistic breakthrough. Its shot of a howling dog near a hut has become a milestone in the march of Indian cinema.” The 1937 Shantaram film *Duniya Na Mane* (The Unaccepted) also critiqued the treatment of women in Indian society.

The end of the 20 century and the beginning of the next witnessed the rise of a new breed of Marathi regional film using either Marathi or Hindi language in their films. These "New Mumbai films" focused their attention on the urban social and cultural problems associated with the life in the metropolis. Ram Gopal Varma's *Company*, Madhur Bhandarkar's *Chandini Bar*, Anurag Kashyap's *Black Friday* etc. belong to this category.

The parallel cinema, pioneered by Satyajith Ray, despite its humble beginning has gone a long way, through its commitment to radical and experimental film making. It projected contemporary social and cultural issues with an unflinching sense of realism, and always stood as a counter-check to the dominance of melodrama and spectacle which characterized the popular Indian cinema. With its emphasis on low budget and high craft, the art cinema transformed itself into a cinema for the people who enjoy the artful presentation of reality.

One distinct feature of Indian realistic films is that these are full of humane warmth. The western movies may be technically much sounder than the Indian ones but they are better in humanitarian treatment. Under the influence of Neo-Wave the Indian film industry saw an awakening in regional cinema, especially in the south. Girish Karnad, who has made his influence widely felt both in theater and cinema, was at the forefront of the Kannada realism, further, south in Kerala, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, who also began as a theater personality, tackled bold subjects through his films.

. In the Bollywood movies, there is an undercurrent of realism and humane approach amid the superficial chaotic presentation. Hindi movies, is scrutinized for what it says about contemporary politics, corruption, public perception of the state and its agencies such as the police administration and judiciary. The “law and order” situation, the position of women in Indian society, and of course such social phenomena as the rise of the middle class, consumerism, social and sexual mores, the “Westernization” of Indian society, and the like.

Parallel cinema was a film movement in Indian cinema that originated in the state of West Bengal in the 1950s as an alternative to the mainstream commercial Indian cinema, represented especially by popular Hindi cinema, known today as Bollywood. Inspired by Italian Neorealism, Parallel Cinema began just before the French New Wave and Japanese New Wave, and was a precursor to the Indian New Wave of the 1960s. The movement was initially led by Bengali cinema and produced internationally acclaimed filmmakers such as Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Ritwik Ghatak, Tapan Sinha and others. It later gained prominence in other film industries of India and Bangladesh.

It is known for its serious content, realism and naturalism, symbolic elements with a keen eye on the sociopolitical climate of the times, and for the rejection of inserted dance-and-song routines that are typical of mainstream Indian films.

The Parallel Cinema movement began to take shape from the late 1940s to the 1965, by pioneers such as Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, Bimal Roy, Mrinal Sen, Tapan Sinha, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Buddhadeb Dasgupta, Chetan Anand, Guru Dutt and V. Shantaram. This period is considered part of the 'Golden Age' of Indian cinema. This cinema borrowed heavily from the Indian literature of the times, hence became an

important study of the contemporary Indian society, and is now used by scholars and historians alike to map the changing demographics and socio-economic as well as political temperament of the Indian populace. Right from its inception, Indian cinema has had people who wanted to and did use the medium for more than entertainment. They used it to highlight prevalent issues and sometimes to throw open new issues for the public.

Social realism aims to create a truthful representation of real life covering the ordinary lives and issues of average people. The British Film Institute defines genres as “the realistic depiction in art as a means of social or political comment” as the genre tends to focus on taboo themes and unrepresented social groups. The British Film Institute also said “art was a weapon that could fight capitalist exploitation”. This relates to social realism as directors often set out with a purpose to try and highlight certain issues in society where opinions could be changed and make a point against them. They focus on human flaws and are a rebellion against romanticism juxtaposing from typical Hollywood over the top films that are intended to entertain us.

Instead social realism tries to educate us on problems and encourages us to explore real issues rather than getting caught up in fiction. Social realism gives a chance for opinionated directors to share their thoughts through the medium of moving image without hiding any less savory moments but instead showing the whole truth. Most working class tend to favor the more Hollywood style fictional blockbusters as they give them a sense of escapism; social realism however, is watched by more educated people in society that want to use film to learn about social issues. The genre is supported by verisimilitude making it true to real life and an accurate depiction pushing boundaries with a relaxation of censorship. A lot of people consider the first social

realist film to be *Rescued By Rover* 1905, a classic short silent film around a dog who helps his master, focusing around themes of family.

This concept was adopted to Indian films especially the Hindi films of the 1950s and 1940s. The Indian cinema has always reflected, what people believe in at large, and where the society is going to stand in future. This can be enlarged as we take an odyssey from past to present. With reduction in the physical and temporal distances, Indian Cinema is only one of the factors shaping our popular culture. On other lines, from fashion to lifestyle it is more of a mirror reflecting Indian culture. Popular culture of any society is defined by the common values and themes that any society seek to build. Indian Cinema is one of the forms of in which the culture can be viewed. Cinema along with characterizing reality of a society, helps in evaluating social norms, value, customs and beliefs.

Culture itself is not static it is dynamic. As a society moves with time, connotations of culture take different meaning as well. A lot has changed in our culture since the first movie *Raja Harishchandra* came out in 1913.

The Indian cinema has always reflected, what people believe in at large, and where the society is going to stand in future. This can be enlarged as we take an odyssey from past to present.

In the pre-independence era, when Britishers left, Zamindari and exploitation of labourers was widely present. This was very evident in the movies like, *Pyasa* and *Do Biga Zameen*. India's vibrant culture which thrives on kinship and family was evident.

Also visible was the immense poverty that abject distress. Gandhian and Nehruvian ethics were dominant in these movies. Everything happening in society was reflected on the silver screen clearly. Also, this was an era where superstition propelled

as in the past, more movies based on mythologies like “Jai Santoshi Maa”, became epics of honesty and idol worship.

With changing political conditions of the country, and coming of Ms. Indira Gandhi in power Indian society changed. There was unemployment and ‘imposed emergency’ on the people. This anger of the crowd was manifested with Angry young man in the Cinema. Movies like *Deewar* and *Zanzeer* showed path of integrity in such turmoil and it also showed the anger of honest working class. It showed how the youth of the country had a lot of suppressed ambitions, frustration and rage against the corrupt system. And this gave birth to a superstar, Amitabh Bachchan, who gave a voice to the masses and masses were able to resonate with him.

Movies, in the new millennium brought newer narratives into public domain. Newer patterns of protest and the power of youth was seen in *Rang De Basanti* in 2005. Protest via candles in India Gate was popularized later in other national protests across the nation.

Then there were movies recently like *Namastey London*, which showed not much has changed since 70s when *Purab* and *Pashchim* with Manoj Kumar as the lead actor came, that highlighted the differences between western and native Indian culture with great sarcasm.

Heroes, who made India proud were brought alive in movies like, *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*. Their popularity gave an idea of the demographic dividend of country, as more people in the 19-45 years of working age could resonate with these stories on the path of dedication and hard work. New patterns of understanding child psychology and problems of children were seen in movies like, *Taare Zameen Par*, *Stanley ka dabba*

etc. This showed evolution of the state into more developed one, as now there is resources to spend on mental strength of our people.

The social realist films reflects the themes on depression, domestic violence, gang, culture, anxiety, social media conflict, family, teen pregnancy, prostitution working class, disability, economic hardship etc.

Location is used as a tool to represent lifestyle and contextualize the grittier urban working class scenarios. More desolate rundown inner city landscapes are used to represent the vast amount of people living within. Blocks of flats, graffiti ridden streets and neglected abandoned areas are commonly used as location because they represent the reality of what some people have to live with. The majority of filming is done on location, rather than in a studio, to further create the sense of verisimilitude and keep as true to reality as possible. Locations that are unknown and unacknowledged to the target audience, of more highly educated young adults, are used to give them an insight into real life working class society.

Social Realism narratives are hard hitting and gritty focusing on the revelation of everyday social interaction and pushing boundaries with contemporary scene. They focus on the struggles and toils of daily life, more than often looking at the drudgery and lifestyle of the working class.

In addition narratives often spur from real life social issues and events; the films try to prove a point or mark an opinion through a thought provoking story line. Another 11 1 convention of social realism is the use of unknown actors; this makes the ordinary bleak scenes feel more realistic, relatable and humble rather than including big name actors who an audience would already have prior opinions and subconscious attitudes.

In social realism camera angles are less impressive and simpler in an attempt to mirror the simple, bleak lifestyle and ordinary average context. The cinematography wants to be organic and natural as not to take away from the important serious narrative lessons or not to suggest that the narrative is false or fiction. Pan's tracks and stills are a lot more common than more adventurous movements such as arcing or padding, establishing shots are frequently used in the exposition to contextualize the urban gritty location, which is so important when considering the genre as a whole. What is commonly a wide- ariel shot, will give the audience a full view of the setting and introduce them to the environment. When action or a climactic point arises handheld cam is often used to track a chase or a fight to make the audience feel more immersed in the life style and convey panic through the raw true movements of the camera. Close ups are used in abundance as to reinforce a reaction shot emphasizing the emotion in the characters facial expressions.

Lighting in social realism films is often low-key and dull following the concept of pathetic fallacy where the weather mirrors the mood of the scenes. Often the natural light isn't tampered with at all because they want to stay as true to reality as possible creating verisimilitude, even if that means slight under exposure or a less attractive viewing experience. Sound is similar, in the way it is approached, to lighting; there is nothing to artsy or out there and the main focus is trying to recreate ordinary life. Most sound is dietetic or pr example sirens, alarms and rain. Incidental music is sometimes brought in to reinforce a mood or split up sets of dialogue but it isn't common as it breaks the illusion of reality recorded foley of natural sounds that are in the world, for

## Chapter 2

### *Kai Po Che* at a Glance

*Kai Po Che* (2013) movie directed by Abhishek Kapoor is the adaptation of Chetan Bhagat's best-selling novel *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*. Even after *Kai Po Che*, the hubris of Bhagat critics will assert that if the film is as elegant and sublime as it is, it's not because of Bhagat but despite him. While he might not be the extraordinary writer alive, Bhagat certainly infer middle-class India better. He perceives to occupy and pack many factors of fresh India or the youth into natural characters that truly represent the problematic certainties of the country.

Three friends in *Kai Po Che*, each represent one side of India — the capitalist (Rajkumar Yadav as Govind Patel), the political (Amit Sadh as Omkar Shastri) and the sensitive (Sushant Singh Rajput as Ishaan Bhatt). Abhishek Kapoor and Chetan Bhagat pull this off with exciting restraint and sublime subtlety and continuously keep us at the edge of the seat with a compelling, risky narrative that's creating the anticipation and volatility of an India torn between tycoons, politicians and optimists.

Govind lives by math, probability and earnings, Omi by his commitments, dedications and amenities, while Ishaan is all heart, selfless and easily enraged. Yet, they all have echoes of each other and end up molding each other to do exactly the contrary of who they are.

This is India. The real middle class India. Real people, not stars. Real houses, not sets. Real clothes not fancy pants. You'll fall in love with everything about India and Gujarat. The screenplay of this flawless film is attributed to Pubali Choudhari, Supratik

Sen, Abhishek Kapoor and Chetan Bhagat and the technological team of Anay Goswami's cinematography, Amit Trivedi's music and Deepa Bhatia's editing couldn't have harmonized this ensemble better, visually and aurally.

The victory of a film is how it formulates feel, when you leave, when you look back at it and when it refuses to leave one long after seeing it. *Kai Po Che* will leave audience choked and feeling good. It will leave you bittersweet. And breathless.

*Kai Po Che* prompts us of another mostly incredible approximation of India — Mani Ratnam's *Bombay*, a melting pot of culture and boiling communal tensions. A film that resorted to a Utopian ending after neatly facing off one society against another, through strategic personality types in a microcosm of India.

Mr. Kapoor too often gives the brothers-for-life theme the Bollywood treatment, including a bro-mantic song montage full of elegant bonding: We're young! We're crazy! We jump off parapets into the green, green sea! That might work in another film, but here it takes up space, going sentimental when the story needs to go deep. Less generic is the plot line involving Ishaan's discovery of a Muslim boy, Ali (Digvijay Deshmukh), cricket's version of the natural, and their complicated teacher-student relationship.

Ishaan-Ali story grows more interesting as the danger of riot rises, and then turns to bloodshed. Here too the movie shows a realistic tendency with a mythic, only-in-the-movies showdown. And though a sudsy epilogue rings false, there's a measure of positivity in the story's insistence that communal boundaries can be exceeded, however briefly or imperfectly, through the federal amusement, cricket.

The film starts up with Govind "Govi" Patel (Rajkumar Rao) in 2010 delivering a demonstration in a school about the assistance provided by his sports club. In a parallel

scene, Omkar "Omi" Shastri (Amit Sadh) is released from prison. While halting at a restaurant mid-way, Govind and Omi recollect their days behind to the year 2000 with the life of their friend Ishaan.

In 2000, Ishaan "Ish" Bhatt (Sushant Singh Rajput), an ex-district level cricketer who is a victim of politics in the cricketing selection organization, Omi is the nephew of a Hindu politician, Bittu, who funds his father's temple and Govind is a geek with an inclination for business and digits. Together they open a sports shop and an academy to equip and boost talented sprouting cricketers. After struggling hard, they achieve in stabilizing it as a hub for cricket among the local youth and start to incur earnings.

Ishaan requests Govind to teach his sister Vidya "V" Bhatt (Amrita Puri) mathematics as her exams are appearing. Govind is hesitant at first but accepts eventually. Vidya and Govind slowly fall in love with each other. Omi finds out the same and warns Govind of the effects, as Ishaan is very guarding of his sister.

The three friends spot a budding cricketing potential in a local boy, Ali Hashmi (Digvijay Deshmukh), who has an unusual ability, and Ishaan begins instructing him vigorously. Govind is ambitious and likes to broaden the budding 16 business by starting a shop in a mall being established in Navrangpura, a developing part of the town. With monetary help coming from Omi's maternal uncle, Bishakh "Bittu" Joshi (Manav Kaul), the trio secure the deal and lift up the shop in the mall.

On 26 January 2001, tragedy strikes when a disastrous earthquake hits Gujarat and the mall is demolished. Govind is devastated as the amount of money they financed was very large and they are now burdened with a massive debt. Omi is reluctantly compelled to work for Bittu's right-wing party due to the money they owe him. When relief camps of Bittu's party refuses to give Muslims shelter in troubled times, Ishaan and Omi had clash over their political and religious viewpoint and temporarily had a gap in

their friendship. They again reunite after India's surprise win in the test match against Australia on 15 March 2001. Omi gets involved with religious politics and joins Bittu's party. Ishaan and Govind, meanwhile, are busy with Ali and Vidya respectively.

Anxiety arises in the political sphere when Bittu fails the elections in his constituency to his opponent. As a part of their campaigning, in 2002, Bittu sends pilgrims (kar sevaks) to Ayodhya to the Ram Temple. Omi's parents were also among them. On the returning day, 27 February 2002, the shocking news of the Godhra train massacre reaches the people.

Omi is broken but Bittu satisfies him to take counterattack on the murderers of his parents. Ishaan and Govind were in Ali's house, worrying about communal riots which were about to begin. As expected, the unrest begins by sunset, and the mob led by 17. Bittu gets into the Muslim locality, killing each one. A battle ensues between Ali's father Nasir (Asif Basra) and Bittu. Nasir stabs Bittu in protection and hurries to save Ali and safeguard in their attic.

Omi, annoyed at the demise of his uncle Bittu, follows him with a gun, Ishaan gets to know about Vidya and Govind's affair, when he reads Vidya's text message in Govind's mobile phone about her periods. Enraged, he starts whacking Govind while Omi enters the premises with a gun in hand, desperate to find and kill Ali and Nasir. Ishaan and Govind break their own fighting and try to stop Omi as he desperately checks out for Ali and Nasir. Omi ultimately aims and shoots at Ali. Ishaan in a bid to save Ali takes the bullet himself and thus dies, leaving both his friends, father and Vidya shattered.

The film then reaches back to where it started, with Omi being released from prison. Govind and Vidya are wedded and have a son, whom they have named Ishaan after their late friend. Vidya forgives Omi when he breaks down in front of her. The film

ends with a now grown up Ali (Tahir Raj Bhasin) debuting for the Indian cricket team against Australia. He plays his first shot by striking the ball to the boundary with a cover drive just like Ishaan had tutored him. Ishaan's spirit smiles at Ali's success, and fades away smiling.

The film title *Kai Po Che* is a Gujarati phrase meaning "I Have Cut" which refers to a kite competition where one of the competitors uses his kite to cut off another competitors kite and yells "Kai Po Che!"

*Kai Po Che* is an unforgettable ode to friendship and the magical moments one shares with one's closest pals -celebrating festivals, drunken dancing, watching cricket matches together, strategizing on how to catch the attention of the cute neighborhood girl, being there to watch each other's back in troubled times and to celebrate one's successes by screaming "kai po che!"

The story is inspiring and motivating with brave direction, strong performances and energizing background score. It is simply irresistible. Raj Kumar Yadav' excels and 'Amit Sadh' too but the man of the movie award goes to 'Sushant Singh Rajput'. It's no doubt that the three of them were good but at the end of the day someone is best. Vidya, played by ' Amrita Puri' is cute with a tinge of joviality and naughtiness. She is a perfect sister and a lover. Little 'Ali' does look strong and playful. Others are good. The three pivotal parts, enacted effortlessly by Sushant Singh Rajput, Rajkumar Yadav and Amit Sadh, are the heartbeats of the enterprise.

*Kai Po Che* had a world premiere at the 63rd Berlin International Film Festival on 13 February 2013 where it was the first ever Indian film to feature the World Panorama section. *Kai Po Che* received six nominations at the 59th Filmfare Awards, including Best Director for Kapoor, Best Supporting Actor for Rao, and Best Male

Debut for Rajput, and Best Story. The film won two awards, including Best Screenplay for Kapoor and Best Background Score for Hitesh Sonik.

## Chapter 3

### Social Realism in *Kai Po Che*

*Kai Po Che* is a rejuvenating tale of friendship, aspirations and passion that might leave you with a mild dose of reality. The film showcases the madness that the common citizen of the country has about cricket, cinema and politics, and the effects that it is making on the process of growth and the ethos of the country. There are no over-the-top dramatic dialogues, instead, those in the film sound very realistic and authentic.

*Kai Po Che* has ironically portrayed the painful reality of human life which is further impacted by enthusiasm rather than feelings and desires. The movie goes into the flashback mode and depicts the events which shook Gujarat right from earthquake in 2001 till 2002's Godhra riots massacre and how these events affects life of three friends.

*Kai Po Che*, chronicles the life of three friends in Gujarat and how their dreams, passion, friendship and. They undergo various upheavals thereby changing the dynamics of their relationship in the face of natural disaster, religious strife's and politics of Gujarat. The central theme that is bro-mance is one of the best. With *Kai Po Che*, Abhishek Kapoor has gone first step ahead in terms of direction and story-telling. This film is classy and sublime.

It continuously keep us at the edge of the seat with a compelling, unpredictable narrative that's brewing with the tension and volatility of an India torn between capitalists, politicians and dreamers. The true triumph of a film is how it makes you feel, when you leave, when you look back at it and when it refuses to leave you long after you have seen it.

*Kai Po Che* isn't a ditto adaptation of '*Three Mistakes of My Life*'. The director has made some changes which have actually made the movie much better than the book; yet the essence of the story remains the same, which happens very rare in book adapted films.

Film points out the importance of cricket in uniting the people devoid of caste and religion (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.1:21:00), where Ishaan says that he missed Omi after a small fight between them. When relief camps of Bittu's party refuses to give Muslims shelter in troubled times, Ishaan and Omi had clash over their political and religious viewpoint and temporarily had a gap their friendship. They again reunite after India's surprise win in the test match against Australia on 15 March 2001. There comes a scene in the post-interval period in which two characters run through the streets of Ahmedabad and upon forgiving, they embrace each other as the camera revolves around them. Right in that fleeting instance, with breathtaking music playing in the background, you realize the achievement of Abhishek Kapoor, the director of *Kai Po Che*, in etching out characters that are realistic and authentic to the hilt. (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.1:03:30).

*Kai Po Che* is a competently crafted, well-acted and consistently engaging drama that makes its point without sinking into preachy paroxysms. While the catastrophes, one natural, the other politically orchestrated, constitute the principal flash points of the narrative, it is the story of love, friendship and dreams that *Kai Po Che* is primarily about. The movie makes no grand statement about the dynamics of communal violence – it is quite apparent that isn't its intention. In a way, this on-the-surface quality of the treatment works in the film's favour. *Kai Po Che* taps the obvious things – cricket, religion, politics, kite flying, Garba dance and the game of

marbles – as it focuses on the eddies of Gujarat’s contemporary history as reflected in the fate of a bunch of believable, ordinary youngsters.

There are no college campuses, no romantic hook-ups that lead to weepy breakups, and no choreographed songs. There is no bathos. It is a simplistic story, naive even, in trying to tackle some big questions. How does a Hindustan-espousing political party get young recruits, and then turn them into zealots? Can a college graduate be entirely oblivious to the implications of social perceptions and political forces around him? Can cricket really be the cure to all our differences? The film skims over these questions.

None of the four main characters—three men and a woman—are graphic or detailed. Yet, the film triumphs over the shallow story with well-executed cinematic details.

There are some realistic incidents which had great impact on the country which are linked with the characters and narrated beautifully in the film without being unfit in the plot. First of all it was lack of support and alienation from the family and the society due to the sensitive character of Ishaan and the ambitions of the three youth. Ishaan had no support from his father and he was remarked as useless because of his jobless condition. He was always criticized for what he was but he never changed his aggressive nature (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC. 9:00).

Movie then look forward to the poverty faced by the minority. Ali was fall down while batting due to lack of nutrition. He was a Muslim and Muslims were considered as 'others' in a Hindu constructed society (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.21:18).

After the earthquake Bittu’s party was providing the Hindu families with their relief camps. He never tried to help anyone other than Hindus. Ishan tried to help Ali and his people in obtaining a place in the relief camp, but Omi turned down, which later

led to a fight between them. There is real picture of a society where religion rules over humanity and how politics makes use of religion to build up their strength and wealth (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.1:03:00).

There are three types of father characters which can be seen as real life characters. One is Ish's father, who blames his talented son and who never encouraged his talent (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.9:30). Alike Ish Ali's father is also not satisfied with Ali's nature but he always cared for his son. When Ish says about Ali's talent in batting he was really impressed and become extremely happy thus allowing him to play (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.50:40). Then there is Omi's father who love his son more than anything. Even if he did not like Omi entering politics, he had an uneasy going with his son, he blesses him and sets out for the journey to 'ayodhya' (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.1:37:30).

*Kai Po Che* is a refreshing tale of friendship, dreams and passion that might leave you with a mild dose of reality. The movie unravels the madness that the common citizen of the country has about cricket, cinema and politics, and the effects that it is making on the process of growth and the ethos of the control.. There's no over-the-top, filmy, dramatic dialogues, instead, those in the film sound very realistic and genuine. *Kai Po Che* is an ode to true friendship. The movie works wonder on every sphere, say it brilliant acting, realistic plot or heart touching dialogues.

'Gujarat' means 'Garba' and thus means 'beautiful'. Film has portrayed culture, life, catastrophes, rituals etc. of Gujarat (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.1:30:31). The Gujarat earthquake in 2001 was presented really well. The scenes were portrayed with real emotion. The sadness related to natural disasters are not explored as much in Indian cinema. The film also shows the struggles of middle class entrepreneurs, their losses,

their broken minds and life of people who were in search of their basic requirements (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.58.14).

The film visualizes the Godhra riots massacre at its best showing the actualities of the riot and helpless and inhumane incidents taken place without any coverage, but without affecting the continuity of the film. Death of Omi's parents when Sabarmati express is burnt to the death of Ishan taking the gun shot by Omi to save Ali. (*Kai Po Che*.2013.TC.1:41:30). Real life events, the 2001 Gujarat earthquake and the 2002 riots that happened in the aftermath of the inhuman burning of pilgrims at Godhra where one of the key characters is shown to have lost his family in the fateful coach that was burnt. In what could be described as controversial, the film takes the liberty to portray one religious community as an aggressor and the other, mostly as a victim, thus playing it safe.

The director Abhishek Kapoor has handled the sensitive subject with maturity and with the backdrop of Gujarati culture and music, *Kai Po Che* is a cakewalk for you. Screenplay keeps you busy with crispy editing. Art direction is good. Cinematography is eye-grabbing capturing the gorgeous locales of Gujarat. Movie shows reality of relationship between middle class friends means how they manage in circumstances like financial pressure, worry about career and family dispute.

Kapoor builds his film beautifully (and the performances are excellent), intercutting the general with the specific, and sometimes the political with the personal. The drama surrounding a local cricket match is inter-cut with the drama around electioneering, where a "red" party is up against a "green" party. (Where these religions wage war against one another through slogans and shouts, the cricket field recognizes only talent, with "Ali the Savior" placards.) Then, the drama surrounding an IndiaAustralia test match (Day 1, Day2, and Day 3...) is inter-cut with the drama

around a brother-sister fight, their subsequent making up, and the estrangement and reunion of friends. Finally, Kapoor intercuts the drama of rioting with that of a pregnancy scare. This cross-hatched texture ensures that we're always inside the movie, despite its somewhat sketchy depiction of one of the nation's major upheavals.

He has eyes only for cricket. When Ali's father is reluctant to let his son play (he calls the game "*ameeron ka shauq*"), Ishaan sets about changing his mind. This religion is for everyone, rich or poor. Ishaan is too good for this world. He gives away their savings to needy Muslims, without thinking, whereas when Govind "gifts" a ball to a student, it's a bit of a promotional strategy, keeping in mind long-term gains. And Omi's status as a follower is reinforced when Govind and Ishaan are shown as teachers, the former of mathematics, and the latter of cricket. Omi is such a sheep that he doesn't do anything even when a sword is thrust in his hands. These are not just the scenes of the movie *Kai Po Che*, it represents the society.

## Conclusion

Social Realist films normally represent true-to-life characters and locations. It refers to films with the serious representation and exploration of political and social issues. The lighting is normally 'naturalistic', which means it does not use lenses or soft lighting. Realism is both an aesthetic and genre. Social Realism is a sub-genre of Realism dealing with issues of poverty, class, mundane life, and struggle.

The aesthetic of social realism is identical to that of Realism. Through this project it is evident that *Kai Po Che*, the Indian film released in 2013 deals with social realistic elements. Even though the film was an adaptation from a renowned novel, it never disappoint the audience moreover it stood above the novel. The realism of a fictional film is realism regarding the story told, but of course not realism in the broader sense that the story being told informs us accurately about the world. A fictional film can successfully tell a story, while the story can be utterly inaccurate when it comes to describing real-world events.

*Kai Po Che* reflected the social and artistic value of films. As a Bollywood film *Kai Po Che* varied to a different level from the usual masala and romance. The director has It not only highlighted as a classic Indian film but also a social realist film youth, political and regional issues and portrayed the life of Gujarati people, their culture, rituals, language and their sufferings during natural and political calamities with great perfection along with sweet and heart breaking essence of friendship.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**TRAUMA AND OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN IN  
ANNA QUINN'S THE NIGHT CHILD**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**YESHAS G PRAKASH**

**Register No: DB18AEGR015**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mrs. ANSA GEORGE

February 2021

## Kannur University

### Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “Trauma and Objectification of Women in Anna Quinn’s The Night Child” is a bonafide work of Yeshas G Prakash, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Mrs. ANSA GEORGE

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Yesahas G Prakash, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Trauma and Objectification of Women in Anna Quinn’s The Night Child” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Ansa George of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

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YESHAS G PRAKASH

DB18AEGR015

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YESHAS G PRAKASH

## Table of Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	1 - 2
Chapter One:	3 - 10
Trauma and Feminism	
Chapter Two:	11 - 23
A Brief Run-through The Night Child	
Chapter Three:	24 - 36
Trauma and Subjugation of Women in Nora's life	
Conclusion	37
Works Consulted	38 - 39

## Introduction

Traumatic theory and feminism: traumatic childhood in women's life through 'Anna Quinn's, the night child. This project paper attempts to bring out the traumatic childhood experience a girl had to endure. This project also contains how her past traumatic childhood experience has affected the psyche of this girl in her adulthood, by apparition she sees as her former past. This project also shows how women is perceived as an object and as a thing by patriarchy. This paper attempts to do a detailed study of the character Nora. A story of long-ago trauma which caused a deep psychological split of a person's consciousness. Nora is a sympathetic character invoking a sense of both pity and sympathy for her upsetting life. And she was also abandoned by her husband when she needed him the most, Paul, her husband is portrayed as a classic example of patriarchal figure who reduced women to a mere object for their virile needs.

This project contains a detail study on traumatic theory: Traumatic childhood in women life through Anna Quinn's, *The Night Child* (2018), and it also presents problems women has to endure when she is only perceived as an object for sexual pleasure and sometimes is merely reduced to an object.

In the introduction to theory, it gives an introduction about the theory about to be used in this project and contains a detailed information about it. The theory used here is traumatic theory and how it has made her personality split into two. The theory chapter also contains about feminism, showing how a woman is reduced into a thing. This chapter serves as an introduction about theory which is going to be used on this project.

In the second chapter, the summary chapter, contains a detailed summary of the work and also shows the study of the main characters such as Nora, Paul, Nora's father etc. it also contains in-depth information on the story and the incidents in the story. Which tells about Nora's miserable life. Nora is a sympathetic character, evoking both pity for her distress as well as the way she abandoned by her husband when she needs him most, and admiration in how she perseveres in her determination to discover the cause of her hallucinations. Though John's support isn't as developed as well as one might have wish, he nevertheless become Nora's one mainstay in her search for answers along with the psychiatrist David.

The third chapter, application, will apply trauma theory into character Nora and study her psychological. This chapter also contains feministic theory which shows woman's suffering in the patriarchal society and how she is reduced to the image of an object by man for his virile needs.

## Chapter- 1

### Trauma and Feminism

Psychological trauma, its representation in language, and the role of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities are the central concerns that define the field of trauma studies. Psychoanalytic theories on trauma paired with additional theoretical frameworks such as Post structural, sociocultural, and postcolonial theory form the basis of criticism that interprets representations of an extreme experience and its effects upon identity and memory. The concept of trauma, itself a source of critique, is generally understood as a severely disruptive experience that profoundly impacts the self's emotional organization and perception of the external world.

Trauma studies explores the impact of trauma in literature and society by analysing its psychological, rhetorical, and cultural significance. Scholarship analyses the complex psychological and social factors that influence the self's comprehension of a traumatic experience and how such an experience shapes and is shaped by language. The formal innovations of texts, both print and media, that display insights into the ways that identity, the unconscious, and remembering are influenced by extreme events thus remain a significant focus of the field.

Trauma studies first developed in the 1990s and relied on Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether. This model of trauma indicates that suffering is unrepresentable. Quickly following the traditional model was a more pluralistic model of trauma that suggests the assumed unspeakability of trauma is one among many responses to an extreme event rather than its defining feature. The idea that a traumatic experience challenges the limits of language,

fragments the psyche, and even ruptures meaning altogether set the initial parameters of the field and continues to impact the critical conversation even while alternative approaches displace this notion.

In Freud's early work he argues that traumatic hysteria develops from a repressed, earlier experience of sexual assault. Freud and Breuer emphasize in *Studies in Hysteria* (1895) that the original event was not traumatic in itself but only in its remembrance. Because the original event continues to inflict harm, the talking cure or abreaction is required to understand the effects of the past and gain freedom from its symptom-causing grasp. Importantly, the traumatic event is understood only after a latency period of deferred action that delays the effects and meaning of the past Breuer and Freud 192. It is only after a contemporary event calls forth the previously repressed event that the past event can become known in the process of remembering.

Trauma is thus defined in relation to the process of remembering and as an event harboured within the unconscious that causes a splitting of the ego or dissociation. The authors, citing Janet's work on dissociation, write: "the splitting of consciousness which is so striking in the well-known classical cases under the form of 'double conscience' is present to a rudimentary degree in every hysteria, and that a tendency to such dissociation, and with it the emergence of abnormal states of consciousness ... is the basic phenomenon of this neurosis". the fundamental "phenomenon of hysteria" involves dissociation which the authors argue is a defence mechanism that arises from repression; another mode of defence is amnesia. the notion that trauma causes dissociation or a gap in the psyche is taken up by Freud throughout his career. the concept of the latency period between the event and its pathological effects, along with the idea that trauma fragments the psyche, can cause dissociation, and continuously wreaks havoc or infects it, are principles that Freud

adjusts later in his career but still influence the contemporary definition of trauma for literary critics.

Freud's later work on war neurosis and the problem of traumatic repetition in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) extends and adapts his earlier theories on the defence mechanisms of the ego as well as the origin and effects of trauma upon the psyche. Traumatic events create conflicts in the ego which "split off" from the unity of the ego and are repressed but return later often in dreams (Freud 8). The conflicts caused by trauma create traumatic neurosis, which is "a consequence of an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli". The mind as an organism, according to Freud, contains outer and inner layers, with the outer layer having a "protective shield" against harmful external stimuli. However, when "fright" occurs, that is "the state a person gets into when he has run into danger without being prepared for it," the lack of anxiety coupled with the external stimuli cause neurosis. Anxiety acts as a protection mechanism against traumatic neurosis but unexpected fright carries no defence. The external stimuli rupture the barrier and enter the inner psyche without the adequate internal defence.

Traumatic neurosis is marked by the "compulsion to repeat" the memory of the painful event with the hopes of mastering the unpleasant feelings (19). The dreams of the traumatized patient repeat the experience as a way to "master the stimulus retrospectively, by developing the anxiety whose omission was the cause of the traumatic neurosis" (37). Freud writes that because the patient "cannot remember the whole of what is repressed in him, and what he cannot remember may be precisely the essential part of it" the patient "is obliged to repeat the repressed material as a contemporary event instead of ... remembering it as something belonging to the past" (18, 19). The narrative of the event is crucial to recovery. According to Freud the self

does not remember the actual event but only the reproductions of the traumatic experience that arise in dreams. Although Freud remains ambivalent about the processes of remembering and questions whether experiences leave permanent traces or records in the mind, he argues that through abreaction and the talking cure the patient gains a greater understanding of the past. Traumatic memory is abnormal and lacks the narrative necessary to integrate it into the psyche. The emphasis on narrative recall for normal integration of memory and the general idea of memory as a storehouse of experience are important points for the literary-critical conceptualization of trauma.

Freud's theory that traumatic experiences are repeated compulsively, divide the psyche, influence memory differently than other experiences, and are unable to be experienced initially but only in a narrative reproduction of the past are key ideas informing the first development in trauma studies scholarship that address the theory of trauma and the ways that trauma influences memory and identity.

The concept of otherness derives from the pioneering work of the second-wave feminist Simone de Beauvoir. Otherness seeks to examine how majority and minority identities are constructed.

Otherness claims that the representation of different social groups is controlled by those who hold a greater level of political power. Whilst identities are often thought to be natural and innate, de Beauvoir claims that this is not true. Instead, the identity of females is constructed by men to serve their own interests. Women are thereby presented as the other sex. This sense of otherness is a highly effective form of patriarchal rule and a major obstacle towards female emancipation. In her succinct words, "he is the subject, he is the absolute – she is the other."

To combat the problem, Simone de Beauvoir prescribed a socialist system built upon gender equality and liberation from the inherent exploitation of the capitalist system. In addressing the question ‘What is a woman?’ she claimed that there is no eternal feminine or essence that defines a woman. Women are not born, they are made. Patriarchy imposes limitations upon women, and once told they are inferior, women are made to feel inferior throughout their entire lives. In contrast, non-exploitative work within a socialist system would liberate both men and women and generate a sense of solidarity among all people. It is for such insights that Simone de Beauvoir remains the most important theorist within socialist feminism and one of the most prominent feminists of the second-wave.

Objectification is a notion central to feminist theory. It can be roughly defined as the seeing or treating a person, usually a woman, as an object. In this entry, the focus is primarily on sexual objectification, objectification occurring in the sexual realm.

Immanuel Kant’s views on sexual objectification have been particularly influential for contemporary feminist discussions on this topic. Kant thought that sexuality is extremely problematic when exercised outside the context of monogamous marriage, arguing that in such instances it leads to objectification. He characteristically writes in the *Lectures on Ethics* that “sexual love makes of the loved person an Object of appetite; as soon as that appetite has been stilled, the person is cast aside as one casts away a lemon which has been sucked dry. ... as soon as a person becomes an Object of appetite for another, all motives of moral relationship cease to function, because as an Object of appetite for another a person becomes a thing and can be treated and used as such by everyone” (163).

Objectification, for Kant, involves the lowering of a person, a being with humanity, to the status of an object. Humanity, for Kant, is an individual's rational nature and capacity for rational choice. The characteristic feature of humanity is an individual's capacity for rationally setting and pursuing her own ends. A being with humanity is capable of deciding what is valuable, and of finding ways to realise and promote this value. Humanity is what is special about human beings. It distinguishes them from animals and inanimate objects. Because human beings are special in this sense, they, unlike animals and objects, have a dignity "an 'inner worth', as opposed to a 'relative worth'" (42). It is crucial, for Kant, that each person respects humanity in others, as well as humanity in their own person. Humanity must never be treated merely as a means, but always at the same time as an end (209).

Kant is worried that when people exercise their sexuality outside the context of monogamous marriage, they treat humanity merely as a means for their sexual purposes. In the *Lectures on Ethics* Kant often speaks about degradation, subordination, and dishonouring of humanity when exercise of sexuality is involved. He goes so far as to say that sexual activity can lead to the loss or 'sacrifice' of humanity. The loved person loses what is special to her as a human being, her humanity, and is reduced to a thing, a mere sexual instrument. Kant's notion of objectification, therefore, focuses largely on instrumentality: the treatment of a person as a mere tool for the lover's purposes. Objectification, for Kant, involves regarding someone "as an object, something for use" (Herman 57). According to Alan Soble, for Kant, "both the body and the compliant actions of the other person are tools (a means) that one uses for one's sexual pleasure, and to that extent the other person is a fungible, functional thing" (226). The idea that within sexual relationships people are reduced to objects, that they lose their rational nature, is an extreme one. Halwani

rightly points out that this reduction to the status of an object rarely happens in sexual objectification. He explains that “Outside rape, it is rare to treat our sexual partners as objects: not only are we aware of their humanity; we are also mindful of it.” (193)

Halwani offers a more sensible reading of Kant’s claim here, in admitting that there is truth to the idea that “Sexual desire is powerful enough to make reason its own tool; it can subvert our rational capacity to set ends” (Halwani 209). In this way, people can “endanger their dignity by undermining their reason” (209). Therefore, even though the view that humanity is completely destroyed when people exercise their sexuality is an unappealing one, it is not unreasonable to think that, in some cases, sexual desire and exercise of sexuality can undermine our rationality.

Kant thought that in theory both men and women can be objectified, but he was well aware that in practice women are the most common victims of objectification. This is obvious in Kant’s discussions of prostitution and concubinage. Exercise of sexuality within these morally problematic sexual contexts leads to the reduction of women (prostitutes and concubines) to men’s objects of appetite.

Kant defines prostitution as the offer for profit of one’s person for another’s sexual gratification. A person, Kant holds, cannot allow others to use her body sexually in exchange for money without losing her humanity and becoming an object. He explains that “ a man is not at his own disposal. He is not entitled to sell a limb, not even one of his teeth. But to allow one’s person for profit to be used for the satisfaction of sexual desire, to make of oneself an Object of demand, is to dispose over oneself as over a thing” (Kant Lectures on Ethics, 165). The prostitute’s commodification necessarily leads to her objectification; she is reduced to “a thing on which another satisfies his appetite” (Kant Lectures on Ethics, 165). Kant states that “human beings are ... not entitled to offer themselves, for profit, as things for the use

of others in the satisfaction of their sexual inclinations. In so doing, they would run the risk of having their person used by all and sundry as an instrument for the satisfaction of inclination” (Kant Lectures on Ethics, 165). Kant blames the prostitute for her objectification. He takes her to be responsible for sacrificing her humanity, in offering herself as an object for the satisfaction of the clients’ sexual desires.

The other relationship in which objectification is, for Kant, clearly present is concubinage. According to Kant, concubinage is the non-commodified sexual relationship between a man and more than one woman (the concubines). Kant takes concubinage to be a purely sexual relationship in which all parties aim at the satisfaction of their sexual desires (Kant Lectures on Ethics, 166). The inequality that is involved in this relationship makes it problematic. Kant explains that “the woman surrenders her sex completely to the man, but the man does not completely surrender his sex to the woman” (Kant Lectures on Ethics, 169). Since body and self are for Kant inseparable and together, they constitute the person, in surrendering her body (her sex) exclusively to her male partner, the woman surrenders her whole person to the man, allowing him to possess it. The man, by contrast, who has more than one sexual partner, does not exclusively surrender himself to the woman, and so he does not allow her to possess his person. In allowing her male partner to possess her person, without herself being able to similarly possess his person, Kant believes that eventually the concubine (and this also applies to the woman in any other polygamous relationship, including polygamous marriage) loses her person and is made ‘into a thing’.

## Chapter- 2

### A Brief Run-through The Night Child

*Anna Quinn* is the owner of The Writers Work shoppe and Imprint Bookstore in Port Townsend, WA. She is a teacher and writer. She is an essayist and poet with twenty-six years of experience teaching and leading writing workshops across the country. Anna's first novel, *The Night Child*, was published by Blackstone Publication. She has thirty years of experience teaching and leading writing workshops across the country. Anna Quinn writing has appeared in various literary journals and texts, including Literature Circles and Response, Practical Aspects of Authentic Assessment, Instructor, Tidepools, IS Literary Magazine, Manifest-Station, Lit-Fest Anthology, 2016, and Washington 129 anthology. Anna's first novel, *The Night Child*, was acquired in a world rights deal by Blackstone Publishing. In an interview Anna Quinn talks about *the night child*. *The Night Child* was born from her memoir. When she finished writing the memoir, it still wasn't the story she most wanted to write, but she wasn't able to articulate why. Weeks later another story began to push up, a story with similar themes to the memoir, a story that wanted to go beyond her singular experience beyond the way she had been telling it. she realized the problem was in the form, so she wanted to change it into a novel.

The original title was split, but in 2016 a movie came out with the same title and similar themes to this book. And to make it worse, the film perpetuated harmful stereotypes of mental illness instead of countering them. she was devastated and she told her publisher that she wanted to change the title and they agreed. The new title, *The Night Child*, came to her in a dream soon after, and it encapsulates one of the primary characters, a child named Margaret who only appeared at night. The good

news was that she loved the new title even more than the old one. the characters in the story are composites of people she met in her life, deepened and expanded by her imagination. she wrote *The Night Child* in only a year, but that's because she used a great deal of content from my previously written memoir. she took another year to edit *The Night Child*, and yet another year to call up the courage to submit it. she queried twenty-four agents and within a month, received nine requests for partial manuscripts and three requests for full manuscripts. Soon after, two agents expressed interest in representation one NY agent, and Gordon Warnock from Fuse Literary in San Francisco. The NY agent wanted significant developmental changes that involved sensationalizing certain scenes for commercial purposes, and Gordon loved the book enthusiastically as it was, so she accepted his offer. Nine months later Gordon called to say Blackstone Publishing had offered a fabulous contract. Susan Wiggs states that it is "A remarkable debut novel you won't soon forget". Pam Houston quotes *The Night Child* as "packed with riveting detail and radical emotional honesty". The New York times bestselling author Dorothy Allison says "what I had not expected was the surprise of being so completely in character with someone experiencing the kind of disassociation Quinn portrays...she made her care about Nora and identify with her. That's a wonderful and difficult accomplishment".

*The Night Child* is an incredible story about split consciousness or dual behaviour, of Nora who had a terrible childhood. Nora Brown is a high school teacher who teaches english and lives a peaceful life in Seattle with her husband and six-year-old daughter. But one November day, after dismissing her class, a small girl's face appears above the student's desk, a ghostlike face with wonderful blue eyes, and a face floating on top of shapeless drapes where the arms and legs should have been. Terror rushes through Nora's body, when she saw the apparition.

A day later, while on thanksgiving event, the face appears again. Nora meets with neurologists and eventually, a psychiatrist. As the story progresses, a terrible secret is discovered, a secret that pushes Nora toward an even deeper psychological breakdown. This breath-taking debut novel examines the impact of Nora's terrible childhood experiences and the fragile line between her past and her present.

Nora's story involves child abuse and sexual violence, both of which are described in graphic detail. However, the darkness and shocking revelations aren't used as attention grabbers. They highlight Nora's fragile condition and the lengths to which her mind went to protect her. Most of the story unfolds in the therapist's office, where an empathetic and caring therapist David who carefully guides Nora toward unlocking her memories. through flashbacks and Nora's own narrative, the truth behind her childhood comes out. Physical, verbal, and sexual abuse collide to shatter her innocent mind.

Characters are extremely well developed, especially Nora, whose difficulties connecting with people, be they her unfaithful husband or her energetic daughter, feel realistic. An ambiguous ending makes room for a possible continuation of Nora's story. Though it is emotionally challenging to read, *The Night Child's* gentle dealings with heavy subjects highlight the fragility of the human mind and the intense journeys required to heal deep wounds.

Nora can't remember any of her terrible childhood memories. Thus, Nora starts a journey delving back into her childhood, to when she lived in Ireland with her grandparents, of a mother who loved her but then began to drink, of a father she adored, of her mother's accidental death for which the child Nora blamed herself. By now, the ghostly child has a name called Margaret, but Nora's memory is still

ambiguous and in confusing images and nothing is clear. the discovery that Paul actually is having an affair, and the suicide of one of her students, a girl being abused by her father, add more current stress to that unknown one in Nora's past. The support of John, the principal of her school, is the one bastion in Nora's now bleak and confusing world. Eventually, she will remember the "Valentine dress," discover Margaret's identity, and what those words mean, and then and only when will she reach the end of a journey begun that day in her classroom.

Nora is a sympathetic character, evoking both pity for her suffering as well as the way she's abandoned by her husband when she needs him most, and respect in how she perseveres in her determination to discover the cause of her hallucinations. Though John's support isn't as developed as some readers might wish, he nevertheless becomes one support in Nora's search for answers. *The Night Child* is a novel that will leave the reader shaken with its ramifications of the way crimes against children, hidden by adults, and buried in a child's psyche, can resurface decades later and cause even more harm. the setting of the story happens in the Nora's personal life, the psychiatric office of David Forrester and Nora's school where she teaches. She sees the apparition at first in her school classroom and Margaret in the psychiatrist David's office.

Nora glances at the clock above the class room door. Thirteen minutes until she had to retreat with her husband and daughter to the Washington coast. Every thanks giving since she and Paul have been married, fifteen years now, they've rented a room at the Kalaloch lodge. She was at class teaching her students in the classroom. when the bell rang Nora walks towards her desk and collapses into her chair. And then it happens, a subtle movement of air behind her. More than a quiver of Wind more like somebody exhaling. She turns around quickly. "In front of her, a child's

face a wild numinous face with startling blue eyes, a face floating on top of the shapeless drapes of purples and blue arms and legs” This incident has caused a raw terror in every cell of her body a moment later the face was gone by now. In chapter two, the same apparition reappears while she was at the thanks giving a few minutes later she feels the same rising panic from her classroom. She opened her eyes there less than a foot away inches above the bed the girls face forms out of nothingness the same face obscure and veiled in blues and violets hangs there for a few seconds and then quickly as before disappears and now there is a perfect clear child’s voice a voice not in her mind but above her saying. Remember the valentine dress. Nora consults David Forrester, David suggests that stress can trigger hallucinations. In the psychiatric evaluation with David Forrester, she discusses about her parents, she says that she was closest to her grandfather and she lived in Ireland after her mother’s death and her father has left her, and he never came back she also talks about the letters she wrote to her father by her and her brother James.

Later on, in her psychiatric evaluation they found that she was having a split personality with of small child, the child’s name turns out to be Margaret. Nora in first grade at St. Raphael catholic school in Illinois, reads a book which has a lady named Margaret with a picture of a beautiful woman riding a white horse in the cover. St Margaret was a character who dedicated her life to protect those in danger. Nora was so fond of this character that she has created a Margaret inside of her. St. Margaret dedicated her life to protecting those in danger. When she was little, her mother died, and her father gave her to a shepherdess in the country. Margaret spends her days watching over the lambs. While she was tending the lambs, she would pray her rosary. Later when her father found out she was dedicating her life to god, he became angry, and she leave their home and she went off to protect those who were in

danger.’’ Nora wished that she was brave like St Margaret. In the psychiatric evaluation with David Forrester Nora rates her marriage three out of ten. David even assumes that she had a lot of stress in her life which might be the reason for her illness. David Forrester states that stress can trigger hallucinations, and make you crazy. Later on, David also assumes that it might be because of stress deprivation, and tells her how it significantly decreases normal functioning causing depression, anxiety, reduce cognitive ability. Nora was persistent in knowing whether she was crazy. David breaks down some reasons. Whether it can be a chemical or emotional reason that might trigger such hallucinations. David further probes into Nora’s life’s past events. He asks Nora whether “she was close with her grandmother?” She replies that, she was not close to her grandmother and was closest to her grandfather. She lived with them and her mother was also born over there after her mother’s death her father left her, so she and her brother lived with them in Ireland. Nora’s mother was Irish and Father German American.

After her mother’s death, her father left her he was never seen again though he had written a couple of times and then it also stopped. Nora also states about her mother’s death, she was eleven and her brother was five. Her mother’s death was an accident. Nora was pounding on the keys of an old piano making a lot of noise her mother was furious and started to shout to stop that goddamn noise. Nora in her plaid school uniform and saddle shoes, doesn’t stop beating the piano, then a shriek from the top of the stairs and a great thud was heard the next thing Nora saw was her mother falling the arm’s hips legs and hand neck and mouth of her mother crashing down the basement stairs, shattering the glass, bouncing and coming to a halt next to the black part of Nora’s left shoe. Blood pools from under her mother’s head, pools on the black- and- white chickened linoleum, rivulets of red travelling toward Nora and she

is frozen there. At the funeral of her mother, Nora reaches tentatively into the casket and touches the hands of her mother. The hands are cold and she is taken aback for a moment. She strokes the hands, trace the bones and curves with her index finger.

Nora reveals that her mother's name was Maeve. Nora further elaborates about her mother's description stating that she was pretty. But there something so repressed in Nora that was related to her mother that she couldn't speak to David. David ask's Nora to confirm whether or not her mother hurt her. Nora knows what she should say; she should tell David that sometimes her mother would shriek at her and how if she tried to run her mother would grab her, throw her down, bring her hand hard across her cheek, how the force of the slap sent her reeling against walls and furniture how sharp and shocking those things felt against her body. She should have told him how her mother pulled her hair out, how she had wanted her mother to die. instead, she says, "she was sick. She was sad". David also reinforces the fact that being an alcoholic doesn't have the right to hurt your child.

It is also revealed that Nora had a feministic mind. Nora also agrees about the fact that the penis theory also pisses her off. She was also pissed off by a school teacher who praised her for thinking like a boy. She then thinks of her father who hated when James cried and how much he hated when he played with dolls with Nora. How when James wants to be a pink tulip for Halloween. He refused and said that, "No son of mine is going to be a goddam pansy".

Nora's had a bitter child Fiona, Fiona tells that, sometimes mommies mess up, makes mistakes. Fiona also says that, you are the worst mom ever. Hearing this from her own child Nora's heart stalls her cheeks redden. John was a teacher who worked with Nora at her school, he was one of the very few persons who understand Nora and

cared for her. John knows how much Nora loved being a mother, how she would do anything for her daughter Fiona. He knows how she practically stops breathing when she talks about a student who's written words that cut to her core, who's found a true way to express what they feel. He also knows that Nora loves to write about poetry and will stay up late into the night until she finds just the right words, the accurate shape to describe what she had seen that day. And that she'd like to climb through the underground cities of Cappadocia just to feel the ancient dirt under her nails. Nora knows things about him too; that he was adopted by a Seattle couple, a Gynaecologist and a fourth-grade teacher, when he was a baby and that his birth parents were teenage Cherokee kids and that he wonders where he'd been born after the Indian child welfare act. He's shy, never married. He doesn't like to cook and eat takeout while watching PBS documentaries or reading Faulkner. When Nora says she is been seeing a psychiatrist he says that, "you're one of the strongest people I have known."

Nora was convinced that Paul was having an affair. Though she really didn't have any good evidence, only that he had been working late and later each night, and by the time she wakes up he was gone. But she was afraid to ask about that, Nora couldn't handle If he answered, yes, Nora, I love someone else. she might lose her mind, and so she keeps silent until she feels strong enough to tell the truth. Nora's husband Paul rarely speaks about this family.

Another character who was important in this story is James, Nora's brother. He also supported Nora. James was a homosexual. James is introduced in the chapter eight, he was coming to Chicago for Christmas and bringing his new partner Stephen who is a doctor. Chapter nine is revisiting Nora childhood its s throws some light about Nora's past events with her mother and father and James. It's some pleasant events when compare with other part of the story.

In the psychiatric evaluation with David Nora talks about her father which slowly unravels her mind to reveal Margaret. Nora started to talk in a tiny voice. Margaret starts to talk with David and reveals that she was a six-year-old girl. David realises that her brain was working hard to remember something. If she could somehow connect the with that past memories, we could understand how to rewrite the pathways so her brain could be healthy again. David suggests Nora that she might be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, when Nora's conscience discovers Margaret, then images of a book appear, a book with velvet cover and a golden lettered title, St Margaret, a crown, a sword, a dead dragon, sister rosa. Nora hears David calling her name and slowly open her eyes. Nora stammers and then runs out of the room and tells David that she will call him later.

Nora reminisces about sister rosa the dragon, and the book of St. Margaret. the images of them have materialized in Nora's mind. She now considers how they must be related to the valentine dress. Then she remembers and writes that "everyone has their own way of being brave." and then she remembers these are sisters Rosa's words that she had said to her in the convent. Nora when in first grade at St. Raphael's catholic school in Illinois. She is marching through deep snow in oversized red boots from the school to the convent. It is her job during the lunch recess to bring a carton of milk from the school cafeteria to the nuns. Sometimes sister rosa invites her into library and reads her a book. There's where she met the character, Margaret. Nora was so worried about this and she started to question David's ability to work on patience David understands Nora's problems and became calm and hear her what her problem was. David also advises Nora, that she will be one who will save you he says that he can only support her and she must herself reconstruct the broken pieces, patch the crack.

Nora was obvious about Paul's affair with "Elisa" and she still hasn't said anything to him about Margaret. She couldn't say the right words "Paul I might be a multiple personality. Paul, I might be schizophrenic." she wasn't ready.

Now Margaret has also called her a liar, she reminisces her mother shouting at her calling her a liar. she also remembers about her mother death. Her mother fell down because she was drunk, and not because she, Nora wouldn't playing piano. Still, she feels guilty. Now She remembers about her father's abandonment, her rational mind knows her father wasn't capable of caring for two children on his own. But for her his abandonment feels like hell. She was still probing on thoughts to find the reason for things which might have trigger this craziness, she again remembers about her mother calling her a liar and scolding and shouting at her.

Margaret appears again and confesses about doing things such as stealing money from her daddy's suit pocket and also stealing from Paul. She says that she had kept it in an orange shoe box with the rosary beads in the closet. She defends her act by saying that she needed the money so that Nora and Margaret could run away. David questions her about spitting in the priest face. This is where she reveals about her father's sexual abuse. She was confessing about all the things happened to her with her father even though she was innocent. She spit on the priest face because she felt the priest sound like her father. David was so sorry towards Margaret about hearing this incident.

Nora was now having a recurring dream about she running through a dangerous neighbourhood at night looking for her car she runs past junkies and barred windows and pimps shouting at her "hey baby come to daddy". And then sees her car getting vandalised and run away into the darkness with things that belonged to her.

Paul always mocks such dreams and doesn't take any of her problems seriously. He always dismissed this dream. Nora now recognises that Margaret knows things that she doesn't know. But Nora was still refusing to believe herself that her father would have done such things to her.

Nora was seen facing nausea when she saw a pink candy at her hand which has "kiss me" written in it. She vomits after this. Nora was also struggling about talking about Paul and his affair. But she wasn't brave enough to speak about it. But she started to question Paul asking about why he was working late and finally ask him about Elisa. After hearing this Paul face reddened and start to fight against Nora saying that "and what if I am", he finally says that, what the hell do you care, and we haven't had sex in months. Paul also mocks about Nora by stating that she hates sex and dress like a boy. he calls her thin and was annoyed with her therapy. She sees her as a zombie. even though Nora expected him to say sorry pal didn't instead he go out. She was depressed after this tries not to think about Paul. And the things he said and how she hates body, hates sex .in chapter twenty she reminisces about daddy's abuse and how it was related to the valentine dress. Now she remembers her father bringing candy which has written "kiss me" in it and he abusing her while she was wearing the valentine dress. Nora was still a small child to recognise this abuse. Her father defined this cruel act to the little Nora as love.

When James calls Nora and talks about her father and that he has found him in a nursing room. And put her father on the call. Hearing his voice Nora was startled, his voice stops her blood. She was terrified and runs down the stairs, runs out the front door, runs down the sidewalk, runs across the bridge. She runs into an accident, a slam into her and slammed her hard against the pavement. By the time she awakens she doesn't know where she is. She was admitted to a hospital. She meets carol over

there who was working as a hospital nurse. Nora was struggling to talk and pain was shooting throughout her body. Carol says to her that her vitals were okay. And she has a gash on her head and few bruised ribs, but those will heal up. Carol also tells Nora that she has been admitted in the hospital for a few days. And narrated the whole incident about her accident.

We can see the intensity of the accident which caused to Nora and what she had to suffer. In chapter twenty-two we can see Nora struggling to try not to think about her father. When Carol gave her pink pills, she reminisces her past with her father. Nora is tired of horror flicks in her mind, tired of the smells and sound of her father by this time. When Doctor Brinkley the one who was treating her at the hospital after the car accident, asks her a few questions about problems and difficulty she was having. Nora was struggling with her family's memories.

By the time David arrives next day Nora's emotions have fallen off the edge. She feels a surge of nausea, anxiety swelling-she fights to follow her breath, to stay present. David urges Nora to talk about the incident and to relieve herself from it.

Nora also started to think that Paul may be trying to abuse Fiona, but it was only her assumption she also argues herself that it was only her mere imagination. David also relieves her from such thoughts by saying that, there is nothing that you've told me to suggest Paul would hurt Fiona in this way. David even confirms this by asking if she had seemed him display affection that is inappropriate. John also cares about Nora; he has sent her flowers to her with a note.

She misses John. He is the only one she can talk to with complete freedom. He is the only one willing to listen to her without trying to correct or fix her. She can say whatever she wants, and it's all right. David pays a visit to Nora's house to make sure

that Fiona was safe he also says that I'm going to keep visiting her for at least a couple of weeks and longer if necessary, so that Nora would feel okay.

Nora wanted to leave from the hospital to her house, but she couldn't. John as a true friend who was affectionate about Nora pay's visit to her, he also gift's her a book. The cover of the book contains the picture of a woman not old not young, with green hair, head bowed, eyes closed. Near the woman's head, a blue green light in dark space. Nora opens the book to the first page which has written it that, you are not alone. With you always. John. Her finger traces his words she smiles turns the page. Again, we can see that John is a sharp contrast to Paul's character.

It's been five days since she the incident, since she's had her voice back, and for the first time in thirty years, she feels her voice is her alone. Her visit with John proved she was stronger, and if she can manage Paul. she can leave the hospital. After reaching home from hospital Nora still faces problems in her life. She recognises that she was done with Paul and that her marriage life was almost over. In the final chapter she is seen confronting with her inner hidden character Margaret. She sees a child she is in red dress her eyes are blue Margaret and Nora converse to each other Margaret say's that she didn't want to die she pleaded that she has worked very hard Margaret began to cry and buried her face in her hands. Nora takes care of Margaret. Nora recognises that the hero child was real, and she arrived each time when she was needed. Nora explains to Margaret that we are not ruined we are beautiful and we are never giving up, Nora gathers her tight kisses her into her breast absorbs more love that she has ever known.

## Chapter – 3

### Trauma and Subjugation of Women in Nora's life

*The Night Child* is a story about dual consciousness or dual behavior, and the split of Nora's mind between her past and present life. It's about the unusual capacity of the human mind to save ourselves through unrealistic means. Nora Brown is a high school teacher who teaches English subject and lives a peaceful life in Seattle with her husband and six-year-old daughter. But one November day, minutes after dismissing her class, she sees a girl's face above the student's desk. a ghostlike face with amusing blue eyes, a face floating on top of purple-colored shapeless drapes where arms and legs should have been. Fear rushes through Nora's body, when she saw the apparition. a terror rises in Nora's body, a kind of raw terror that made her feel as if every cell on her body is on fire. which made her feel as if she was about to die.

A day later, while on Thanksgiving, the same face reappears at the event. Nora was terrified, Nora meets with neurologists and eventually, a psychiatrist. As the story progresses, Nora's terrible past life secret is discovered, a secret that drives Nora towards an even deeper psychological breakdown. This debut novel examines the impact of Nora's terrible childhood experiences and the delicate line between her past and present. This novel is beautifully nuanced and deeply intimate. Nora's story involves child abuse and sexual violence, both of which are described in graphic detail. They highlight Nora's fragile condition, and the lengths to which her mind went to protect her. Most of the story unfolds in the therapist's office, where an empathetic and caring therapist David carefully guides Nora toward unlocking her memories. Between flashbacks and Nora's own narrative, her childhood memories

come out. Physical, verbal, and sexual abuse collide to destroy Nora's innocent and fragile mind.

In chapter one, Nora while sitting in her class feels a subtle movement of air behind of her, she felt like it was someone exhaling. Panic tightens her chest and chokes her breathing. In front of her she sees a girl's face a wild numinous face with startling blue eyes, a face floating on top of shapeless drapes of purples and blues. The same face appears again, at thanksgiving trip to the seashore, the child's face appears again. This time, she whispers the phrase: Remember the Valentine dress.

She goes to the family doctor, and the conducted by the doctor shows nothing wrong, she is then referred to a neurologist who advises consulting a psychiatrist, Doctor David Forrester analysis Nora and started asking about her past and her personal life. Nora can't remember her childhood memories clearly. So, David and Nora started to recall the old life for delving back into her childhood memories, to when she lived in Ireland with her grandparents, of a mother who loved her but then began to drink, of a father she adored, of her mother's accidental death for which the child Nora blamed herself. By now, the ghostly child has a name: Margaret, but Nora's memory is still vague and in confusing images, nothing is clear. the discovery that Paul actually is having an affair, and the suicide of one of her students, a girl being abused by her father, add more stress to that unknown memories in Nora's past. Eventually she remembers the valentine dress and realizes about Margaret as her split consciousness or as a double identity who has been taking all the blame and hard memories for Nora and protects her from her terrible past memories, and helps Nora for having a simple and a happy life with her husband and her daughter.

But now because of many bad events happenings in her life, such as her husband's affair with Eliza and the suicide of one of her student Elizabeth, and her father abusing her had triggered her past life, so her brain started to work hard to work remembering something, which was hidden by the second personality Margaret.

Due to her suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, she is having this kind of apparition's, anxieties and hallucination, dissociation-an altered consciousness. people dissociate when they fear death or can't escape a dangerous situation, they mentally leave the situation, imagines that they are somewhere else and watch as if they're bystander. Many try to forget that event and contain the memories in a mental lockbox and in order to keep functioning in a normal way.

Nora's brain has also employed a similar way of coping with the incident by creating a character called Margaret. Margaret is a six-year-old girl fictional character who Nora met when she was in first grade at St. Raphael's catholic school in Illinois. Sometimes sister Rosa invites her to into a library and reads her a book. There she saw a book with a picture of a beautiful woman riding a white horse on the cover. Nora was so interested towards Margaret and her characteristic qualities, and the character also share similarities with Nora's life too. St. Margaret's mother also died at a very young age. Margaret was a brave character who dedicated her life to protecting those in danger. Nora even wishes that she was also brave like St. Margaret.

So, Nora elopes the persona of Margaret as a guard, to protect her from remembering the traumatic events of her past life such as her mother's abuse and her father's sexual abuse. In the psychiatric evaluation with David Forrester, Margaret comes to the surface and confesses about doing things like stealing money and

spitting on the priest's face. But further evaluation reveals that she was a victim of her father's sexual assault. She also remembers her mother calling her a liar. Though her conscious mind does not acknowledge her mother's abuse she shy's away while thinking of revealing her mother's attitude towards the psychiatrist David:

She knows what she should say; she should tell David that sometimes her mother would shriek at her and how if she tried to run her mother would grab her, throw her down, bring her hand hard across her cheek, how the force of the slap sent her reeling against walls and furniture, how sharp and shocking those things felt against her body. She could have told him how her mother pulled her hair out, how she had wanted her mother to die.

She refused to talk about all this incident. she tries to change the topic of speaking about her mother. She tries to deviate the talk about her mother by talking about the books in the room and started talking about subjects relating to feminism. She started talking about Freud and then switched to Jung, she was glad that she was talking about Jung instead of her mother.

In chapter fifteen, Margaret awakens in Nora when David was persistent towards knowing about Nora's mother and her mother calling her a liar. Margaret takes over Nora and started confessing about doing things like stealing money and spitting on the priest's face;

Mommy broke our rosary and I tried to find all the beads but I couldn't find them all and it was me who spit in the priest's face," she says. She cannot stop shaking. His hands are wrapped around his coffee mug, and he stays looking at the blind when he talks. It could be a trick, but she

doesn't so because his body is leaning back. "and I'm the one who ate the cookies in bed," she says watching him, watching the door. "I ate the cookies because daddy tasted yucky and I'm really, really sorry." No one is coming in, but she will talk fast And I stole money from daddy's suit pocket's and also, I steal money from Paul. I keep it in an orange shoe box with the rosary beads in Nora's closet ... the one with little white check mark."

Margaret also confesses about her father's sexual abuse and how he made her do things which Nora's conscience could not remember but Margaret did. Margaret is an invention of her consciousness, Margaret knows things, that Nora did not. Nora's secondary character Margaret was constructed so that her traumatic past would not inflict her psychological pain, so the traumatic past is repressed in her unconscious. this unconscious has led to the splitting of her ego or disassociation. the splitting of conscious to double consciousness. The splitting of Nora's mind was a brilliant coping mechanism. Her brain's entire physiology changed so that Nora could endure her traumatic past and forget about it and go on living her life. As a child Nora had no control over her body. And by the time she had control over it. That might overwhelm her and the splitting up of her mind has saved her from emotional damage.

But now her mind had started to remember about somethings due to certain events happening in her life. And now Nora's brain is attempting to integrate-heal the splitting. The brain is looking for patterns and images that could give clues to her past. Traumatic events such as her mother's abuse and father's sexual abuse had created conflicts in Nora's ego which split off from the unity of ego and are repressed and hide inside of Margaret. Nora as a victim of physical abuse survived by ignoring what the perpetrator did-by refusing to believe it. So actually, Margaret is Nora's

actual truth that Nora doesn't want to know but in life she is. Margaret is trying to protect Nora by taking all the blame and negatives in Nora's life.

Children and adult who have been sexually abused trust very few people, and it takes a long time for them to regain trust, this characteristic is seen in Nora. Nora now doubts her own husband Paul to know if he is behaving in the same way as Nora's father is to her. Her mind is a blur. She wanted to get to her daughter Fiona to check whether she was okay.

Traumatic neurosis is marked by the compulsion to repeat the memory of the painful event with the hopes of mastering the unpleasant feelings (Freud beyond the pleasure principle, 19). The dreams of the traumatized patient repeat the experience as a way to master the stimulus retrospectively, by developing the anxiety whose omission the cause of the traumatic neurosis (37) Freud writes that because the patient "cannot remember the whole of what is repressed in him, and what he cannot remember may be precisely the essential part of it" the patient "is obliged to repeat the repressed material as a contemporary event instead of ...remembering it as something belonging to the past" (18, 19). The narrative of the event is crucial to recovery.

This can be seen in Nora. she can't keep track of some of her memories which is omitted by her mind. This for instance can be seen when Nora reminisces and images of the book, sister rosa, and the dragon start to reappear in her mind. In chapter twelve we can see Nora contemplating about the valentine dress, and the fictional Margaret who she had seen in the book and started to connect the relationship between them.

In chapter fourteen page five she remembers being angry with the priest. But she doesn't remember why or what she'd said. And she doesn't remember spitting on him. Lying in the dark, Nora remembers these things. But she doesn't remember why there was an empty package of cookies in her bed. And she does not remember praying to St. Margaret.

Nora is also a victim of inequalities and torture faced for being a woman. From her father's side and her husband. Her husband Paul sees her as a sexual object to obtain pleasure, he was angry with her because she couldn't full his virile needs. This is similar to Immanuel Kant's views on sexual objectification. He characteristically writes in the Lectures on Ethics that;

sexual love makes of the loved person an Object of appetite; as soon as that appetite has been stilled, the person is cast aside as one casts away a lemon which has been sucked dry. ... as soon as a person becomes an Object of appetite for another, all motives of moral relationship cease to function, because as an Object of appetite for another a person becomes a thing and can be treated and used as such by everyone (Kant Lectures on Ethics, 163).

We can see Paul as a patriarchal power which view woman as an object for sexual satisfaction. He is seen blaming Nora for not able to sexually interact with him he yells at her saying that we haven't had sex in months while Nora was questioning his affair with another woman. Paul also complains about her and tells her she was similar to a corpse. Paul is one among many patriarchal figures who sees woman as a mere object and sees marriage as an institution of having their virile needs. Paul says that this is not what a marriage is supposed to be like. And he wants more than this.

He also mocks her by saying that she hates sex and Paul is also seen body shaming her by saying that she was thin and she looks like a boy and dressed like a boy. And calls her a zombie.

Nora is seen as the other by the patriarchal eyes, the concept of otherness derives from the pioneering work of the second-wave feminist Simone de Beauvoir. Otherness seeks to examine how majority and minority identities are constructed. Otherness claims that the representation of different social groups is controlled by those who hold a greater level of political power. In this novel we can see that Nora wasn't abused because of sex but it's about power it's about control. It was her father who wanted the pleasure and she being a small and innocent child was an easy target for him. He abused that power and exploited her. Nora's father sees her as an object, she was an object for him to satisfy his need for control, a way to dominate. Even if she had cried out, told him to stop, he probably wouldn't have heard her. He didn't see her and had no awareness of her pain.

Her father has broken into Nora's body and stole her sense of self. She knew that something was wrong, she knew it felt horrible, but she also believed that her father wouldn't have done anything horrible towards her so it was obvious for herself to blame herself. This was a typical example of the othering process seeing herself as the other and to made Nora think that she was doing something wrong and something was wrong with her and to doubt herself. Her father has taken away the power to trust her own assessment, her own capability to judge.

Otherness claims that the representation of different social groups is controlled by those who hold a greater political power. The identity of women is constructed by men to serve their own interest. Woman are thereby represented as the other. This

sense of otherness is a highly effective form of patriarchal rule and a major obstacle towards female emancipation. In case of Nora her father broke into her body sexually abused her and stole the sense of self. The othering process has caused her and her second personality Margaret to believe that she was the bad one and not her father, this social construct was so powerful that Nora and Margaret both couldn't come across this patriarchal trap. The psychiatrist David has to try hard to make Margaret believe about that she wasn't the bad one but it was her father. And Nora wasn't the bad one and the bad one was her father. And that her father was the one to do very bad things. Very bad things. And Margaret and Nora were the innocent one's.

In chapter twenty-six, Nora reminisces her childhood, by looking at her photograph, which was taken by her father. When she received the valentine's dress from her grandmother.

Taken the picture when a week before he ruined the dress. Taken the picture when she'd been a good girl. And now-her father's mouth, Breathing heavy in her ear, whispering If you tell you will be alone. All alone. no one will believe you. If you tell, noone will ever believe you.

Nora's father is trying to isolate herself from others making her vulnerable and evoking within herself a sense of weakness within her. This makes Nora completely surrender to her father and making her an object which can be used by her father for his sexual satisfaction.

The character Paul is no different than her father for he too see's Nora primarily as a sexual object and he was never affectionate towards Nora in other aspects of life. He is a perfect example of male attitude which sees woman as the

other. Nora was hesitant about telling her problems to her husband Paul. This can be seen in chapter twenty-six-page number four, when David ask's about did she tell Paul about Margaret? She replies that he didn't take that well and he thinks that she was crazy.

Kant explains that “the woman surrenders her sex completely to the man, but the man does not completely surrender his sex to the woman” (Kant Lectures on Ethics, 169). Since body and self are for Kant inseparable and together, they constitute the person, in surrendering her body (her sex) exclusively to her male partner, the woman surrenders her whole person to the man, allowing him to possess it. The man, by contrast, who has more than one sexual partner, does not exclusively surrender himself to the woman, and so he does not allow her to possess his person. In allowing her male partner to possess her person, without herself being able to similarly possess his person, Kant believes that eventually the concubine (and this also applies to the woman in any other polygamous relationship, including polygamous marriage) loses her person and is made ‘into a thing’. (Kant Lectures on Ethics,169).

This for instance can be seen in the life of Nora, where her husband Paul sees her as an object, for sexual satisfaction and he does not indulge in Nora's life problem's. for example, he never was there when Nora needed him, he didn't show up in her psychiatric evaluations with David. He never gave her a helping or motivating speech to overcome her problems in life. When Nora had recurring bad dreams, which affected her. As a husband Paul could have shown a little affection towards his wife. But Paul being a classic example of the patriarchal figure who see's woman as the other, when she'd described the nightmare to him, Paul dismissed her dreams by

saying, god, that's so classic, and it was a classic dream of stolen identity, you don't know who you are. The only thing Paul was frustrated about was that they hadn't had sex in months, for Paul that was his major concern. And to compensate that he had started to look for women outside of the marriage for his needs. While Nora has emotionally and psychically surrendered to Paul, Paul doesn't care enough for her. When Nora surrender to Paul she surrender's her whole personality to Paul. Allowing him to possess it. While Paul as for men in contrast has more than one sexual partner, does not exclusively surrender to women, and he does not allow women to possess his personality. Allowing her male partner to possess her personality without herself being possess Paul's personality Nora eventually is made into a thing.

Nora is considered as the angel of the house, she is only given appreciation when she becomes the ideal image of women which has been put forward by the patriarchy, Nora is always tortured by her unsupportive husband Paul and her head strong daughter Fiona. We can see Paul showed some affection towards Nora when he wanted as her daughter's babysitter. When Nora talks about the apparition and the valentine dress, and asks Paul that she needed some rest in the thanks giving event. Paul says;

You've just got too much on your plate, that's all. You never should have taken that department chair job. He checks his watch. Reservations are in fifteen minutes. Get dressed up, you'll feel better. Eat something. Christ, you're so thin! Probably half your problem.

Even though Nora wants Paul to be concerned about her but he isn't, he wants Nora to accompany him in the thanks giving event to take care of Fiona. When Nora

briefly explains about the apparitions, he again tries to relax her and wanted her to come to the thanksgiving event. Paul says;

Please come with us, he says gently. He walks over to her, takes her hands and brings her to her feet. “we came here to relax, right? We’re both really stressed,that’s all. You probably just fall asleep for a bit, had a dream. “he kisses her cheek. “let’s stop thinking of all that, okay? I’ll order an amazing bottle of wine-we won’t talk about work. I won’t talk about work I promise.

Paul’s affection towards Nora is conditioned with his wants he only sees and recognize her as an individual when he needs her. As a baby sitter or his daughters’ mother, Paul is oblivious about her as an individual. In her whole life Nora was always considered as an object both by her father and her husband. He father sees her as a sexual object and her husband also sees her as an object for sexual satisfaction and as an angel in the house who will help Paul’s family by sacrificing herself and surrendering to her life’s problem for the sake of Paul. Paul and Nora’s father are classic example for patriarchal attitude which subjugate women in order for their dominance.

James, David and John are some of the very few characters who helps and cares about Nora and her problems while all others are against Nora. James, David and John are contrasting characters who are willing to help Nora overcome her problems.

David: He pulls her tighter into him. “fuck him. You don’t owe him a thing. You never have to see him again. This isn’t about him anymore,

do you understand? This about you getting better. This is about us doing whatever it takes to bring you home.

James, relaxes Nora by showing herself an identity of her own and supporting her by showing herself that she was important and what happened in the past doesn't matter and from now onwards it was about making her life better. And from now onwards life is always about her. Nora is also seen appreciating her split personality, Margaret.

Nora is a character who had to be subjected to multiple levels of suppression as a woman and is also reduced to a mere object, who is only seen as an object for the virile needs of man. Both her father and her husband are examples for those people who view women as a subordinate to man and a worthless being, when compared to the patriarchal figures, there are only a very few characters like John, James, David who helps and supports her as a woman. Nora's husband is a stark contrast to other characters who supports Nora, he doesn't care about Nora's condition, he was only obsessed with whether he could make pleasure with a woman. So, he went to Elisa to seek pleasure.

"It is crucial, for Kant, that each person respects humanity in others, as well as humanity in their own person. Humanity must never be treated merely as a means, but always at the same time as an end (209)". What Kant view must be applied in the story of Nora each person must respect humanity in others, as well as humanity in their own person. If Nora's husband Paul and her father would have respected her as a human being, she could have a peaceful and joyful life, but the patriarchal negligence of this respect towards women has created all this suffering in Nora's life.

## Conclusion

This project shows that the character Nora in Anna Quinn's *The NIGHT CHILD*, who had to endure traumatic experience in her childhood, which led to the splitting of her personality. The traumatic experience had made her mind to suppress her bad memories to cope with the incident by creating a character called Margaret. Nora elopes the persona of Margaret at times to protect herself from remembering her traumatic past. It has made effects on the psyche of Nora in her adulthood, by seeing apparition of her former past. This project also brings out the inequality of women in a society and also under the institution of marriage by analyzing the lack of freedom and not giving proper value to the character Nora which makes herself feel as a subordinate to men.

This project applies traumatic theories into the character of Nora and study her psychological problems and also uses feminist theories to show how women have to endure in the patriarchal society. Where women are only perceived as an object for sexual pleasure for the virile needs of men.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM IN THE FILM**

***RAAVANAN***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award  
of Bachelor of Arts

**ALEENA BINOY**

**Register No: DB18AEGR016**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mr. Jince Joseph

June 2021

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “Archetypal Criticism in the Film *Raavanan*” is a bonafide work of Ms. Aleena Binoy, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mr. Jince Joseph

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Aleena Binoy, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Archetypal criticism in the Film *Raavanan*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Jince Joseph of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Aleena Binoy

08 June 2021

DB18AEGR016

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Aleena Binoy

## Table of Contents

	Page no.
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Archetypal Criticism	2
Chapter Two: Summary Analysis of the Film <i>Raavanan</i>	10
Chapter Three: Archetypal Criticism in the Film <i>Raavanan</i>	20
Conclusion	27
Works Cited	28

## Introduction

The project entitled “Archetypal Criticism in the Film *Raavanan*” is a deep observing of the movie *Raavanan* trying to bring out the connection between the movie *Raavanan* and the real epic *Ramayana*. The project is divided into three chapters. The first chapter titled ‘Archetypal Criticism’ describes about the archetypal criticism, mythology, symbols and so on. Archetypal criticism argues that archetypes determine the form and function of literary works that a text’s meaning is shaped by cultural and psychological myths. Archetypes are the unknowable basic forms personified or concretized in recurring images, symbols or patterns which may include motifs such as the quest or the heavenly ascent, recognizable character. The second chapter titled ‘Summary Analysis of the Film *Raavanan*’, describes about the summary of the movie. The third chapter titled ‘Archetypal Criticism in the Film *Raavanan*’ is the core chapter in the project, here the Archetypal Criticism applied to the film to prove that, it is directly connected to the real epic *Ramayana*. The full analysis of the film *Raavana* and comparison between the film and the epic *Ramayana* also done.

## Chapter One

### Archetypal Criticism

The concept of the archetype is a venerable philosophical principle that came into new prominence and usage in the twentieth century with the development of archetypal literary criticism through the theories of psychologist C.G.Jung and literary theorist Northrop Frye. Archetypal criticism argues that archetypes determine the form and functions of literary works, that a text's meaning is shaped by cultural and psychological myths. Archetypes are the unknowable basic forms personified or concretized in recurring images, symbols, or patterns which may include motifs such as the quest or the heavenly ascent, recognizable character type such as the trickster or the hero, symbol such as the apple or snake, or images such as crucifixion (as in *King Kong*, or *Bride of Frankenstein*) all laden with meaning already when employed in a particular work.

Archetypal theory and criticism, although often used synonymously with Myth theory and criticism, has a distinct history and process. The term 'archetype' can be traced to Plato (arche, original; typos, form), but the concept gained currency in twentieth-century literary theory and criticism through the work of the Swiss founder of analytical psychology, C.G. Jung (1875-1961). Jung's "Psychology of the Unconscious" appeared in English one year after publication of the concluding volume with bibliography of the third edition of J.G. Frazer's "The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion. Frazer's and Jung's texts formed the basis of two allied but ultimately different courses of influence on literary history.

Archetypes are the secret forces behind human behavior. Because archetypes reside in the unconscious – the part of human minds they are not aware of – they influence the mind without knowing it. The archetypes, Marie-Louise von Franz writes in "Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche," "are inherited dispositions, which cause us to react in a typical way to basic

human problems, inner or outer”. Archetypes are influencing everything you do, think, and feel. And they are influencing everyone around you in a similar way. When you can observe an archetype operating within you, you have differentiated yourself from the archetype. This difference is important because when you can separate yourself from an archetype; it is less likely to influence your behavior in deleterious ways.

Archetype derived via Latin from the Greek adjective ‘Archetypos’ (archetypal), formed from the verb ‘Archein’ (to begin or to rule) and the noun ‘typos’ (type). Archetype specific uses in the field of philosophy and psychology. In everyday prose, however Archetype is most commonly used to mean a perfect example of something.

Archetypes provide a powerful way to understand minds. It tends to think of the mind as a singular unit ‘mind’ assumes a unified sense of self. But a careful examination of the mind shows the view to be incorrect. Instead of the mind being singular, it is plural. A pantheon of archetypal characters exists in human minds. Various forms of therapy seek to integrate these archetypal characters. They each have a different language to describe them. In psychosynthesis, they call them sub personalities. Psychologist John Rowan defines a subpersonality as “a semipermanent and semi-autonomous region of the personality capable of acting as a person.” In his book *Subpersonalities: The People Inside Us*.

By whatever name, come to see the minds as a collection of these semi- autonomous personalities, or archetypes. In *Re-Visioning Psychology*, Neo-Jungian James Hillman explains: “We are no longer single beings in the image of a single God, but are always constituted of multiple parts: impish child, hero or heroine, supervising authority, asocial psychopath and so on.”

Think of a film or a TV show you watched recently. Now consider that all of the characters in that story not just the hero or protagonist are operating in your mind. They are all

within you. People begin to see how complex human minds are and the hidden, often opposing forces influencing our behavior. William Shakespeare observed this reality over 400 years ago, in his play *As You Like It*: “All the worlds a stage, and all the men and women merely players; they have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts, His acts being seven ages.”

Archetypal or Myth criticism is a form of criticism based largely on the works of C.G Jung and Joseph Campbell and myth itself. Some of the school's major figures include Robert Graves, Francis Fergusson, Philip Wheelwright, Leslie Fiedler, Northrop Frye, Maud Bodkin, and G. Wilson Knight. Whereas Freudian, Lacanian, and other school of psychological criticism operates within a linguistic paradigm regarding the unconscious, the Jungian approach to myth emphasizes the notion of image.

The term ‘archetype’ can be traced to Plato, but the concept gained currency in twentieth century literary theory and criticism through the work of C. G. Jung. Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* appeared in English one year after publication of J. G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. Frazer's and Jung's texts formed the basis of two allied but ultimately different courses of influence on literary history. In 1934 Maud Bodkin published “Archetypal Patterns” in his work “Poetry” that is the first work on this subject. Archetypal criticism became popular in the 1950s and 1960s, largely due to the work of Frye. Though archetypal literary criticism is no longer widely accepted, it still has a place in the tradition of literary studies.

C. G. Jung's works speculate about myths and archetypes in relation to the unconscious. His most famous book *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* he said that, myths are the “culturally elaborated representations of the contents of the deepest recess of the human psyche: the world of the archetypes”. He used the term archetype to refer to the experiences of the ancestors which get lodged in the ‘collective unconscious’ of the whole race. Jungian

psychoanalysis distinguishes between the personal and collective unconscious. The collective unconsciousness is a number of innate thoughts, feelings, instincts and memories that reside in the unconsciousness of all the people; collective unconsciousness is the psychic disposition shaped by the forces of heredity. The content of the collective unconsciousness are the archetypes which are expressed in myths, religions, dreams and private fantasies as well as in works of literature.

Archetypal criticism based on Jung's Psychology, searches texts for collective motifs of the human psyche, which are held to be common to different historical periods and languages. These archetypes represent primordial images of the human unconsciousness which have retained their structures in various cultures and epochs. It is through primordial images that universal archetypes are experienced and more importantly, that the unconsciousness is revealed. Archetypes such as shadows, fire, snake, paradise garden, hell, mother- figure etc. Constantly surface in myth and literature as a limited number of basic patterns of psychic images which lend themselves to a structural model of explanation. Various cultures, religions, myths and literature have recourse to primordial images or archetypes which like a subconscious language express human fears and hopes. A Jungian analysis perceives the death- rebirth archetype (Frazer`s) as a symbolic expression of a process taking place not in the world but in the mind. That process is the return of the ego to the unconscious – a kind of temporary death of the ego -and its re-emergence, or rebirth, from the unconscious.

The most influential contribution of archetypal criticism has been made by the Canadian mythologist Northrop Frye, who places structure of myth at the heart of the main literary genres. His *Anatomy of Criticism*, the critical tour de force, is a touchstone of archetypal criticism. His essay "The Archetypes of literature" expresses his dissatisfaction with New Criticism.

According to Frye, the whole body of literary works of any society constitutes what might be called a self-contained autonomous universe. He classifies this literary universe into four categories or mythoi, which are the plot forms or organizing structural principles. These mythoi correspond to the four seasons of the natural world, comedy corresponds to spring, romance to summer, tragedy to autumn and satire to winter. His view of life and of literature are one and the same: life, structured as concrete universals, is made available in a heightened form in literature. In Frye's "Archetype of Literature" his view of literature is that it is a 'reservoir of potential values'. He holds myths are the conventional structure in literature. Myths are the units which form the organizing principle of literary work. In other words, literature is reconstructed mythology. In using the term 'structure' in several related senses, Frye anticipated structuralism in literary criticism. The concept of 'vraisemblabilisation' of the structuralists has close affinities with Frye's theory. Frye's view of literature 'as a total order of words' and that works of literature are created out of literature anticipated the structuralism view of intersexuality. Only in the case of Frye, coherence is to be achieved by conformity, whereas for the structuralisms it is through a play of difference. Frye restricts the association with other text to mythological images by which analogies and identities are established. The heyday of archetypal criticism began to decline after the 1970s. However, its impact can still be seen in the interpretation of children's literature, science fiction, and feminist criticism.

There are four basic theories of myth, the rational myth theory, functional myth theory, structural myth theory, and psychological myth theory. The rational myth theory states that myths were created to explain natural events and forces. Functional myths are what you call the kind of myths that were created as type of social control. The third myth theory is the structural myth theory, this theory says that myths after patterned after human mind and human nature. The psychological myth theory is the fourth myth theory, which states that myths are based on human emotion.

The rational myth theory states that myths were made to better understand natural events and forces that occurred in every life of people. This theory is also explained that the gods and goddesses controlled all of these happening of nature. Examples of this type of myths are creation myths from different culture. Creation myths explain how man was created and explain what the gods and goddesses used and what action they took to create humans. These myths also tell what substances were used in order to man for exist. The existence of man is a natural event but creation myths give other explanations.

The functional theory talks about how myths were used to teach morality and social behavior. It is states that myths told about what type of things should and should not be done, and the consequences for those wrong doings. The functional myth theory also states that myths were created for social control and served the function of ensuring stability in a society. This myth is trying to say that you should not be lazy because if you are, then you will regret it.

Structural myths are said to be myths based on human emotion. These types of myths show the two sides of the human mind; the good side and the bad side. They show the divided self and the humanity of human nature. Myths about Hercules shows how the human mind can be both good and bad. Hercules did both good and bad things. One of the bad things is he did was he stole a broach pin from the treasure chamber of the God Talos. This sis caused to be his friend killed. Hercules knew that his friend was killed because of his sin, so to make up for it: he vowed to stay on the island until his friend was found.

The Psychological Myths Theory states how myths are based on human emotion and that they come from the human subconscious mind. Cultures all around the world had similar fears, question and which to them were unexplainable, that is the reason that psychological myths were made; and that is why there are archetypes shares between cultures. Archetypes are general forms and characters used by all cultures. Some archetypes found between cultures are having a sky

god, a sea god and an agricultural god. These archetypes are examples of how people think alike when it comes to things that are to them mysterious and fears.

So, it appears that man created myths for quite a few reasons. These reasons include explain the unknown, natural events and forces, to show the duality and pureness of human nature and the human mind, and to help societies maintain order and remain stable.

The second essay of the *Anatomy of Criticism* is “Ethical Criticism: Theory of Symbols”. Frye defines ethical criticism as consciousness of the presents of society in his essay ‘Anatomy of Criticism’. The chapter on ethical criticism is subtitled “Theory of Symbols”, for Frye, that relate to ‘the presents of the society” and do this work of communicating between societies, and this symbolism is different kinds. Frye offers five: motif, sign, image, archetype, and monad. Each belongs to what Frye calls a ‘phase’ of symbolism: literal, descriptive, formal, mythical, and anagogic respectively.

The motif is the, literal symbol. By this Frye refers to what a symbol means in context, or how words take on meaning in relation to one another. This symbolism is ‘centripetal’, meaning it comes into itself. It enjoys the rhythms of its own language instead of referring to meanings outside the text. Think about how a string of words sounds rather than what they represent or mean. In, contrast, the sign, or ‘descriptive’ symbol, is centrifugal, referring to things outside the text. When people describe a tree, they are describing something outside the text: trees. Thus, a sign does not belong to the text, but to the conventions they have for talking about and naming the world.

The archetype is the symbol of the mythical phase. This is how symbolism operates in multiple works of art. For instance, the trees as archetype of giving life occur in multiple works of literature in the west, from the *Book of Genesis* to *Johnny Appleseed*. Considering the tree as an archetype is considering how it functions across multiple texts, drawing connection among

them. In turn this phase of symbolism is associated with archetypal criticism. That means criticism that deals with conventions, genres, and traditions in literature. Here are interested in categories that transcend any one text. Lots of text have trees as symbol; that`s what makes the trees an archetype.

J.G.Frazer`s *The Golden Bough* was the first influential text dealing with cultural mythologies. It was wildly accepted as the seminal text on myth that spawned numerous studies on the same subject. Eventually, the momentum of Frazer`s work carried over into literary studies. In *The Golden Bough* Frazer identified shared practices and mythological beliefs between primitive religions and modern religions. Frazer argues that the death-rebirth myth is present in almost all cultural mythologies, and is acted out in terms of growing season and vegetation.

Archetypal images and stories patterns encourage readers and viewers of films and advertisements to participate ritualistically in basic beliefs, fears, and anxieties of their age. These archetypal features not only constitute the intelligibility of the text but also, Tap into a level of desires and anxieties of humankind. In short, complex critical and theoretical question about myth and literature continued to be asked. The susceptibility of literature to forms of myth criticism depend upon the persuasiveness of answers to such questions, as well as upon the success of literary theorist in appropriating the empirical and conceptual investigations of myth by other discipline.

## Chapter Two

### Summary Analysis of the Film *Raavanan*

The man who revolutionized Tamil-language cinema, Mani Ratnam is the biggest director in south India and one of the most respected directors in all of India. Each of his films contains its own unique style, with beautifully photographed songs and unique- back lighting. However, his films contain substance as well as style- Ratnam has dealt with a wide variety of topics, from the classic Indian love story to political thrillers.

He was born in Madras in 1956 Filmmaking was in his blood. His first film, *Pallavi Anu Pallavi* (1983), starring Anil Kapoor, did not make many waves, all though it won the state award from Karnataka that year, but even though he made two films in Tamil and one in Malayalam, nothing worked for him until he broke through with *Mauna Ragam* (1986) starring Revathi. The film was noted for its sophisticated approach and execution of an extremely sensitive topic. His next film, *Nayakan* (1987) was also arguable his greatest. It established Ratnam as the leading director of Tamil- language cinema and won its leading actor Kamal Haasan the National award for Best Actor.

Then came the best of his early work *Agni Natchathiram* (1988), *Gitanjali* (1989), and *Anjali* (1990). The first was a tale of conflict between two step brothers. Shot with glossy camera work, the film resembled a cross between an advertisement and a music video, and set a trend for a whole new visual style in Tamil language cinema. *Anjali* (1990), about a disabled child brought back to her family with two normal children had been chosen by India to be sent to the Oscar for best foreign language film, but it did not receive a nomination.

It was *Roja* (1992) that made Ratnam a household name all over India. A patriotic love story set against the backdrop of Kashmiri terrorism; the film was dubbed in Hindi became a huge national success. It enforced Ratnam as a director of style and substance, as well as

proving a highly suspicious debut for the now acclaimed music director A. R. Rahman, whom Ratnam had discovered. It helped that India's at the time election commissioner T.N. Seshan took the rare step of officiously endorsing the film. Continuing his political obsession, Ratnam made *Iruvar* (1997), based on the MGR- Karunanidhi affair, and *Dil Se* (1998), which starred superstars Manisha Koirala and Shah Rukh Khan. The latter was Ratnam's first Hindi language film. Based on the Northeast Indian problem, it told the story of a radio executive and revolutionary. It had an excellent cast, beautifully crafted scenes, most of all one of A.R. Rahman's greatest tunes- but did not go down too well with the audience, who hailed it as a strange and confusing film that headed nowhere. However, today it is held as ahead of its time, being that it was shot pre-9/11, and is now hailed as a contemporary classic.

He returned to familiar ground with *Alai Payuthey* (2000), which tackled the story of a couple in love that goes through the trials and tribulation of marriage. His subsequent film, *Kannthil Muthamittal* (2002), which told the tale of an adopted meeting her terrorist mother, saw Ratnam back in form as one of the greatest storytellers in Indian cinema. His next film *Yuva* (2004), saw Ratnam return to Hindi language cinema after six years, but in spite of some fine flourishes, the film largely failed to work.

In the first 15 minutes of *Raavanan* one is battered with several episodes, one merges into the other and each disappearing in the wink of an eye. The plot, though, is predictable, despite the director's attempt to give it a twist here and a twist there. Many Ratnam's cinema is invariable a feast for the eye, and his choice of cinematographers like P.C. Sriram, Rajiv Menon and Santosh Sivan have turned the screen into visual opulence, spinning the script into a radiantly moving imagery. No quarrels on this point. But a film has to transcend that barrier between the eye and the mind. Otherwise, it will quite possibly remain a string of lovely shots no better or worse than

an advertisement campaign completes with classy costumes, beautiful faces, scenic spots and merry jingles.

Sadly, for that all buzz Ratnam's latest movie, *Raavanan* (also shot in Hindi and dubbed into Telugu), created, it has ended as one long promotional propaganda for the forests of God's Own Land. Cinematographers V. Manikandan (who had to leave midway) and Santosh Sivan let their lenses caress the region's lush greenery, might, waterfalls, sweeping rivers and awesome cliffs, mixing and mingling these into a canvas of sheer magnificence. Misty vistas, rain drenched hamlets and moss kissed rocks take our breath away.

It is against this series of fabulous picture postcards that Ratnam's story of Rama, Raavana, and Sita, with a Hanuman and even a Lakshman, unfolds, sometimes in irritatingly jerky sequences. Veeraiya (portrayed by Vikram) is a forest brigand, a kind of sandal wood smuggler Veerappan, who rules, using reward and retribution as his weapons (other than revolvers, but, of course.) His sense of justice matches his illiteracy and upbringing (as an unpolished, uncouth country bumpkin, but with a heart that understands an emotion called love.) people mostly adore him, some out of fear or necessity. The others hate him, and among them is a chocolate boy of a cop, Superintendent of Police, Dev Prakash. An encounter specialist- whose immaculately made-up face and figure deceptively hide an almost evil mind- he is bent on finishing Veeraiya. And for that he would go to any length: he storms into the marriage of the bandit's sister, Vennila (Priyamani), wounds Veeraiya and looks the other way when his men take her away to the police station to rape and ravish her for a whole night.

It is then that Veeraiya kidnaps Dev's wife, Ragini (Aishwarya Ray), and take her into the deepest of jungles, holding her hostage and finally succumbing to her exceptional beauty and fiery disposition. In a kind of Stockholm syndrome, Ragini begins to inch towards her captor, ultimately realizing that Veeraiya is not as ruthless and steely as she had imagined, but

compassionate and even extraordinarily magnanimous. His generosity is amply evident during a superbly choreographed do- or- die fight on a wooden footbridge between Veeraiya and Dev, who in his desperation to find his wife has been turning the forest into battleground with his gun- toting men and sniffer dogs.

The tale is told in bursts of explosions, the background score dead intrusive, and the editing turning the movie into one mad rush of images. Characters have really not been fleshing out: forest officer Gnanaprakasam (Karthik) essaying the modern-day Hanuman appears more like a circus clown, while Dev seems terribly shallow. Audience never understands him: his brutality, his singular resolve to gun down Veeraiya, and his distrust of Raagini (that provokes him to ask her to go through a lie detector test) are never convincingly explained. If it is the call of duty that incites Dev to try and kill Veeraiya, the outlaw's dark side is at best narrated in the passing.

Mani Ratnam is blessed with one saving grace. Vikram is excellent, despite a script that helps him very little. His strong screen presence, and his ability to get into Veeraiya's skin (with a set of peculiar mannerisms) and emote with conviction largely helped "Raavanan" to score the two stars here. Otherwise, Ratnam's latest effort seems soulless and adrift under a canopy of dense foliage.

*Raavanan* is Mani Ratnam's another modern-day adaptation of an Indian epic after Rajnikanth's *Dalapati* which was apparently a Mahabharata rip off. This time it is the Ramayana. Each character of Mani's can be co-related with that of Valmiki's and Mani has succeeded in getting his casting bang on target. Vikram as the monstrous Veeraiya (Raavanan) proves his acting genius yet again. He comes around as a true performer. Aishwarya as Ragini mesmerizes with her pristine beauty. At times, it even overshadowed her remarkable performance. And the handsome Prithviraj with a well-toned physique fits well into the role of

the Dev (Lord Rama). He succeeds in exhibiting the shades of grey in his character with ease. Mani has managed to effectively incorporate even the smallest but crucial characters from the ancient epic into his plot namely those of Soorpanaka (Priyamani), Vibeeshnan (Munna), and Lakshmanan (Hemanth).

But it is the cinematography which elevates this movie to a different level. Whether it is the introduction to Veera, or the picturization of the 'Usurey Poguthey' number, the lens of Santhosh Sivan and Manikandan literally teleport as to the jungle realm. The picturesque waterfalls, deep gorges and the dense flora leave the audience dumb struck. Samir Chanda has to be commended for his captivating artwork. Some of the daredevil stunts performed by the lead characters are amazing. Especially the dual between Veera and Dev on the hanging bridge comes up to a nail-biting climax. A. R Rahman comes up with yet another immortal piece of work for Mani. His jungle beats, melancholic howls, and the chartbuster songs are in unison with the movie's feel. Despite its technical brilliant, dependable star cast and world class music, *Raavanan* proves to be a great film by Mani Ratnam. The film exists in two versions made at the same time in Tamil as *Raavanan* and Hindi as in *Raavan* with a third dubbed version, titled *Villian* in Telugu.

*Raavanan* is a recognizable Mani Ratnam film in two ways: It teams him up with his usual collaboration- fellow Southerners, Santosh Sivan as cinematographer and A.R Rahman as composer and with familiar stars: Vikram and Rai. Like all Ratnam's films since early 1990s, the production company was Madras Talkies, Ratnam's own company.

It features a central relationship set against one of India's major social/political issues- in this case the guerilla wars between the security services and Maoist groups in the forests of North/Central Eastern India. It is different in the conscious attempt to reply one of India's most famous stories- *Ramayana*. An earlier Ratnam film *Thalapathi* (1991) did something similar

with *Mahabharata*. That film too had a high profile because of the status of its Tamil super star hero Rajanikanth, but Mani made the reference to the classical tale quite as prominent.

The visual quality of *Raavanan* will tempt to give the film another watches. The opening shot is one of great beauty. A man stands calmly on top of a cliff with a river flowing below. This is intercut with a blockade being created, a woman seducing two police officers and a shot of a bike approaching a road with oil spillage. It is the calm before the storm as the man slowly nudges a pebble into the placid river. He dives in and audience see his master planers get shot, taking shape. To the sound of beating drums, police officers get shot, are set on fire and their vehicles burnt, before the audience cut back to silence and the river, placid again.

He stood naked at the edge of a cliff. The lake lay far below him. A frozen explosion of granite burst in flight to the sky over motionless water. The water seemed immovable, the stone flowing. The stone had the stillness of one brief moment in battle when thrust and the currents are held in a pause more dynamic than motion. The stone glowed, wet with sunrays. *Raavanan* as the idealist Roark and Ram as the hypocritical Keating, it is already interesting.

When the audience first see Ragini they are swooping down on her thought Jatayu's bird's eye. A large boat is headed straight towards the boat she is on, and she notices the blinding image of a man standing in front. In the epic Raavanan kidnaps Sita using the 'pushpaka vimanam' in a battle in the sky. Here, it happens on water, but the difference is that audience also get a shot from underwater of the two boats colliding. Set against the sky, it does not look like its own water anymore. Does not the shot resemble the beaks of two birds going at it with the one on Ragini's side (Jatayu) getting its wings chopped off.

There is no Mani Ratnam film without a great mirror scene, and these two are outstanding, even though the giant mirrors in Dev and Ragini's bedroom would make for their conversation. The first is that of 'Gnanprakasam', looking upside down at the two faces of Laxman. Much later

in the film, a wild 'Veera' breaks a mirror and the audience see his many faces (all 10 of them) in the broken pieces.

Ragini's eyes are covered quite a few times throughout the film. After being kidnapped, she enters Veera's world while being blindfolded and she hears him before she sees him. A scene later, trance women blindfold her again before Veera unties it. This perhaps hints at her initial inability to see from his perspective. In a flash back, Ragini telling Dev to finish Veera off without knowing anything about him. It is when Veera unties her that she starts seeing things from his point of view. Towards the end, he even ties another blindfold on her before she goes back to Dev to help her find peace again. Also, many shots of only one half of Ragini's face. She has so far only heard one half of the story, she also only seen one side of him. What she sees is the result of this half- truth and what she imagines him to be. To her, he is as good as a ghost, a deadly phantom in a black dress.

Fear is a topic that is constantly addressed throughout the film. It is Ragini's lack of fear that makes it difficult for Veera to kill her, and when she jumps off the cliff, he realizes that he is met a woman unlike any other. To understand the images that follow, people need to listen closely to the lyrics of 'Usure Pogathey'. Dressed in yellow, Ragini becomes the flame that sets an entire teak forest (his mind) on fire. Notice how her flowing hair and tattered dress are used to give a human form to the flames of this fire.

Much has already been written about the film's great photography scene. Dev uses his cigarette to burn a hole through the faces of his enemies, one by one. But instead of burn them from the front, he uses the butt to burn them from behind, foreshadowing how he stabs (shoots) Veera's brother Sakkarai from behind when he comes to broker peace. Here, Ragini lying curled in a foetal position in a circular well like rock formation that resembles a nest. Linger

a second longer and you will notice how it appears to be a child resting in her mother's womb. What a fitting way to show us Sita, 'the Daughter of the Earth'.

In the film's the most sexually charged scene, a ballet like exchange between Veera and Ragini. She wants to run away and she tries striking him from behind. As he fights her off, she kicks the rock he is standing on, forcing him to fall on to her. Is it an accident or does she intend for him to fall on her, she does not shout or fight. She just pulls up her dress and back slowly, even as Veera avoids laying a finger on her. This may perhaps be the weirdest proposal scenes in all of Tamil cinema. He asks her to stay on with them and Ragini asks Veera to just shoot with her with his gun. But Veera is now in love with her and the coracle is used to show how his mind is spinning. He is no longer in control of himself, but as it slows down, he asks her if she would have ever fallen for a man like him had she not been married. She does not say a word.

In the film's other flashback, seen through Ragineri's eyes, the audience understand why Veera was forced to take revenge. He was, after all, avenging what the cops did to his half-sister Vennila. The concept of fear is back here again as Mani introduced to Vennila as the only person who is not afraid of Veera. Her fiancé dressed up in a sari to come and see her and he even boasts of how he is not afraid of anyone, having learnt karate and judo. But when Veera comes suddenly, you see how he is just a cowered without the courage to protect his lover (also why she gets taken away later). See how his cowardice is shown by placing him in between Veera and Vennila as tough he is neither.

In her confused state of mind, Ragini asks God to make it easier for her understand who is right and who is wrong, when audience notice that Veera was there all throughout sitting at the feet of the broken statue. Apart from an indication of where his people come from in the cast hierarchy, audience also see how he is managed to enter her mind.

In the climatic fight sequence on the bridge that burning from both sides, see how Dev does not help Veera when he is hanging by an inch, even though Veera is quick to help him up. And when Veera makes finally climbs back to spot Ragini, he gives her two options. A rope to help him climb down and save Dev or a gun to shoot him down. His life and his death are both choices that depend on Ragini now. Finally, this is the scene where Dev asks Ragini if she will be willing to undergo a lie detector test to prove her 'purity' or equivalent of the 'Agni Pareeksha'. The staging of the scene is such that he is asking her this vile question as the train enters the darkness of tunnel. And each time she answers, audience are back in full daylight. The darkness of the tunnel to show his mindset and the light to show her's just Mani Ratnam things.

The audience all know Ravana did not kidnapped the wife of Rama on his own desire but after that, the brother of Rama cut the nose of Ravana's sister Surpangai, the Ravana got very angry and his sister Surpnagai explain the lovable charming looks and the beautiful queen like manners of Sita, Ravana get into the idea of kidnapping her for a revenge, but eventually he fell in love with her. Of course, how a masculine can cannot fall in love with an exquisite lovable queen by heart of soul. audience are not saying that he is a pretty good hearted one, but the world of evil, demon, asuran are not belong to him, and the actual evil is Rama.

Rama was born into a family of wealth and go behind a girl called Sita and win and married her by his hand and some crap to throw his girl from the home with him without did any of the masculine to stay against or use his good heart to make it right for a girl to stay in a house. Instead, he settled in a forest of wild animal things. Apart from that, after breaking the Ravana love, he drew her back to his house with the thinking of her as a slut. Yes, he the Rama doubted her virginity which leading to her Agnipariksha. Where Ravana is seen as the man who never violated her or even touch her but took her away with him to Lanka where he treated her well that he made a privacy place for her instead of his palace and made a maid lady for her. For that reason, some

places in Tamilnadu worships Ravana and sees Rams as the villain who treat a girl unfairly. In actual factor Ravana was a victim.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect is about the film`s dual release in Tamil and Hindi is that the two works were shot in together but differently, with good and evil reversed. Also, the director Mani Ratnam explaining that there is a good and evil in all of us, in a continue, and that nothing is entirely black or white. This epic depicts for Indians and indeed the world the duties of relationships, portraying ideal characters such as the ideal servant, the ideal brother, the ideal wife, and the ideal king. The characters Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Bharata, Hanuman and Ravana are all fundamental to the culture consciousness of India.

The one thing that keeps Mani Ratnam`s *Raavanan* very good, rather than great, is that it sets up a love triangle but does not give the protagonist equal weight, also from the Tamil speaking cast make more engrossing viewing than the alternate Hindi version. A major drawback is the lack of 'Tamil' feel in the film and its music: it more appears for the audience north of Vindhyas in many places.

## Chapter Three

### Archetypal Criticism in the Film *Raavanan*

Archetypal literary criticism is a theory that interprets a text by focusing on recurring myths and archetypes in the narrative and symbols, images character types in a literary work. Archetype denotes recurrent narrative design, patterns of action, character types, themes and images which are identifiable in a wide variety of works of literature, as well as in myths, dreams and even social rituals. Such recurrent items result from elemental and universal patterns in the human psyche. This theory can be applied in the film also.

The movie *Ravana* was made in reference to the mythology Ramayana written by Valmiki. When Ravana imprisoned Sita, he could not force himself on her. Meaning he has not touched Sita even once, if he had his head would have burst into seven pieces. In the movie, Vikram has imprisoned Aishwarya for fourteen days. All these days from the first movement of capturing her to realizing her, Vikram does not even touch Aishwarya. There are no such scenes! There were some intentional leading shots where the director has tested the audience if they were noticing this fact clearly.

Before the 'Usurey Poguthey' song when Aishwarya was brought near the cliff with her eyes and hands tied. Vikram removes the cloth tied around her eyes and hands, not touching her a bit. When one another scene, Aishwarya tries to escape and seen by Vikram she fights against him. Vikram, even though having all the possibilities of colliding or touching Aishwarya, but does not.

When once being doubted by Prithivi, Aishwarya comes back to Vikram, to inquire what had he talked about her to Prithivi. Vikram senses that Prithivi had purposely doubted her to catch or kill him. He shouts out for the Raman and the Ram appears. Now Sita sensing what is going on tries to cover Ravana from being shot down. Ram orders Sita to sit down, she refuses. Now Ravana, Vikram touches her head for the first time even in the movie, to push her down so that she is not hurt by the arrows, bullets. The first touch and Ravana is down. The curse the myth comes true!

From the movie *Ravanaan*, where darkness was used to explain one of the characters were lying. In *Ramayana*, Ravanaan was killed in the battlefield. But in the movie on verge of winning over Ram, Ravana leaves the battlefield and leaves Sita behind to be taken back by Ram. But Ram who wanted to kill Ravana at any cost decided and plans to use Sita as prey. Understanding that Sita would go back to Ravana, Ram questions her as if he did not believe her chastity. The scene goes like, the train is coming out of the dark tunnel, indicating that Ram and Sita are entering or travelling on a path away from their dark fourteen days. Prithivi was stood near the door and Aishwarya open the coupe door and comes out, indicating Prithivi even though came to the extent of saving her, it is really Aishwarya's will power and acceptance to stay back with Vikram that really saved her.

Now Aishwarya and Prithivi are having a chat about her days in Vikram's place. Prithivi asks her if she was hurt, have they tortured her, as Aishwarya denies. Prithivi, who has already planned to act like he doubted her chastity for that, is the most triggering thing, which will lead her the way he wanted. In the movie *Ravanaan* he asks her: "Has he touched you? He has held you for Fourteen nights and Fourteen days." (1:52:12-35). When this question was being asked the train was inside a tunnel, Prithivi starts to lie and darkness covers the frame. Again, in the movie *Ravanaan*, train enters the tunnel or darkness, Prithiviraj again asks her: "Are you ready to take lie dictator text? If you are telling the truth, why are you afraid of the test?" (1:52:46-50)

The train is out of the tunnel and darkness Aishwarya told him in the brightness that, "I have somehow survived the Fourteen days, but in your Ten bad questions I might die" (1:53:01-06). Then the train enters to the tunnel or the darkness Prithivi told her that, "Truth hurts sometimes; he told me you are not pure" (1:53:07-10). Aishwarya replies: "No way he would not have said it." (1:53:32-39) This is a beautiful scene where two bright gaps are given for Aishwarya's words, while the train continues to be in the tunnel, engulfed in darkness. After the conversation, Aishwarya who was blamed, decided to stop the train and pulls the chain. The train

stops. Half inside and half outside the tunnel. The place where Prithivi stands, who lied so far, is inside the darkness and the place where Aishwarya stood; who spoke the truth is outside the tunnel.

The film is a re-enactment of the Ramayana with not only the three characters Raman, Ravana, Sita but also the other main characters and many other situations. Veera is a character who is portrayed as Ravana in the Ramayana. The hero of the movie is like the ten headed Ravana in the Ramayana. The word ten is used many times in this film. According to the psychology of this character, Veera is a character who goes through many emotions at the same time. While capturing Ragini, various ideas come to his mind. When asked by many people in the village, there are about ten different opinions about him. So, this story is told through the perspective of Ravana in the Ramayana, so the name Ravana is apt for this film, which follows the perspective of Ravana in the Ramayana with different mentalities.

Compared to the other characters in the film, Prithviraj's Dev is considered to be Raman and Aishwarya Rai's Ragini is portrayed as Sita. Also, the character of Vennila, who is Vikram's sister is Surpanaka and Prabhu's Singaraj can be compared to Kumbhakarna. Apart from this we can also be considered Njanaprakashan the forest ranger as Hanuman, all events of the Ramayana are portrayed through these characters.

At the beginning of the film, Vikram abducts Aishwarya and in the Ramayana, Ravana abducts Sita. But in the Ramayana, a hawk named Jatayu is at war with Ravana at this time. In the film the first scene was shown in a bird eye view, that is, Aishwarya was shown in a bird eye view. Later, the bird's eye view changes and a hawk are seen landing on the boat. In this scene, Mani Ratnam symbolizes Aishwarya's impending danger by showing this bird in the first shot. In the Ramayana, Rama and his group go to Lanka to save Sita. In this movie, Prithviraj's character is seen symbolically crossing a river in a scene.

In the *Ramayana*, Ravana kidnaps Sita, but not once does Ravana touch Sita. Similarly, in the film, Vikram's Veera never touches Aishwarya's Ragini. It shows the attitude of Ravana in

the Ramayana. Prabhu's character Singaraj in the film bears a resemblance to the Kumbhakarna in Ramayana not only by his body but also through the various events. In the *Ramayana*, Sita was fed by Kumbhakarna. Similarly, in this movie too, the character of Singaraj feeds Aishwarya's Ragini. In addition, the word Fourteen can be seen used several times in the film, and the significance of the word fourteen in the Ramayana can be understood, because Rama and Sita have been going into exile for fourteen years. When it comes to this movie, Veera kidnaps Ragini for fourteen days. Also on the Fourteenth day, Ram came and saved Ragini. The word Fourteen using several times in the movie *Raavana*, "It's only been fourteen days. It's been brought for fourteen hours, and now it is fourteen days, and you will not leave her for another fourteen years" (1:32:32-33). So, the word fourteen is a direct reference from the Ramayana.

The character of Hemant who comes with Prithviraj can be considered as Lakshmana and Vikram's sister Vennila as Shurpanaka. In the Ramayana, it is Lakshmana who cuts off the nose of Shurpanaka. When it comes to the movie, it is said that the character Hemant comes to Vennila's house during Vennila's wedding and threatening her to cut Vennila's nose. This is a direct reference to the Ramayana. Similarly, Njana Prakasham, a forest ranger, is compared to Hanuman, not only he jumps through a tree in the first scenes of the film, but also because Hanuman finds Sita in Ramayana and tells Rama. In this movie too, Njana Prakasham who finds Ragini's place and brings the information to Ram. This is why the film has a direct connection with *Ramayana* through the characters.

Mani Ratnam is one of the few directors who can convey ideas to people with the help of visuals rather than dialogue. He has done a lot of visual stories telling in this film as well. If the audience analyze how this is, Aishwarya's character Ragini looks at Vikram's character Veera through the same eyes throughout the first half of the film. By looking at him like this, Ragini understand only one side of Veera. Ragini knows the flash of the story during the break of the

movie, and after which Ragini shows both her eyes. Through these scenes, Mani Ratnam shows Ragini's view of Veera.

The character of Sita in the 'Ramayana' can be seen as a very brave and fearless person. Similarly, the character of Ragini in this movie is portrayed as a brave heroine. Also, Sita in Ramayana is portrayed as the daughter of Goddess of Bhumidevi, and the position of a picture of Aishwarya lying in a well makes it look like a child is lying in the womb of a mother, it is a direct reference from *Ramayana*.

Similarly, Mani Ratnam says many things in terms of colors. Prithviraj's character will be mostly dressed in white, while Vikram's character will be dressed in black. Ragini's dress has been yellow since the beginning of the movie. Despite the song in the middle of the movie, Ragini's dress is yellow. This suggests that Ragini is symbolizing fire. Mani Ratnam symbolizes many things like this to *Ramayana*.

Mani Ratnam also tries to show the mindset of two people using light. At the end of the film, when Prithviraj and Aishwarya are on the train, the train passes through a tunnel, during which Prithviraj asks her about the purity of her body while the train is moving to the tunnel. It shows the darkness inside Prithviraj or his mindset. But Aishwarya answer when there is light. Mani Ratnam used the blackness of a tunnel and then the light to show the mind set of two people. This shows how brilliant Mani Ratnam is. Also, the final argument between Ragini and Dev which leads to leave Ragini, it is also a reference of leaving Sita in the forest due to misunderstanding.

Then, Veera cutting off the hand of the sister's husband for instance, a little decoding and you realizing the striking similarity to Ravan cutting off Jatayu's wings in the actual epic. There is another numerous links to the epic such as Vibhishana's request to Raavan to return Sita back to Rama. Sakkara asks Veerayya to return Ragini back to Dev. He says, things have changed a lot

since she was kidnapped and there can be peace after she is realized. The locals of the forest tell Dev at once that Veerayya is very good with musical instruments the dhol, in this film.

According to the mythology, Raavan was proficient with veena. The bridge fight sequence in the climax showed the fight between the Lord and the Demon that occurred between the sky and the land. The bridge, in a way, also depicted the link between Ram and Raavana's territory. The scenes leading to the climax as well as the dialogues conveyed between the lead character, especially with the Tirunelveli Tamil all through deserves a special mention. Scenes involving dev doubting Ragini and asking her to take tests were also well crafted to connect with the epic.

There is no Mani Ratnam film without a great mirror scene and the giant mirrors in Dev and Ragini's bedroom would make for a kinkier conversation. Then is that of the Njana Prakasham, the hanuman equivalent looking upside down at the two faces of Lakshmanan, much later in the film a while Veera breaks the mirror and see many faces almost all ten of them in the broken pieces.

Ravana in the Ramayana can do many things at the same time. In the movie, Prithviraj's character Dev is told by the villagers that Veera can do different things at the same time. The villagers said to Prithviraj that, "Veera is a soft-spoken saga" and then "he is match for anyone, even the God of Death". (32:19-34) Then another woman says that, "Sir, his heart is clear as water; he is like a son to us. Likes a bit of mischief and creates some problems". (32:34-45) In the Ramayana, a character brings the deeds of Rama to Raavana, in the movie also, a similar character tells Veera about Dev.

This paper has focused strongly on the character of Ravan where this particular character has been changing throughout the ages. This topic has been a very different one with new approaches towards the character of Ravan. The gradual change in treatment of the character of Ravan has been shown chronologically through taking the very recent change in approach into consideration. Valmiki's Ravan is of evil and bestial nature and

Mani Ratnam's Ravan is focused as a hero. A hero is someone who persists against all odds, someone who is willing to plunge into the depth of his or her inner being, as frightening and as dangerous as that process might be. He recognizes the risks of his decision, and he acts anyway. The demarcation between hero and villain, good and evil, peace and chaos, and light and dark are surely questioned and threatened by the recent treatments of the character of Ravana.

## Conclusion

In the era of intellectually film making *Raavanan* is a superior modern exploration of psychological interactions. Mani Ratnam's stories is about complex human emotional relationships. According to this theory, it is possible to see how *Ramayana* relates to this film. Many events are directly related to this movie. It can be clearly understood by the audience while watching the movie. The difference in the movie is that the protagonist is Ravana. This is why the movie is going through the perspective of Ravana and Sita. That is the main difference Mani Ratnam brought into the movie *Raavnan*. After the film, the audience will get another view of thinking about Rama and Ravanan especially a change will occur in the perspective of *Ramayana* the great Indian epic. When we consider the great visuals of the movie, a great part of the audience are the fans of these visuals. The same result also in the part of music used in the film. So, the conclusion of the movie is, while the movie is giving another form or layer to the movie still the movie is very prominent in the contemporary world.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**SUBALTERN IN INDIAN SOCIAL SYSTEMS: AN  
ANALYSIS OF VIKAS SWARUP'S Q & A**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Arts

**ALPHY MARY SAJI**

**Register No: DB18AEGR017**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project Supervisor: Mr. Jince Joseph**

**June 2021**

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Subalterns in Indian Social Systems: An Analysis of Vikas Swarup’s *Q & A*” is a bonafide work of Alphy Mary Saji, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan  
Department in charge

Mr. Jince Joseph  
Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Alphy Mary Saji, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Subalterns in Indian Social Systems: An Analysis of Vikas Swarup’s *Q & A*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Jince Joseph of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

08 June 2021

Alphy Mary Saji

DB18AEGR017

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## Table of Contents

	Page No:
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	3
Subaltern Studies	
Chapter Two:	14
Analysis of <i>Q &amp; A</i>	
Chapter Three:	26
Subalterns in Vikas Swarup's <i>Q &amp; A</i>	
Conclusion	41
Works Cited	43

## Introduction

Postcolonialism, refers to the period aftermath of western colonialism. It represents the historical, material, and actual living conditions of newly-independent Asian, African, and South American states within the global system. It also refers to the economic and political conditions in countries such as India after the European ruler handed over political power to the native population. A key movement in postcolonial studies was the 1980 intervention of the subaltern studies groups. The word subaltern stands as a general name for the people who are subjugated in the terms of class, caste, gender or in any other way. Though the original subaltern studies group emerged out from historical and cultural studies, the concept of the subaltern has expanded in interpretation from the original configuration to apply to any population that is disenfranchised and unreachable due to hegemonic oppression.

The work titled “Subalterns in Indian Social Systems: An Analysis of Vikas Swarup’s *Q & A*” is an attempt to analyze how the underprivileged or subalterns are colonized by the upper crusts and existing social systems in India. The project contains three chapters in total in which the first chapter deals with the origin and theory of subaltern studies. The chapter also mentions the subaltern studies by Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Dipesh Chakrabarty.

The second chapter makes an analysis of the novel *Q & A* by Vikas Swarup. This chapter contains short biography of the author and also a detailed plot of the novel. The different themes of the novel is also explained in the second chapter.

Finally, the third chapter studies how subalterns are colonized in India by the so called cultured class on the basis of the novel. The challenges faced by poors, orphans

and women in postcolonial India are also the major issues which will be discussed in the third chapter.

Therefore, the project on Subaltern studies would provide a platform for a readers to understand what exactly theory is all about. It discusses the lives of destitute people in modern India. The plights of those people under the present circumstances and how they are becoming subalterns in modern India. The novel often features a main conflict between the protagonist and the society. The novelist has made a harsh comment on society through his novel. The main protagonist of the novel, Ram remains a symbol of those suffered orphans and figures out to the readers that how vulnerable are the lives of orphan in present social circumstances. This project attempts to examine how the idea of subaltern studies work in relevancy to the present novel.

## Chapter One

### Subaltern Studies

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1930), the Italian Marxist and theoretician, is believed to have introduced the term 'Subaltern' means inferior status, quality, or importance. During his imprisonment, Gramsci kept prison notes where he wrote about subaltern social groups. In the South Asian context the term 'subaltern' may be applied to those groups that have been subordinated in terms of class, caste, age, gender, language and culture. It also indicates to those groups in society who are subject to the domination of the ruling classes. In general subaltern classes include peasants, workers, and other groups who have been denied access to 'hegemonic' power. Gramsci affirmed that the term subjected to the people of underclass in a society on whom the dominant power puts forth its hegemonic power and impact.

The term subaltern, in general, indicates a kind of deprived person which ensemble within the representation of the Oppressor/Oppressed. A subaltern is a certain kind of a person with a low ranking in a social, economic or other chain of command. It also denotes to the individuals who have been marginalized or oppressed. Gayatri Spivak's outstanding article "Can the Subaltern Speak?"(1988) scrutinizes the subaltern. According to Spivak, the subaltern cannot speak. She opines that the subaltern does not have a voice. Spivak in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" writes: "The Subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with woman a pious. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual has a circumscribe task which she must not disown with a flourish." (308)

Of late, postcolonial theory as a new field of study has become one of the most prominent academic disciplines in the world of literature. Postcolonial literature

persistently generated an enormous literature, especially by literary critics, feminists, social reformists, political scientists and political economists. The incessant expansion of postcolonialism in its new account made its own domains of attention extended beyond the other fields of global academics like African American Literature, Literary Theory and Criticism, Anthropology and Cultural Studies. Consequently, Subaltern Studies has become one of the latest subdivisions of postcolonial theory.

Readings of Subaltern Studies began in India when writings initiated about Subaltern Studies began in book reviews. Primarily, every volume in the series was reviewed independently as a collection of essays, but by 1986 an increase of writing inside and outside the project had launched a unique school of research whose supporters came to be called 'subalternists' or 'subalterns.' Their influential essays published in 1988 as *Selected Subaltern Studies* was published by Oxford University Press in New York and Oxford, edited by Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, with a foreword by Edward Said. Subaltern Studies extended in the literary arena as Subaltern Studies Group or the Subaltern Studies Collective which was launched in the 1980s by a group of eminent Indian scholars.

Subaltern Studies initiated its remarkable work in England from the end of 1970s, during discussions on subaltern themes among a small group of English and Indian historians led to a plan to launch a new journal in India. Oxford University Press in New Delhi agreed to publish three volumes of essays titled "Subaltern Studies: Writings on South Asian History and Society" from 1982. These essays appeared annually and succeeded with three more volumes, all edited by Ranajit Guha. The central objective was to retake history for the under classes, whose voices had not been heard earlier. Scholars of the subaltern group anticipated to get rid of the histories of elites and the Eurocentric bias of existing imperial history.

They also protested against the Cambridge School which gave the impression to support the colonial legacy of elitism. They were highlighting on subaltern in terms of class, caste, gender, race, language and culture. The first and foremost leader of this literary movement was Ranajit Guha who had written on peasant uprisings in India. Their detailed and methodical approaches in reading of the Indian and south Asian histories are chiefly motivated by Gramsci's outlook expressed in the *Prison Notebooks*. However, the writers of subaltern were also further motivated by their eminent predecessor, Ranajit Guha, initially in his "*Subaltern Studies I*" and later on in his well-known classical discourse named "The Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India" (1983). Ranajit Guha is undeniably the most renowned name among all historians. His "Elementary Aspects of Peasants Insurgency in Colonial India" is considered to be the most influential model of subaltern historical study.

Guha attempted to reveal the factual condition of peasants' survival in colonial India. He claimed that the peasants were unrecognized as a topic of history in his own right yet a subject that was all his own. Guha looks for the justice to the Indian peasants by investigating the relationship between domination and subjugation in Indian context from 1783 to 1900. In the preface and introduction to "*Subaltern Studies I*", Ranajit Guha tries for the need to uphold a systematic dialogue of subordination and domination in South Asian history and society.

The three essays in the *Subaltern Studies* series, summarizes the essential elements of the *Subaltern Studies* Group. The first essay titled "Colonialism in South Asia: A Dominance without Hegemony" (1989), Guha states the ongoing authority and impact of British colonial historiography in the work of Indian scholars and the need for self-criticism. In the second essay, "Discipline And Mobilize: Hegemony and Elite

Control in Nationalist Campaigns” (1922), Guha depicts M. K. Gandhi's use of idiosyncratic range of secular and spiritual powers which move caste sanctions that controlled the former Swadeshi Movement. Guha observed it as a reflection of the expanding disagreement between the elite and subaltern domains of politics. Guha's third essay, “An Indian Historiography of India: Hegemonic Implications of a Nineteenth-Century Agenda” (1988), concerns elite uses of the past. According to Ranajit Guha, Subaltern Studies is a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way. The term Subaltern according to him represents the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom are described as the elite in the society. To defend his concept of subalternity from critics, Guha asserts the fact that there is an idiosyncratic divergence between subaltern groups of dominant indigenous groups at the local level.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is an Indian scholar, literary theorist, and feminist critic. She is a University Professor at Columbia University. She is the co-founder of Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. She is considered as one of the most influential postcolonial intellectuals. She translated Jacques Derrida's *De la Grammatologie*. Her introduction to this translation has become the most influential piece of literary criticism. She translated Mahasweta Devi's “Stanadayini” into English as “The Breast Giver” which shows her passion for the women in subjugation. According to Spivak, subaltern refers to those who do not give orders; they only receive orders. That comes from Antonio Gramsci, who made the word current. But ‘subaltern’ also means those who do not have access to the structures of citizenship. I am now talking about India today, where the largest sector of the electorate is the rural

landless illiterate. They may vote but they have no access to the structures of citizenship.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is well-known for her openly political use of contemporary cultural and critical theories to confront the inheritance of colonialism on the way one read and reflect about literature and culture. Spivak's critical interventions include a range of theoretical interests such as Marxism, feminism, deconstruction, postcolonial theory and subaltern studies. She has challenged the disciplinary conventions of literary criticism and academic philosophy by centering on the cultural texts of those people who are often marginalized by overriding western culture: the new immigrant, the working class, women and the postcolonial subject. Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" challenges the idea of colonial (and Western) subject and offers an example of the boundaries of the capability of Western discourse, even postcolonial discourse, to interrelate with incongruent cultures.

Spivak's groundbreaking essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" marked a paradigm shift in postcolonial studies. Spivak in her essay argues that it is not an easy task to make subalterns visible. She also says that there is no quick fix for inequality. Many of European theorists such as Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze thought that they could access the subaltern's voice directly. Spivak's essay tries to explain why this project is doomed to fail. It may not be for the reason that the subaltern cannot speak words or produce sentences. The subaltern 'cannot speak,' instead, because her speech falls short of fully authorized, political speech and her message is being heard, socially and politically. Spivak expresses her disapproval of 'subalternity' analyzed by Subaltern Studies Ground.

She utters against an exceedingly wide application of the term in 1992.

Subaltern is not just a classy word for 'oppressed', for the Other, for somebody who's not getting any benefits that one deserves. In postcolonial terms, everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern, a space of difference. The working class is oppressed. It is not subaltern. Many people want to claim subalternity. They are the least interesting and the most dangerous. They should see what the mechanics of the discrimination are. They are within the hegemonic discourse, wanting what they needs and not being allowed to choose what they deserves.

In her influential essay, Spivak reconsidered the problems of subalternity within new historical developments as brought by capitalistic politics of undermining rebellious voice and divisions of labor in a globalized world. She criticizes the first place of Gramsci's affirmation of the independence of the subaltern groups. Her validation of this denial of Gramscian outlook is based on her observation that this autonomy results in homogeneity of the subaltern group and subaltern subjective distinctiveness. Spivak's further disapproval of Subaltern Studies Group lies in her belief that no methodology, even the most ambitious Marxist one, can avoid a sort of essentialism in its attempt to define who or what may form the subaltern group. Therefore, Spivak prefers to take up the idea of the subaltern fundamentally because, It is truly situational. 'Subaltern' began as a description of a certain rank in the military. The word was used under censorship by Gramsci: he called Marxism 'monism,' and was obliged to call the proletariat 'subaltern'. That word, used under duress, has been transformed into the description of everything that does not fall under strict class analysis.

Spivak, faced with this complexity of identifying the area of subalternity, alters to re-evaluate the issues of the subaltern groups by dealing with the tribulations of

gender and above all Indian women during colonial times. She revealed the standing of Indian women relying on her analysis of a case of Sati women practices under the British colonial rule. She considered 'Sati women' as a subaltern group. Spivak concludes at the end that 'the subaltern cannot speak'. This last pronouncement that she made in her essay was controversially interpreted. It was assumed as a statement of the impossibility of voicing the oppressed groups' confrontation because of their demonstrations by other overriding forces as the same as a declaration which confirmed the fact that the subaltern as a definitely conscious prejudice only obsessed with a leading language or a dominant voice to be heard. According to this stand, one may go further to presume that the entire dialogue of post-colonial theory itself is to be considered as a voice for the voiceless and politically marginalized groups by their scholarly representatives. Therefore, by exploring the conditions of oppressed women, particularly in India, Spivak managed to explain on the original differentiation of the idea of the subaltern as it was first developed by Ranajit Guha and the others through her basic investigation of the happenings and problems of women in general, either from the lower class and peasantry class or from the upper middle class and elite class. She stands for women as a distinguished gender because of the disgraceful exclusion of their contribution in anti-colonial history.

Spivak believes being a female and subaltern is more challenging. The question is not of female participation in insurgency, or the ground rules of the sexual division of labor, for both of which there is 'evidence'; rather, both were used as object of colonialist historiography and as a subject of insurgency, though the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow.

Thus, Spivak has been sustaining in drawing and redrawing the boundaries of post-colonial studies and subaltern studies.

Dipesh Chakrabarty (b.1948) is a historian, and subaltern studies critic who made contributions to postcolonial theory and subaltern studies. He is the Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor in History at the University of Chicago. He was an active member of the Subaltern Studies Group or Collective. His contribution towards post-colonial and subaltern studies can be seen from his pioneering works such as “Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference” (2000) explores the relation between history and post-colonial theory. He has also contributed the area of subaltern studies with his book titled “Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies” (2002). His “Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference” first published in 2000. It deals with the mythical stature of Europe that is frequently taken to be the original site of modernity in various histories of capitalist evolution in non-Western nations. According to Dipesh Chakrabarty, the imaginary Europe is built into the social sciences. The notion of historicizing carries with it some strangely European postulations about disillusioned scope, secular time, and sovereignty. Considered against such mythical standards, capitalist shift in the third world has repeatedly seemed either unfinished or deficient. This book addresses that each case of transition to capitalism is a case of translation as well- a translation of existing worlds and their thought- categories into the categories and self-understandings of capitalist modernity.

Chakrabarty’s “Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial Historiography” reveals the historiography of the Subaltern Studies starting from the initiative of Ranajit Guha and his Group way back in 1982. He explored to answer his own question i.e. how did a

project which began as a specific and focused intervention in the academic discipline of (Indian) history come to be associated with postcolonialism, an area of studies whose principal home has been in literature departments? And attempted to answer this question by discussing how, and in what way Subaltern Studies could be seen as a postcolonial project of writing history. It should be elucidated that the relationship between postcolonialism and historiography fails to see the contributions that other disciplines such as political science, legal studies, anthropology, literature, cultural studies, and economics have made to the field of subaltern studies. Dipesh's treatise on "Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial Historiography", is motivated by a question that has the discipline of history in focus: In what ways can one read the original historiographic agenda of Subaltern Studies as not simply yet another version of Marxist/radical history but as possessing a necessarily postcolonial outlook? He concentrated on the discipline of history for two motives. That is the association between the new field of postcolonial writing and historiography has not yet gained the notice it justifies, and to reply critics who say that Subaltern Studies was once good Marxist history in the same way that the English tradition of history from below was, but that it lost its way when it came into contact with Said's Orientalism, Spivak's Deconstructionism, or Bhabha's analysis of colonial discourse.

Without aspiring to increase the claims of Subaltern Studies scholars or to refute what they may have really learned from the British Marxist historians, Dipesh tries to illustrate that this reading of Subaltern Studies as an example of Indian or Third World historians simply catching up with or only relating appropriate methodological insights of Anglo social history-gravely misjudges what the series has been all about. From its very beginning, Dipesh argues that Subaltern Studies raised questions about history writing that made a fundamental exit from English Marxist historiographical traditions

unavoidable. Dipesh tried to develop his argument by concentrating primarily on the work of the historian Ranajit Guha in the period when he acted as the founding editor of Subaltern Studies. The specific writings of Guha which Dipesh selected to discuss are those which could be considered the founding texts of the project Subaltern Studies.

Dipesh Chakrabarty's essay in "Subaltern Studies IV" points out that the nature of this declaration by asserting their basic concern with the thorny question of consciousness and by identifying subalternity as the composite culture of resistance to and acceptance of domination and hierarchy. Chakrabarty therefore has remained the subalternist most concerned with Marxism. His "Invitation to a Dialogue", the first extended response to critics in the pages of "Subaltern Studies".

Subalternity as a form turns into an umbrella concept which increases the scope of research from various subaltern perspectives. People existing at present would readily like to inhabit the situation of a subaltern whose silence is perhaps voiced through the advocating demonstration of an intellectual. However, Spivak warns in advance from such a situation of accommodating the condition of an enduring subordination. She stated that the undertaking of an intellectual is to pave way for the subaltern groups and let them freely speak for themselves. It turned out to be quite complicated for all the changes happening in a globalized post-modern world to define the subaltern as a separate class. The Subaltern theory proposes that the subalterns cannot speak by providing special prominence on the aspect of noise.

Subaltern studies also became entangled with efforts to re-imagine history itself. It re-invented subalternity. The subaltern school has contributed a lot in the study of history, economics and social sciences in Third World countries during the end of the twentieth century. It shapes a part of postcolonial theory in literature and its application

is certainly functional in the study of certain texts like Dalit literature. The subaltern school has no doubt made an enormous contribution in the realm of Indian historiography.

## Chapter Two

### Analysis of *Q & A*

Postcolonial literature seeks to address the ways in which non-European(Asian, African, South American but also settler colony) literatures and cultures have been marginalized as an effect of colonial rule, to find, if possible, modes of resistance, retrieval, and reversal of their own precolonial pasts. Postcolonialism refers to the historical, material, and actual living conditions of newly independent Asian, African, and South American states within the global system. Indian authors like Amitav Ghosh, Anita Desai, Hanif Kureishi, Rohinton Mistry, Meena Alexander, Arundathi Roy, Kiran Desai and Salman Rushdie have written notable Postcolonial novels. *Q&A* is a novel written by Vikas Swarup, an Indian diplomat. Published in 2005, it was the author's first novel. Vikas Swarup was born in the historic Indian city, Allahabad in a family of lawyers. He is the current secretary at the Ministry of External Affairs, India and has previously served as High Commissioner of India in Canada and has been the official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, India. He is best known as the author of novel *Q & A*, adapted to film as *Slumdog Millionaire*, the Best Film winner at 2009 Academy Awards, Golden Globe Awards and BAFTA awards. His other novels are *Six Suspects* and *The Accidental Apprentice*. *Q & A* tells the story of how a penniless waiter in Mumbai becomes the biggest quiz show winner in history. The novel opens with Ram Mohammed Thomas being arrested by the police at night. This is a normal occurrence for slum dwellers, apparently, and he has been terrified of it for years because, over the course of his life, he has taken lives and committed crimes in order to survive. The police torture him, and question him about the quiz show he starred in, *Who Wants To Win a Billion?* Ram won the quiz show before the producers had enough money to actually award a first-prize winner, and the police are trying to

get Ram to admit that he cheated in order to say that he does not deserve the prize. The novel starts with a prologue followed by thirteen chapters and an epilogue. Swarup opens the novel with a prologue in which the protagonist articulates his subaltern concern, "I have been arrested. For winning a quiz show."(11)

The main protagonist of the novel, Ram Mohammed Thomas is arrested and taken to the police station alleged for cheating in a quiz show. But the arrest did not affect any of the residents in slum, because arrests in Dharavi are as common as pickpockets in the local train. He has not done anything wrong, yet the producer of the quiz show has asked the police to interrogate Ram for cheating, thinking there is no way a street kid could have known every answer correctly. Ram remembers how the people changed their attitude towards him when they hear about his victory. The other waiters arranged a big party for him. The doddering bartender offered him his daughter in marriage. The grouchy manager did not call him a worthless bastard or a rabid dog.

Ram was locked up in prison. Inspector Godbole himself came for the second time interrogation. Godbole insults Ram on his name which mixed all the religions. Ram was introduced to Neil Johnson, an American who represents New Age Telemedia, the company that licenses the quiz. Mr. Johnson along with the producer Billy Nanda allures the commissioner to convict Ram for cheating and winning the show. Neil Johnson discloses to the commissioner that the company is not in a position to pay the prize money and he wants the commissioner to prove Ram has cheated to win *Who Will Win a Billion?*

Godbole tried different inhumane methods to torture Ram to make him sign the confession statement. But a young woman bursts into the room and announces that she was the lawyer of Ram. She was Smitha Shah. She rescued Ram from the police station

and took him to her home in Bandra and asks him to tell the truth. When she asks him whether he knew the answers he replied that he was lucky enough to be asked those questions that he knows the correct answer. Smitha promised Ram that she would help him only if he says the truth. Ram decides to reveal his life story to Smitha. In this way, Smitha agrees to listen the whole story of Ram but in the order in which the questions are asked in the show. These questions asked in the show constructs the plot of the fiction.

The first chapter, 'The Burden of a Priest' covers the early years of Ram's life. Ram was abandoned by his mother in front of St. Mary's church in Pahargang, Delhi as soon as he was born. The sisters of the church runs an orphanage and adoption agency. Ram has dark skin which makes him unpopular amongst adoptive parents. One couple named Mr. and Mrs. Thomas was ready to adopt him. But within three days his foster mother left Ram and his foster father and runs away with a tailor. Mr. Thomas returns the baby to the orphanage thinking that the baby was the reason for his personal tragedy. Father Timothy takes him in and named him as Joseph Michael Thomas.

Two members of All Faith Committee was unhappy with the naming and meets Father Timothy accusing that Father converted a Hindu child into Christian. So, Father Timothy gives him a Christian, Muslim, and Hindu name as Ram Mohammad Thomas to protect him from the civil wars raging in India. There he learned to speak English. Ram also learned everything about the Catholic Church, which is how he knew the answer to the second question.

Father Timothy is a married man and he has a son. Father John came when Father went to Timothy England to see his son. He was gay and homosexual. He also abuses young boys including Father Timothy's son who has just come from England

and staying in the orphanage. Ram informs this to Father Timothy and John is caught red handed by Father Timothy. A conflict happens between them and both of them are found dead in the morning. Thus Ram becomes a true orphan after the death of Father Timothy.

Ram who is eight years, is sent to the Juvenile home in Turkman Gate, Delhi. He met number of children who comes from slums of different cities of UP and even as far away as Nepal. The life in the Juvenile home is different from his life in the orphanage with Father Timothy. Ram becomes a leader of the boys there because of his knowledge in English. The authorities also has a consideration towards Ram due to his English. Ram meets Salim, a boy from a village of Bihar who runs away to Delhi. Salim's whole family is burnt alive in a communal riot in the village and he is the only one left. Salim and Ram becomes friends and Ram saves him from being abused by Mr.Gupta, the deputy of juvenile home.

Ram and his newfound friend Salim are chosen by Sethji, a man known to change young people lives. Sethji is actually a gangster from Mumbai under the cover of rehabilitating children. They are taken to Sethji's house and are given training to sing *bhajans*. In Mumbai, Ram discovers what Sethji's real plan is and also learns about how he maims helpless children in order to make money. It turns out that Sethji not only exploits little disabled children by forcing them to beg for money, but also he is one who crippled them in first place. Sethji's real name was Babu Pillai, but he was also called Maman. He came from Kollam in Kerala, but had lived in Mumbai for a long time. If the children fails to bring in less than hundred rupees, they are starved by Maman. Ram decides to run away from Maman when he understood that Maman's men are going to blind them. But Salim refuses to run because Maman has promised to make him a film star. Ram tosses his lucky coin to decide their fate. It is head and they decide

to flee. At last they are able to run away and Ram is able to answer the question based on his experience – “Surdas, the blind poet was a devotee of which god?” (122).

After escaping from Maman’s gang, they goes to the house of Neelima Kumari, the famous actress. Ram gets a job considering he is a Hindu but Salim is rejected because he belongs to another religion. Ram understood that the life of film stars is not glamorous as seen from the outside world. They love flattery and hates criticism and they live for their fans. Neelima becomes happy when someone recognizes her and asks her for autographs. She also has a lover who torches her with cigarette butts. On one occasion when her lover torches her too much, Neelima shows Ram the burn marks all over her chest and that makes Ram cries. After that she takes sleeping pills and committed suicide. During the show, the presenter Prem Kumar asks a question based on Neelima Kumari’s life. “Neelima Kumari, the tragedy queen, won National Award in which year?”(272).Ram answers the question correctly.

Ram lives in a chawl of Ghatkopar when a war is going on between India and Pakistan. This war reminds them of the 1971 India-Pak war. There is a resident in chawl who fought in the 1971 war and he tells the brave stories in the warfront. He also tells that highest award given to armed forces is Param Vir Chakra and second highest award is MahaVir Chakra. This information helps Ram in answering the question about highest award for gallantry given to Indian armed forces.

Salim and Ram live together in a chawl in Ghatkopar. Ram is at the theatre with his friend Salim, whose hero is Armaan Ali. Salim idolizes Armaan Ali and refuses to believe any bad rumours about him. The two go and watch an action movie about Armaan Ali. Then a man enters the theatre halfway through the movie and tries to touch Salim. Salim reacts when he tries to touch his crotch and runs after him; he pulls

off the man's fake beard and realizes that it is the movie star, Armaan Ali. This is how Ram knew the first question.

Ram meets Shantaram and his family while living in Chawl. Shantaram's daughter have a pet cat named Pluto because it is the smallest member of the family. This is how Ram knows the answer of question, "Which is the smallest planet in the solar system?" Shantaram is a drunkard who usually beats his wife and daughter. He also harasses his daughter sexually. Once Gudiya attempts to save her mother when Shantharam throws a hot cup of tea to his wife and she hospitalized. Ram is like a brother for Gudiya and promises her to save. Shantaram tries to molest Gudiya again and Ram consoles her. Next day when Ram sees Shantaram drunk, he pushes him down the stairs and runs away to Delhi.

In Delhi, Ram works for the Taylors, a rich, self-absorbed family that has a habit of speaking badly of anyone and everyone. It seems that everyone who has worked for the Taylors is caught in their wrongdoing and Mr. Colonel Taylor catches them in the act. One day, Ram picks up the phone to hear Mr. Colonel speak in code to a man panting on the other line. Ram notices that the Taylors take their rich lifestyle for granted. One day, Ram follows Mr. Taylor to find him talking to a strange Indian man. The next day, a new cook arrives to replace the last one who thought he was in love with the Colonel's daughter. This new cook attempts a heist in the house when the Taylors were on vacation, but abandons his efforts when he realizes the Taylors do not store any valuables in their house, particularly in Mr. Colonel's heavily fortified den. Mr. Colonel shows he trusts Ram out of all his servants in his house by giving him access to his den to deactivate the security alarm. Ram knows that the Colonel is stealing documents of India. Ram learns Australian English accent and makes a phone call in Australian English to the Indian inspector of police. Mr. Colonel is arrested for

treason and being a double agent. Colonel is caught and declared *persona non grata* which means “the diplomat is not acceptable” (151). Ram helps Indian officials by informing them about the traitor, so he was able to answer the question explaining the meaning of *persona nongrata*.

Ram heads to Mumbai taking 50,000 rupees which he gets as salary for working with Taylors. For the first time in his life he is a bona-fide passenger of the sleeper coach of Rajdhani Express. He keeps his money in his underwear because he has heard about thieves who steals everything while travelling in a train. But Ram boasts about his money to the co-passenger boy and shows him the bundle of money. Then there comes a dacoit and he snatches everything from the passengers. The co-passenger boy who was jealous of Ram’s money tells the dacoit about the wad of notes. Ram is forced to give his money to the dacoits. When the dacoit tries to molest a girl, Ram gets angry and he attacks the dacoit. At last the dacoit is killed by the shot of his own revolver. The revolver with letters Clot written on it is with Ram. Thus Ram was able to answer the question, “Who invented the revolver?”(192).

Ram gets down at a big station. It is Agra. Ram is hungry and but he has no money in pocket. So he finds his food from a dustbin. Ram ends up in a place near the Taj Mahal. He starts earning money by illegally guiding tourists. With the help of a boy of his age named Shankar who cannot speak properly, Ram rents a room in the outhouse of Swapna Palace. Ram finds that Sankar is the son of rich Swapna Devi but she does not recognize him. Sankar, who is the heir of wealthiest woman in Agra dies of rabies because his mother refuses to recognizes him and pay four lakh rupees to buy the anti-rabies tablet. From the next day onwards, Ram acquires knowledge of the Taj Mahal and becomes a famous guide and is earning enough to outside once in a while.

Then, he meets a group of rich boys when acting as a fake guide. Ram is shocked by noticing the disparity between the rich and poor. He is unable even to eat when he sees boys spending money like paper. They take him to an expensive restaurant and to the Red Light District of Mumbai. He has sex with a young prostitute, Nita, and falls in love with her. Nita is forced into prostitution by the conventions of Bedia tribes in the Bhind district of MP. She also loves him, but cannot leave the brothel because of her brother who forces her to prostitute. One girl in the family is forced into prostitution and the men of the family spend money earned by her on drinking and gambling. Nita's brother tells Ram he needs 400,000 rupees to buy Nita her freedom.

One day Nita calls Ram because she is hospitalized. He goes to see her and is shocked by seeing her appearance. She is tortured by a man from Mumbai. He was sent by Nita's brother Shyam. Ram decides to rescue Nita from the brothel. So he steals money from Swapna Devi's safe and goes to hospital. Meanwhile, he sees another child, a teacher's son is about to die because of rabies and the teacher has no money to pay for anti-rabies tablet. The teacher begs Ram for money when he sees huge amount of money with Ram. But Ram refuses to give the money and goes to Shyam. When Ram takes the amount to Shyam, he demands six lakh rupees. Now Ram understands that Shyam would ask more when he brings six lakh. So he gives the money to the teacher to save his son. This act of humanity helps Ram in the question in the quiz show, Ram calls this man because he is a teacher and answers the question successfully with the help of teacher. The question is, "In which of the plays of Shakespeare is one of the characters named 'Costard'?"(340). The answer is *Love's Labour's lost*.

Ram works in Jimmy's Bar and restaurant in Colaba and lives in Dharavi. Ram is made to work with the Drunkards; also, he is asked to have conversation with them

and encourage them in drinking more. He has to work till the letter comes from *W3B*. He encourages Mr. Prakash Rao, a drunkard, in drinking more by listening to his story and is able to answer the question, "What is the capital of Papua New Guinea?"(171). He knows that the answer is Port Moresby because he knows that the other options are incorrect. While working in the bar, Ram meets some unusual characters; one in particular named Prakash Rao, who tells him all about his Haitian wife and his brother who died of a heart attack. The poor man is in despair as he pours out his story to Ram that he stole money from his brother, and his wife, who is a voodoo priestess, makes a doll of his brother for him. Prakash Rao admits to Ram that he had the guilty pleasure of taking all his troubles out on the voodoo doll of his brother, giving him painful headaches and small heart attacks. Prakash Rao soon found out that his brother died a week ago of a major heart attack that he had caused through the voodoo doll. Rao falls in love with another woman and decides to take revenge on his wife and dies the same death as his brother.

Ram meets Salim accidentally after a long gap. Salim is working as a dabbawala but is trying to becoming a film actor. Salim is rescued by a man named Ahmad Khan during a Hindu riot. Ahmad Khan is a business person and a professional contract killer. From now on, Salim cleaned the house and looks after it when Ahmad isn't at home. Ahmad Khan kills people whose photographs was sent to him in an envelope. Abbas Razvi offers Salim a supporting role in his next film. One day Salim finds out that the person next to be killed by Ahmad Khan is Abbas Razvi. So Salim informs the truth to Razvi and switches the photo of Razvi in the envelope with Maman's. Maman was the man who almost blinded the two boys. Razvi is so impressed and offers Salim a role of hero in his next film. After some days Maman is killed by Ahmad Khan and Ahmad Khan is killed in a police encounter. Before his death Ahmad Khan has bet a

ten lakh rupees on Sachin Malvankar's thirty seventh test century. Sachin fails and Ahmad loses his money. But Ram was able to answer the question; "How many test centuries has India's greatest batsman Sachin Malvankar scored?"(243). Ram's choices were a) 34, b) 35, c) 36 or d) 37. He answered c) 36 and won a million rupees.

The twelfth question is the last question of the show. The twelfth question was, "What is the name of Mumtaz Mahal's father?"(345). Prem Kumar makes fun of Ram about his waiter job. But Ram knows the answer because he has worked as a guide in the Taj Mahal. Prem Kumar informs the authorities during the commercial break that Ram know the answer for jackpot question. The company does not want to pay the money, so they flipped the jackpot question to another question which Ram does not know the correct answer. When they take another commercial break, Ram tells Prem Kumar that he does not want to win the show. The real motive behind Ram's participation in the show was to take revenge on Prem Kumar because it was Prem Kumar who tortured Neelima Kumari and Nita. Ram pulls out his revolver to kill Prem Kumar but Prem Kumar entreats Ram that if he spares his life he will help him to answer the thirteenth question. Ram is unable to kill him so he spare Prem's life with thirteenth question and wins the world's biggest jackpot of one billion rupees with the help of Prem Kumar.

After listening to the story, Smitha reveals that she is Gudiya, daughter of Shantaram who is a lawyer now. She has read about the arrest of a boy named Ram Mohammad Thomas in the newspaper. Smitha did not reveal her identity at the beginning because she wants to confirm whether he is her old brother Ram. In the end Smitha helps Ram to prove his innocence and she also says Ram that her father is not dead and he only broke Shantaram's leg. Ram gets the huge amount of money and he spends it to help the suffering people. Ram rescues the crippled children and gets

Maman's men arrested. He produces a movie for Salim in which he plays the role of a young hero. He marries his love Nita. In the end, Ram talked Smitha about his lucky coin. He shows that the coins has heads on both of its ends. According to Ram, luck has nothing to do with it. In the end Ram throws away his lucky coin because luck comes from within.

The themes in novel *Q & A* varies from abuse, corruption, poverty, differences in social classification, adventures and love. The differences between upper and lower classes is a foundational theme in the novel. Although the plot is centered on Thomas winning a billion rupees in the quiz show, the novel discusses the lives of poor while observing decadence of the wealthy. Thomas makes it clear that with money one can have power over the minds of others. This is most explicitly shown through the quiz show itself, with the program dictating the kinds and types of knowledge in order to advance to the next round, and thereby grow wealthier.

One of the main themes in the novel is physical and sexual abuse. In particular, children and women are subjected to the abuses. Both the boys and girls are sexually and mentally assaulted in the novel. For example, Father John molests young boys, and Ram's neighbor Shantaram molests his own daughter Gudiya. The abuses are occurring frequently but the society ignores everything around it. No policemen, politicians or authorities takes interest in helping the victims. What is shocking is not just that the society seems to have accepted the abuses, but the victims as well. Neelima accepts it by saying, "It is the destiny of women to suffer in silence. And what he has done to my face is nothing compared to what he has done to rest of my body."(265).

Corruption is also a prominent theme in the novel. People of all social classes seems to accept bribes. When Ram works for the Australian Colonel, the household is

disturbed by a man who comes to conduct a census. Eventually, he leaves them alone after receiving a bottle of whisky, which he specifically asked for. The Colonel's wife says: "These bloody Indians, give them a bottle of whisky and they will do anything" (125). When Ram wins the billion rupees he also bribes the people to get what he wants. He uses his power to rescue crippled children from Maman's men and he also releases Lajwanthi from jail.

The novel explores the lives of people living in slums and streets of big cities. When Ram was working as a tourist guide in Taj Mahal he was amazed by seeing rich boys spending money like paper. Ram also discovers that money and fame does not bring happiness from the life of tragedy queen Neelima Kumari. However, by winning the one billion rupees, he is finally able to cross the barriers and joins the rank of rich.

## Chapter Three

### Subalterns in Vikas Swarup's *Q & A*

In Postcolonial literature, Subaltern concepts have been well portrayed in some of the recent Indian fiction with reference to those groups that have been subordinated by gentlefolks in many ways. Vikas Swarup's *Q & A* highlights the fact that norms are established by those in power and imposed on 'other' who has had no voice because of race, class, economical or gender differences. The novel tells the lives of subaltern community living in the slums of big cities in the midst of murder, theft, communal riots, prostitution and beggary.

In describing the contemporary social history of India, Swarup artistically portrays its darker reality in the form of class struggle and clash, collective cynicism and snobbery of the emerging Indian bourgeois, deep rooted corruption in all spheres of the society and so on. This is a story of an underprivileged boy Ram Mohammed Thomas who wins the prize money of the biggest W3B on the basis of his ability and life experiences. It is chance factor that all the questions happen to correspond to vicissitudes of his life. But the cynical society would not believe it, terming it a trick and thus a fraudulent offence by someone who has hailed from slum.

There are instances of clash, struggle and protest on the part of the marginals in the social history, yet the whole system of Indian society still hinges upon the colonial and feudal patterns as hinted in the novel. Post-colonial or Post-independent social scenario in India is characterized by the continuing colonial mindset and the true kaleidoscope of such phenomenon. Unlike other contemporary post-colonial writers, Swarup's focus is not confined to continuing colonial forms of British influence only,

but his treatment of Indian social reality ranges to the age-old, hierarchical socio-cultural aspects which have been shedding colonial impact on people. On comparing the picture of Pre- and Post-independent India there is visually no change in the living standard of the subalterns. In *Q & A* the subalterns are identified by the poverty. Ram reveals the miserable condition of the downtrodden- they are completely ostracized from society. Poverty is a great stigma on the poor. They are not counted subaltern on the basis of caste, creed, color etc. as the designation given by the Hindu caste system. But here everyone is counted Subaltern who financially not very 'strong' and those women who suffers from the acts of vicious males. The prologue at the beginning of the novel describes the plight of the subalterns.

I have been arrested, for winning a quiz show. They came for me last night, when even the stray dogs had gone off to sleep. They broke open my door, handcuffed me and marched me off to the waiting jeep with a flashing red light. There was no hue and cry. Not one resident stirred from his hut. Only the old owl on the tamarind tree hooted at my arrest. (11)

It is a normal thing in India that the slum dwellers and the poor are arrested for false accuses. The organizer of the show W3B is scandalized and cannot digest the fact that Ram gave correct answers for every questions because, for him, Ram is an uneducated slum dweller who cannot achieve anything great in his life. Show organizer, to prove himself right, he seeks the favour of the police commissioner and remarks:

I want your help to prove that Thomas cheated on the show. That he could not have known the answer to all twelve questions without an

accomplice. Just think. He has never been to school. He has never even read a newspaper. There is no way he could have won the top prize. (18)

The show organizer is a 'colonizer' of sort and cannot digest the fact, how an uneducated, poor Indian boy can win in such an intellectual game and take off his money. Ram comes to the realization that the trap was laid by the organizers convincing with the police to continue the TV gimmick. Billy Nanda conducts one more quiz in the jail to test the level of intelligence But Ram fails to answer the questions. The organizers were not ready to pay the total amount to him. He was told to withdraw from the quiz after taking some money. The police use beastly methods to make him sign the confessional statement accepting that he cheated in the quiz show. At last Ram made his confessional statement:

I, Ram Mohammad Thomas, do hereby state that on 10 July I was participant in the quiz show Who Will Win a Billion? I confess that I cheated. I did not know the answers to all the questions. I hereby withdraw my claim to the top prize or any other prize. I beg forgiveness. I am making this statement in full control of my senses and without any undue pressure from anyone. Signed: Ram Mohammad Thomas. (24-25)

The colonizer succeeded in proving the innocent Ram was wrong with his money and power. He confesses to the crime which was not done by him. It is the fate of the subalterns. They are made to believe that they belonged to an inferior race and not fit for making any real contribution to the society. The colonial settler always becomes winners and the poor are forced to accept their fate. These types of comparisons subjugated the will and aspirations of the subalterns. Through his life

story from childhood to adulthood, he narrates and brings into prominence the lives of females, children and orphans including himself, and tells us how all these subalterns can carve their life from subjugation to liberation. Through the stories of the females, the children as well as his own, also exposes the dark and steamy side of Indian society. The novel reveals that social inequality and injustice keep widening the poor rich divide in society, leading to escalation of violence, crime and evils of all kinds. In a society like India where money gets all priority and plays a vital role, those who are affluent flourishes while the poor are deprived. The novel focuses on the deprived groups of India and becomes an in depth and riveting tale about the less fortunate people of India. When the narrator, Ram Mohammad Thomas is arrested he explains:

My departure from Asia's biggest slum would make no difference to their lives. There would be the same queue for water in the morning, the same daily struggle to make it to the seven-thirty local in time. They wouldn't even bother to find out the reason for my arrest. Come to think of it, when the two constables barged into my hut, even I didn't. When your whole existence is 'illegal', when you live on the brink of penury in an urban wasteland where you jostle for every inch of space and have a queue even for a shit, arrest has certain inevitability about it. You are conditioned to believe that one day there will be a warrant with your name on it, that eventually a jeep with a flashing red light will come for you.

(2)

A group of people whose lives are not a matter for the outside world are, living in the slums of Mumbai. Warrants and arrests are normal there. Swarup gives the reality of slums in India. The police and the wealthy groups, who are new age

colonizers makes false accuses and arrests against them. But nobody seems it as human right violation and they are always expecting it because they are the subalterns. Ram Mohammad Thomas recollects how he had fallen into a trap by overstepping his limits by taking part in a quiz program meant for the elite groups:

There are those who will say that I brought this upon myself. By dabbling in that quiz show, they will wag a finger at me and remind me of what the elders in Dharavi say about never crossing the dividing line that separates the rich from the poor. After all, what business did a penniless waiter have to be participating in a brain quiz? The brain is not an organ we are authorized to use. We are supposed to use only our hands and legs. (12)

The narrative in each chapter has been given in the form of fold structural realities. First, the real situation of the protagonist and Smitha at her home, telling and listening each story in accordance with question; second, the recorded footage reality of the game show involving the protagonist and third is the episode of each story of his life in flashbacks. In all three forms of life there run common features Indian society such as hierarchy strictly based on caste and religion, prevailing social discriminations, cynicism and skepticism against the poor class etc. The name of the main protagonist of the novel is Ram Mohammad Thomas. Such unique name of the protagonist is a literary tool in the hands of Swarup which he deploys to put the boy in comparison and contrast to others in different situations. The orphan boy is projected as the protesting figure in the stereotype-ridden ruthless society; yet the novelist does not mould the narrative in tragic shape unlike other contemporary writers.

However, Swarup does make it quite clear that the minority such as Salim, belonging to Muslim community has to be at back foot in such a dogmatic society. Religious minorities are most probably synonyms to the term subalterns in India. Though Neelima Kumari, the tragedy queen in chapter ten is a good natured human being with a modern outlook, yet she lives with her old mother who is a Hindu, representing the narrow minded generation. When Ram and Salim approaches her for a job, Ram is selected because he has a Hindu name and Salim is rejected because he belongs to other community. She asks the boys:

What is your name? she asks Salim.

Salim

Oh you are Muslim, aren't you?

Salim nods.

Look, I am sorry, but my aged mother who lives with me cannot eat anything touched by a Muslim. I personally don't believe in all this polluting- contact nonsense, but what am I to do? She shrugs her shoulders. Salim looks crestfallen. Then she turns to me. And what about you? What is your name?

Ram, I tell her. (245)

Minorities, dalits, poor people have to be a receiving end in all situations and have to suffer at the hands of the powerful those who have cultural, religious and social hegemony in this country. The disadvantages position of a Muslim is also depicted in the novel in some other instances; being minority, a Muslim has to be ready for devastations at any time at the hands of the dominant community. The protection of

police, legislature and even judicial authorities is not withstanding in the case of weaker sections. When Thomas sees Salim for the first time in Juvenile Home in Delhi narrates his pathetic past pertaining to communal disharmony, riots, insecurity of minority Muslims in rural India.

Swarup raises the issues like Hindu terrorism in a country which is supposed to be secular and thus protecting minorities. The minorities such as Muslims, Christians, Parsees, Buddhists, Dalits and others have lead the life of compromise, humiliation, terror etc. in a country which always burns in the fire of religion and caste hatredness. The reality which novelist endeavours to bring forward is that India is not free from the shackles of dogmas of caste, community and creed; even in the twenty first century. The ruffians leading the outraged mob here state their intention of revenge since their Hindu houses were torched by Muslim arsenals. This is a recurring act of instigation and revenge that is kept moving all the time; revenge may be of any nature: personal, communal, caste or gender based or in any form. Such emotions signify the colonial features of the society which blindly and slavishly follows the impulse calls.

The novel reveals the fact that how millions of economically and socially weaker people have to live in miserable conditions in the slums of Dharavi, the largest slum in Asia. In the slums such as Dharavi which represents various other slums, there seems hardly any possibility of regeneration since the poor slum dwellers have to remain unsupported, categorized as stray dogs to be included in the army of beggars, crippled beggars, slaves, prostitutes, criminals and so on. The writer gives brief description of such future professionals when he depicts the children of Dharavi. "From time to time, the train passes through slum colonies, living in the edge of the railway track like a ribbon of dirt. We see half-naked children with distended bellies waving at us, while their mothers wash utensils in sewer water. We wave back." (105)

Domestic violence, incest, child-abuse, human trafficking, prostitution, even gay-prostitution etc. are associated practices with poverty. Swarup is a visionary enough and ahead of the contemporary Indian writers with his concept of indigenous colonization, which creates more and more subalterns in the country. Since Smitha alias Gudiya once was the neighbour of Thomas in the chawl residency, as a child she had to undergo horrendous treatment at the hands of her own father. Her case, she is saved by Thomas, represents the shocking reality of many innocent girls who have to suffer this stigma called incestuous exploitation. This shocking example from the novel is the essence of all colonizing reality of Indian life, the evils so permeate the very culture that people stay colonized, slave to follow what happens around, though wrong and horrible it may be. Novel depicts how money play vital role in the lives of people and those who without it becomes the real subalterns in the society.

Lajwanti in the chapter 'A Love Story' has been a faithful, loyal housemaid to Rani Sahiba, the royal lady and the owner of the large property in Agra, yet she is discarded by the latter one stroke when the former has to resort the illegal ways of stealing. Both Shantaram and Lajwanti has been leading a peaceful life but the circumstances, social politics, fate, corruption etc. play crucial role in jeopardizing such cases. The politics in the space organization in the case of Shantaram and Swapna Devi alias Rani Sahiba in the case of loyal maid Lajwanti, represents a form of colonial feudalism in India which is always standing against the hopes of proletarians and have-nots. In the politics of this bourgeoisie power human values find no place, only the mottoes of utilitarianism and laissez-faire are valued. Lajwanti lived like a family member in Swapna Palace, cherishing the illusion of having right over the disdain queen for help but she is disillusioned when she asks for help in the marriage of her younger sister. Swarup does not hesitate to explore about how cultural codes and

social systems colonize people. The very cultural values and customs are keeping people colonized and captives; the people like Lajwanti needs money for spending in the proposed wedding of her sister to show off the lavish expenditure in her community and village. This is a very common stance in Indian social reality that the people sacrifice themselves for the sake of ostentation on such occasions.

Shankar is a best answer for the question, ‘Who is a subaltern?’ When Ram reaches Agra, he lives in the outhouse of Swapna Devi along with Shankar. The reality is that Shankar was Swapna Devi’s unrecognized son, who is the heir of all her wealth. But Swapna does not accept him as his son. When Shankar was bitten by a mad dog but Swapna refuses to save him, she was not ready to pay four lakh rupees for the treatment of Shankar which is not a huge amount for the rich Rani Sahiba. When Ram goes to get help from Swapna Devi for Shankar’s treatment and listens from her that “It is for the best that he dies” (324), he expresses his feelings in this way:

She wants Shankar to die like a rabid dog. At no other time has my poverty riled me as much as it does now... Watching Shankar’s slow death, I can only imagine how utterly heartless Swapna Devi must be, to allow her son to die in this horrible fashion while she was having party in her house. (324-325)

The lives of two orphan boys, the protagonist and Salim, are the stark illustration of the child abuse; how they have to serve like slaves; how they have to close shave from the clutches of child trafficking mafia and so on. Although the novel is rich with multi-faceted aspects and issues typical of Indian society, the big portion hovers over the dark reality of the society i.e. child abuse; every here and there are the instances of this evil practice in the novel. The very first chapter ‘Death of a Hero’

comprises this psychological mania called child abuse. The title of the chapter refers to Arman Ali, who is the iconic god of Salim. Children may experience a range of emotional, psychological and physical problems as a result of being harmed, including low self-esteem, increased fear, guilt, and self-blame. Mental health disorders such as anxiety, attachment, post-traumatic stress and depression disorders. According to *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, about 53% of Indian children are experiencing different kinds of abuse, which included being forced to nude photography, assault, inappropriate touching and sexual abuse. So being a kind of subalterns, destitute children in India are exposed to all kind of abuses which affects their physical and mental health resulting to be the destruction of valuable human resource of the country.

Vikas Swarup is a bureaucrat and he is not vehement with the gloomy and grim reality in the society and thus keeps his cool to describe the things in well-designed manner. The smooth and unchecked working of the human trafficking does indicate the big politics behind it. This so called Sethji is in strong alliance with the Juvenile Home authorities, but to Thomas he sounds a disguised man, “Sethji finally arrives, accompanied by two other men. He does not looks like a diamond merchant. He looks like a gangster” (102). The evils have been colonizing people since long when the western traders even did not step in this dark land. And out of many colonizing evils, child abuse is as old as the human history. Similarly the roots of child-trafficking mafia also seems to be very deep when Swarup depicts this bleak business in full swing in Mumbai after Thomas and Salim are trafficked there at the mercy of Babu Pillai alias Maman. The alarming truth is explored by the novelist when he describes the plight of helpless innocent children. The mafia not only exploits children sexually and in other

ways but also cripples them, making them fit for begging in local trains, traffic signals or elsewhere.

Such crippled, helpless and hopeless subalterns with no eyes, no arms, no legs present the country as helpless, crippled and hopeless; the country that cannot protect its children is, in fact, in the lurch of utter gloom. Swarup makes it clear that such mafias have firm grip on police and government authorities as the children in the Maman's captivity are very soon brought back to the hell. This fact indicates the involvement of police and other so-called prestigious citizens in the society. Thomas and Salim were able to escape from the hands of Maman and child mafia, but there were numbers of children who could not escape from the torture.

The term subaltern is closely related to the disempowered. Subaltern issues would prevail in the society as long as the categorization and marginalization exists in the society. An issue which cannot be excluded from the subaltern is the difficulties of women. Women in India are the victims of 'external colonialism' as well as 'internal colonialism'. The issue of 'internal colonialism' of women by the patriarchal society is well portrayed in the novel. Vikas Swarup's novel discusses the fact that norms and rules are set by those in power and imposed on those with no voice because of race, class, or gender. The issue of sexual abuse and violence against women and discrimination against them is brought forward in the novel.

Swarup's female protagonists are the victims of patriarchy that is rooted in the consciousness of Indian men. Swarup's women are passive sufferers whose destiny is designed by men. Women in his novels are subalterns who rarely speak. They are also practiced to accept their destiny rather than opposing against it. Swarup feels that a woman, whether she is rich or poor, high caste or lower caste, is a marginalized being.

Neelima Kumari, one of the female characters in the novel represents the upper layer of the society. She is rich and beautiful but her life is a real tragedy. While talking with Ram, who is her domestic servant, Neelima Kumari presents her subaltern concerns:

Huah! Have you forgotten what I told you once, that an actor is an actor for life? Do not forget that I will forever be known as the Tragedy Queen. And I didn't become a tragedy queen by reciting lines given to me by a scriptwriter. I lived the life of my characters. Ghalib did not become a great tragic poet just by writing some lines in the book. No you have to feel the pain, experience it, and live in your daily life before you can become a tragedy queen.

(260)

Neelima Kumari is a character who is afraid of her ageing. She becomes more introverted and withdrawn from the outside world. Her addiction to alcohol is the after effect of the violence of her lover towards her. The actress was under constant pressure of keeping her youthfulness in order to impress the audience as well as her lover. She could not accept the truth that she was moving towards old age. The increase in the frequency of torture makes her life more traumatized. She decided to end her relationship with her lover. She hoped that her relation with her lover would give her comfort, solace and love but it was her relationship that made her life a tragedy. She told Ram that it was the destiny of a woman to suffer in silence. Neelima Kumari's lover was a true representative of patriarchal society who finds pleasure in hurting the woman who loves him.

Nita is another character in the novel who is a representative of a group of subalterns, prostitutes. Nita's life in the novel reveals the pathetic picture of sex workers or prostitutes. They are brought to the sex trade due to poverty or some sociological system or tradition or custom, set by male dominating society. The novel projects how the society has exploited the prostitutes.

Nita was a Bedia tribal girl from the Bhand district of Madhya Pradesh. She is pushed into the world of professional prostitution primarily to fulfill the tradition in her tribal group and also for the livelihood of her family. She is beautiful, but her beauty was the only reason to select her for the sex work rather than her sister. "Now I am in this brothel. This is the price I have to pay for beauty. So don't call me beautiful." (305)

Prostitutes are the subalterns who do not have a surname. Nita's brother was a pimp and he made money of his sister and lived in luxury. When Ram meets Nita for the first time, he asks her surname. She tells him that prostitutes do not have a surname.

What is your name?

Nita

Nita What?

Meaning?

I meant what is your full name? Don't you have a surname?

You came to brothel, Sahib, not a marriage bureau. Prostitutes don't have surnames. Like pet cats and dogs, we are called by our first names.

Nita, Rita, Asha, Champa, Meena, Leena, take your pick. (299)

Ram fell in with Nita and he wanted to marry her. During his second visit to the brothel, he proposes Nita. But Nita rejects his proposal and says “who will marry a prostitute? We are supposed to work till our bodies start to sag or till we die of disease, whichever is sooner” (306). Nita’s conversation reveals her helplessness, agonies and the exploitations she faces.

The narrator also reveals the reality of cruelty and brutality she has to endure in the life of a professional sex worker. She is considered as an object in the sex trade market. Nita has to suffer violent physical assault. Ram saw Nita, abused by customer and admitted in hospital. She was in such a wretched condition: “...she has livid bruises all over her face and lips are peculiarly twisted, as if her jaws has been dislocated. There is blood on two of her teeth, and her left eye is blackened” (328). In addition to this, “There are cigarette burn marks all over her chest, looking like ugly pockmarks on the smooth brown flesh of her breast” (329).

Ram wants to save Nita from brothel and marry her. But her pimp cum brother Shyam asks a huge amount of ransom money in lieu of a golden goose like her. Nita is not even considered as a human being, but an object designed for running flesh business flourishingly. Prem Kumar has paid Shyam a huge amount of money to freely torture the girl, to abuse commodity called Nita, “Do you know how much this party from Mumbai paid for her? Five thousand rupees” (329).

Meenakshi and Gudiya are also subalterns in the novel. Their only fault was that they were born as girls. Ram has taken the role of a super human who takes revenge on different people who tortures various subalterns in the novel. Because of the exploitation of the subaltern a kind of revolt and silent anger bought him to the level of revenge.

The novel also attempts to find out how the people in India itself colonializes the thus creating subalterns. Common Indians has a servitude attitude to any white skinned foreigner. Novelist criticizes the people who are responsible for ensuring justice for the subalterns. Godbole has the responsibility to listen to the part of the accused. But instead he works in favour for the rich corporate. Ram remarks: “Godbole presents me to the white man like a ring master introducing his pet lion. ‘This is Ram Mohammad Thomas, Sir.’” (15)

According to Subaltern theory, norms are established by those in power and imposed on the other who has no voice because of race, class, or gender. The novel *Q & A* shows many subaltern characters who has no voice. They can only act like puppets according to the rules set by those in power.

*Q & A* expresses the dark realities of Indian society. Society is reluctant to believe that Ram won the billion prize money on the basis of experience-based knowledge in the school of life. Corruption is highly prevailing in society and the officials act in the favor of those with money and power. Women in India faces exploitations from not only the society but also from their relatives and loved ones. The old age customs practiced even nowadays make people follow them at the cost of their happiness and life. Child abuses, prostitution, class and religious differences, gay mania, different forms of corruption forms the subaltern groups in the novel.

## Conclusion

The subaltern is a technical term for a certain kind of dispossessed person. This project is aimed at understanding Subalterns in the present social systems of India by analyzing the novel *Q & A* written by Vikas Swarup. Through this project I understood that the social walls are increasing between rich and poor at the present era of globalization. The project portrays how subalterns are struggling in the midst of caste, religion and traditional clashes. The darker reality of Indian society is clearly described in this project.

The project tries to prove Swarup's *Q & A* as a picturesque through the underbelly of urban India where evil has its footings. The characters in the novel range from the prostitutes to film stars, slum-dwellers and people living in mansions. The project studies the struggles of underprivileged people in India. It is understood from the project that subalterns are not only the economically weaker sections of the country but it also includes the communities belonging to lower castes, women, orphans and the religious minorities. There are women characters in the novel who are abused by their own relatives and family members. So it is clear that the number of subalterns in the country are increasing day by day.

Through the analysis of project on the basis of novel, it is clear that subaltern groups are taught eventually to succumb to the dominant power without being able to resist, having no voice of their own. Or, they are too scattered and passive to play any role in the subordinate- dominant powers. Whenever the subaltern characters in the novel try to overcome their struggles, the so called elite classes subjugate their efforts and not letting them to upgrade their way of living. The main protagonist of the

novel, Ram got Smitha Shah to help him but the real life subalterns are most often exploited by the elite groups of the society.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**GENDERED SUBALTERNITY IN THE SELECT WORKS  
OF MAHASWETA DEVI: A CRITIQUE**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ANGEL JOY**

**Register No: DB18AEGR019**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Twinkle Thomas

February 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Gendered Subalternity in the Select Works of Mahasweta Devi: A Critique” is a bonafide work of Angel Joy, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Twinkle Thomas

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Angel Joy, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Gendered Subalternity in the Select Works of Mahasweta Devi: A Critique” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Twinkle Thomas of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

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Angel Joy

DB18AEGR019

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Angel Joy

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Chapter One Gendered Subaltern	3
3. Chapter Two A Review on Mahasweta Devi's Select Short Stories	10
4. Chapter Three Gendered Subalterns in Mahasweta Devi's Short Stories	17
5. Conclusion	24
6. Works Consulted	27

## INTRODUCTION

In postcolonial era, the field of gender has been of much debate and many seminal works have been based upon it. Different societies have treated women as the 'other', 'colonialized', 'deprived' and 'the fair sex' has time and again suffered the politics of oppression and repression. Of late the concept of gendered subaltern has been of much consequence which implies that women have been doubly subalternized first on the basis of nationality; the other, on the basis of gender. In this recent time 'double colonization' and or the gendered subaltern has begun to be theorized and found voice. The question of position of gendered subaltern and their representation and participation in speech and resistance has secured a central space in this project. The positioning and defining of subalterns are done with the help of Mahasweta Devi's short stories included in the collection titled *Imaginary Maps* and *Breast Stories*. The term 'subaltern' is a technical term in post-colonial theory for certain kind of marginalized people. Gayatri Spivak has most theoretical look at the subaltern and her work is still the starting text for discussion of the subaltern based on her article "Can Subaltern Speak?" The study mainly aims on the short stories like "Draupadi", "The Hunt", "Douloti the Bountiful" and "Petrodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirtha". The characters in Devi's works were women, who seek to participate in resistance and display strength.

This project is divided into three chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction to gendered subalterns. The second chapter is a review on Mahasweta Devi's select short stories from the books titled *Imaginary Maps* and *Breast Stories*. It

deals with the short stories mentioned above and focuses on introducing the characters named as Draupadi, Mary Oran, Douloti and Puran Sahay. This chapter also discusses the other works of Mahasweta Devi. Also, focus on the major themes that Devi uses in her works. The main theme is the gendered subaltern's presence and their resistance to oppression. The final chapter is the core of my study, titled as, Gendered Subaltern in Mahasweta Devi's Stories. This chapter discusses the way to find gendered subalterns in short stories of Mahasweta Devi. Through her works, Devi focuses to bring the reader's attention to the indigenous people. Also, with the concept of Spivak's gendered subaltern and other information, this chapter finds the presence of gendered subalterns, along with their resistance to the patriarchal society.

## CHAPTER ONE

### GENDERED SUBALTERN

Originally the word 'subaltern' was a military term denoting the soldiers who were inferior or subordinate in their ranks. In the other sense, the term stands for those groups in society who were lacking autonomous political power. It also refers to the subordination of class, caste, gender, race, language and culture. These days the term also refers to those groups in society, a subject to the domination of the ruling classes and is at the margins, not getting the reward due to them. This class can include peasants, women, workers and other groups who have been denied access to 'hegemonic' power. The term 'subaltern' also denotes to the individuals who have been marginalized or oppressed. Italian Marxist political protester Antonio Gramsci in his book *Prison Notebooks: on Italian History* discusses the idea of subaltern as:

The subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a "State": their history, therefore, is intertwined with that of civil society and thereby with the history of States and groups of States. (202)

He states that the subaltern was the term subjected to the people of underclass in a society on whom the dominant power puts forth its hegemonic power and impact. The term 'subaltern' also denotes to the individuals who have been marginalized or oppressed.

An outstanding article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) written by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak scrutinizes the subaltern concept from the most theoretical perspective. According to Spivak, the subaltern cannot speak; they do not have a voice. In her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak", Spivak states that:

The Subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with woman a pious. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual has a circumscribe task which she must not disown with a flourish. (104)

Post-Colonial Theory as a new field of study has become the most prominent academic disciplines in the global wide literatures and subaltern studies has become the subdivision of the post-colonial theory. Readings on Subaltern Studies began in Indian when writings initiated about Subaltern Studies began in book reviews. By 1986 launched a unique school of research whose supporters came to be called 'subalternists' or 'subalterns'. During 1990s, Subaltern Studies turned as a hot topic in academic circles ranging from History to Political Science, Anthropology, Sociology, Literary Criticism, and Cultural Studies across the globe. Subaltern Studies extended in the literary arena as Subaltern Studies Group or the Subaltern Studies Collective which was launched in the 1980s by a group of eminent Indian scholars. From the end of 1970s Subaltern Studies initiated its remarkable work in England, led to the launch of a new journal in India. Oxford University Press in New Delhi agreed to publish three volumes of essays titled "Subaltern Studies: Writings on South Asian History and Society."

These essays are edited by Ranajith Guha and main concern was to retake history for the under classes, whose voices had not been heard earlier. The scholars from the subaltern group anticipated to get rid of the histories of elites and the Eurocentric bias of remaining imperial history, protested against the colonial legacy of elitism. They were highlighting on subaltern in terms of class, gender, race, language and culture. The first and foremost leader of the subaltern literary movement was Ranajith Guha who had written on peasant uprisings in India. Guha attempts to reveal the factual conditions of peasant's survival in colonial India. Guha mainly focus to

provide justice to Indian peasants by investigating the relationship between domination and subjugation in Indian context from 1783 to 1900.

The three essays in *Subaltern Studies* summarize the essential elements of the Subaltern Studies Group. “Colonialism in South Asia: A Dominance without Hegemony” (1989) the first essay states the ongoing authority and impact of British colonial historiography in the work of Indian scholars and the need for self-criticism. The second essay, “Discipline and Mobilize: Hegemony and Elite Control in Nationalist Campaigns” (1992), Guha depicts M. K. Gandhi's use of an idiosyncratic range of secular and spiritual powers which move caste sanctions that controlled the former Swadeshi Movement. Guha observed it as a reflection of the expanding disagreement between the elite and subaltern domains of politics. Guha’s third essay, “An Indian Historiography of India: Hegemonic Implications of a Nineteenth-Century Agenda” (1988), concerns elite uses of the past.

According to Guha in “Preface”, the subaltern stands as, “a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way”. (35). The subaltern represents the demographic difference between the total population and all those whom titled as the elite.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is an Indian scholar, literary theorist and feminist critic. She is considered as the most influential postcolonial intellectuals. Also, she is regarded as the spokesperson for the underprivileged and for the women globally. According to Spivak, subaltern means:

It refers to those who don’t give orders; they only receive orders. That comes from Antonio Gramsci, who made the word current. He was looking at people who were not

in fact working-class folks or victims of capitalism. He was looking at people who were outside of that logic because he was himself from Sardinia, which was outside of the High Italy of the north. But “subaltern” also means those who do not have access to the structures of citizenship. I’m now talking about India today, where the largest sector of the electorate is the rural landless illiterate. They may vote but they have no access to the structures of citizenship. So that’s a subaltern. (Spivak’s explanation in an interview with Steve Paulson of Los Angeles Review of Books on 29 July, 2016 under the title *‘Critical Intimacy: An Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’*.)

Spivak examined the term ‘Subaltern’ in her famous essay “Can Subaltern Speak?” It mainly challenges the idea of colonial “subject” and offers an example of the boundaries of the capability of Western discourse, even postcolonial discourse, to interrelate with incongruent cultures.

Spivak in her essay argues that it is not an easy task to make subalterns visible. She also says that there's no quick fix for inequality. Many of European theorists such as Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze thought that they could access the subaltern's voice directly. Spivak’s essay tries to explain why this project is doomed to fail. It may not be for the reason that the subaltern cannot speak words or produce sentences. The subaltern "cannot speak," instead, because her speech falls short of fully authorized political speech and her message is being heard, socially and politically.

Spivak also argues that:

Subaltern is not just a classy word for "oppressed", for [the] “other”, for somebody who's not getting a piece of the pie.... In post-colonial terms, everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern—a space of difference. Now, who would say that's just the oppressed? The working class is oppressed. It's not subalterns.... Many people want to claim subalternity. They are the least interesting and

the most dangerous. I mean, just by being a discriminated-against minority on the university campus; they don't need the word 'subaltern'... They should see what the mechanics of the discrimination are. They're within the hegemonic discourse, wanting a piece of the pie, and not being allowed, so let them speak, use the hegemonic discourse. They should not call themselves subaltern. (Leon De Kock interview with Gayatri Spivak, 1992)

Spivak's other focus was on women, explores the conditions of oppressed women, particularly in India. She also stands for women as a distinguished gender because of the disgraceful exclusion of their contribution in anti-colonial history. The representations of subaltern insurgency tend to prioritize men. In the context of colonial era, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. Spivak gives examples of these silenced subaltern women by looking at the documentation of *sati* or widow sacrifice in colonial India. Spivak suggests that, it is better to acknowledge that the subaltern as female exists as the unrepresentable in discourse, a shadowy figure on its margins. Any attempts to retrieve her voice will disfigure her speech. So, Spivak concludes, intellectuals must instead critique those discourses which claim to rescue the 'authentic' voices of the subaltern as female from their mute condition, and address their complicity in the production of subalternity. Simply inserting subaltern women into representation is a cosmetic exercise as long as the system of representation endorses discredited models of essential, centered subjectivity. In discussing the term 'speak' in the title of the essay, Spivak explains that she was not using the term literally to suggest that such women never actually talked. Rather, she wanted to consider the inability for their words to enable transactions between speakers and listeners. Their muteness is created by the fact that even when women uttered words, they were still

interpreted through conceptual and methodological procedures which were unable to understand their interventions with accuracy. It is not so much that subaltern women did not speak, but rather that others did not know how to listen, how to enter into transaction between speaker and listener. The subaltern cannot speak because their words cannot be properly interpreted. Hence, the silence of the female as subaltern is the result of a failure of interpretation and not a failure of articulation.

Dipesh Chakrabarty, a historian and subaltern studies critic who also made contributions to postcolonial theory and subaltern studies. His contribution to subaltern studies is through *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (2000) defines the connection between history and post-colonial theory. Chakrabarty's "Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial Historiography" reveals the historiography of the Subaltern Studies starting from the initiative of Ranajit Guha.

Chakrabarty's essay in Subaltern Studies brings out the nature of subalternity as the "composite culture of resistance to and acceptance of domination and hierarchy."

So, one can conclude as, in the post-colonial era, the field of gender has been of much debate and many works have been based upon it. The term "subaltern" designates and identifies the colonial populations who are socially, politically and geographically excluded from the hierarchy of power of an imperial colony and from the metropolitan homeland of an empire. Antonio Gramsci proposed the term "subaltern" to identify the cultural hegemony that displaces specific people from certain levels of social status and to explain the socio-economic status of "the native" in an imperial colony. Both the terms "subaltern" and "subaltern studies" has been included in the vocabulary of post-colonial studies through the studies of Subaltern

Studies Group of historians who explored the act of women and men who constitute the mass population.

Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers, women and other groups denied access to hegemonic power. In postcolonial theory, the term subaltern describes the lower social classes and the other social groups displaced to the margins of a society and they are the native man or women without human agency, as defined by his and her social status.

Since 1970s, in India, the term subaltern denoted the colonized people and Ranajith Guha, is considered as the father of subaltern studies in the Indian history. In India the literal meaning of subaltern can be defined on the basis of various perspectives and can only be depicted through the caste, age, color and many factors. Spivak argues that subaltern is a subject surviving at the threshold of mainstream society, alienated and marginalized. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in her essay 'Can Subaltern Speak' concludes that the subalterns do not have voice of their own and so that they cannot speak. So subalternity is an umbrella concept which increases the scope of research from various subaltern perspectives.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A REVIEW ON MAHASWETA DEVI'S SELECT SHORT STORIES

One fails to evaluate a writer if the writer's setting in time and history is not taken into account”

- “Mahasweta Devi

Mahasweta Devi, an eminent personality in Bengali literature, born on January 14, 1926, is one of India's prominent literary figures from the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Also known as Mother of the Sabars because, she had worked for the rights of Sabars tribe in West Bengal. She is a witness to drastic political fluctuations and changes that transformed the face of India. Being born the daughter of a renowned poet and novelist Manish Ghatak, who was also a writer and Dharitri Devi, Mahasweta had an enough space to open up her mind and to develop herself with finer sensibilities. Mahasweta Devi has published more than ninety-four works of fiction which includes novels, short stories and even plays.

The Hindu Newspaper commented on Mahasweta Devi's works as: “Her stories of subaltern will live forever as long as there's oppression in the world and the poorest of the poor need a voice”.

Her personal struggle itself got reflected in the works, introduced her own unique style in exploring subalternity. The themes that she included was social

realism, caste and most important was about the indigenous people that allows the reader to mingle through the complex, struggles faced by the most defenseless people on the map of nation. The female characters in her works have a notion of defiance for the patriarchal society. Another key theme in the stories of Mahasweta Devi is subaltern feminism, focuses on the problems and challenges of subaltern women. Her major concern was on tribal areas and tribal women. In Devi's fictions, she combines different registers of language including chaste, Sankritized Bengali, the colloquial idiom with localized flavors, tribal dialect as well as snatches of Hindi and English. She elevated the stories with her imagination, using various genres and styles. Mahasweta Devi's words never fail to construct her character as docile. Her subject matters are written with clarity and powerful metaphors that push the frontiers of the reader's imagination and then will create a visual treat. She had left behind a collection of more than hundreds of novels and short stories reflecting the themes of dispossession, rebellion and insurgencies. Her writings were mainly in Bengali, but incorporating 'tribal' dialects, those works were translated to English, Japanese, French, and Italian and even to several other Indian languages. A global acceptance or a major breakthrough for her work came with the translation of *Imaginary Maps* by Gayatri Spivak Chakravorty to English. Thus, the translation of *Imaginary Maps* brought the global attention to the struggles faced by those subalterns.

Mahasweta Devi's "Draupadi", included in the collection of stories known as *Breast Stories*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, is a symbol of subaltern defiance. This story is against the Naxalite movement, the Bangladesh Liberation War of West Bengal. It is a story about Dopdi Mehjen, a tribal woman who belongs to the Santhal tribe of the West Bengal. Along with her husband she murders wealthy landlords and usurp their wells, which is the primary source of water for the

village. The government then turns to be more subjugating those tribes through many means: kidnapping, murder, rape, etc. Dopdi was then captured by the Officer who instructs the army officers to rape her to extract information about the rebel uprising and later Dopdi realizes that there's no help from Lord Krishna for Kalyug's Draupadi. It then discusses the powerful way of resistance by Dopdi against officers, who indicates the government.

“The Hunt” is from a part of collection published as *Imaginary Maps* by Mahasweta Devi in 1995, picturizes how the tribal people are closely associated with nature, and it was their world. The tribal people got disturbed by the modernization, urbanization and natural disasters. The Hunt is about a half tribal girl's bold attempt to put a violent end to her personal exploitation. The story revolves around Mary Oraon, has the courage and determination to take matters in her own hands and had the fearless attitude to fight against the oppression.

“Douloti the Bountiful” included in the *Imaginary Maps* deals with the problem of bonded labor, specifically women who are exploited endlessly and mercilessly through the system. It is a women-centric work and one of Mahasweta Devi's most probing exposures of bond slavery in India. Douloti has to pay through the life for a loan of three hundred rupees taken by her father, raising over forty thousand rupees for her masters by time. She dies at the age of twenty-seven and the ending image of Douloti raises many disturbing questions.

The story, “Petrodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirtha”, in the collection, *Imaginary Maps* deals with the tribal world of India. It communicates the agony of the tribals, of marginalized people all over the world. Pirtha is a tribal region having a unique history of its own. They always had a traumatic experience with the outsiders

and the government was unable to resolve the problems regarding the drought and famine of the tribal areas but they are insistent on watching the tribal dancing and singers during the Independence Day

In the article, named “Defiance and the speakability of rape: Decolonizing trauma studies in Mahasweta Devi’s short fiction” by Bidisha Banerjee focus mainly on the traumatic representations of violence in the stories, that not readily fix into trauma studies discourses which emphasize the aporia and unspeakability of trauma. The portrayals of the character like Dopdi in “Draupadi” provide opportunities to decolonize cultural trauma theory by focusing on the unexpected arising of agency and empowerment from victims of gendered violence. Also states that Devi had adopted several complex ways to empower her female protagonists and make them powerful critiques of patriarchal systems of exploitation. In doing so, these stories also decolonize established discourses of trauma.

Another article named, “The Nation and Its Outcastes: A Reading of Mahasweta Devi’s ‘Douloti the Bountiful’” by Nivedita Majumdar states that the character Ganori refers to India’s independence from the colonial rule, a complete alienation from the central event of nation’s history, and thus from the nation itself, is of his caste and class. This article then highlights how everyday experiences of oppression are interconnected with larger structural forces and Devi avows both class and nation as necessary categories in the resistance against such oppression.

“The case of identity as a reversal of gender roles in Devi Mahasweta’s ‘The Hunt’”, develops a literary analysis of Mahasweta Devi’s “The Hunt” from the book *Imaginary Maps* in terms of the construction of female identity. An analysis of the character Mary is carried out by taking into consideration the roles she performs in

the story as well as the way she perceived in the social sphere of the Kuruban society. The article concludes that Mary transgresses the stereotypical images about women deconstructing the traditional patriarchal gender identities-associations.

“Reading ‘Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha’ amongst the Barabaig Tribe of Eastern Tanzania” by Mary Louisa Cappelli, demonstrates how the construction of tribal songs and myth histories challenge global dynamics and renegotiate gendered positions within dominantly indigenous patriarchal contested spaces. These powerful stories and songs reflect how indigenous mothers imagine and control their own gendered history and preserve their cultural identity and traditional livelihood.

So, while considering Devi’s works, one can conclude that, her writings raised the voice against the exploitative social and political mechanisms. Her strong voice of protest and anger makes fear in political circles and administration as she is the upholder of the rights of the masses and a representative voice. Mahasweta Devi thinks that a work should belong to the people, not to the elite and that a creative writer should have a social conscience. The conviction is stated in the author’s note Introduction to a 1978 collection of stories, *Agnigarbha*,

A responsible writer standing at a turning point of history has to take a stand in defense of the exploited. Otherwise, history would never forgive him. Anger-luminous, burning and passionate-directed against a system that has failed to liberate my people from these horrible constraints, is the only source of inspiration for all my writing. (10)

Mahasweta does not see herself as speaking on behalf of the marginalized. To her, the poor, the downtrodden and the subaltern have always been speaking, but was forcefully muted by the mainstream discourses and what Mahasweta

does was, decodes and brings these voices to the force. She studied the history of the people and wrote about them by examining documents, collecting myths, legends and ballads and by direct observation. Her fiction is not a fantasy nor is it a pastoral romance. It is firmly rooted in ground reality and solidity of facts. She rejected the stereotyped symbols, myths and imagery and symbolized the images of reality behind the social class.

From early period of colonial India itself, Devi has traced the erased, hidden and recorded history of the aboriginals. Devi herself stated about the tribals in India as:

Tribals ...I have sought to bring the harsh reality of this ignored segment of India's population to the notice of the nation. I have sought to include their forgotten and invisible history in the official history of the nation. I have said over and over, our Independence was false; there has been no Independence for these dispossessed people, still deprived of their most basic rights. ("A Writer's Testament of Faith" April 9, 2010)

Mostly her characters are drawn from poor, oppressed classes, although she has also written about the middle-class and historical figures. History, myth, folklore and contemporary reality combine the moral nature of Mahasweta Devi's novel, plays and short stories. The main location for her stories includes the tribal regions of Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Her fiction and plays are distinguished by the characteristics like powerful, direct, unsentimental style and by the subtlety and sensitivity with which she approaches the themes of struggle, resistance and empowerment. She travels to the remote areas of India, gets the harsh living realities of the tribal people, which are then reflected through her works.

The book *Breast Stories* portrays the breast as the source of food and livelihood. Through such an image, Devi, pictures a native woman's defiance against the patriarchal system. Devi's stories are remarkable for their complete lack of sentimentality. The pathetic nature of the tribes who are oppressed by the landlords and moneylenders are well described in her distinctively matter of fact style. Her works are rooted in reality and thus have its own path. Always her writings addressed a single word: "injustice."

G. N. Devy, a writer and an activist remark about Devi as: "Wherever she saw what she thought was injustice, she plunged into the struggle and never looked back". Through this statement itself one can identify the depth of her works. The books named *Imaginary Maps* and *Breast Stories* deals with the same theme and bothers about the tribal people. She always believed that the real history is created by ordinary people. The injustice, struggles, discrimination, and their findings for survival are well portrayed. Those books then turn out to be the reference point towards the history of tribal oppression.

In today's atmosphere of growing intolerance, it's imperative to read Mahasweta Devi's works and remind ourselves of her lifelong fight for those who are sought to be silenced.

## CHAPTER THREE

### GENDERED SUBALTERNNS IN MAHASWETA DEVI'S STORIES

“If the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow and cannot speak at all”

-Gayatri Spivak (Can Subaltern Speak, 1983)

According to Spivak, subaltern is the one who survives at the threshold of the mainstream society, alienated and marginalized. The main argument made was that the subaltern cannot make its voice heard without participating in the mainstream discourse.

“Draupadi” was published in Mahasweta Devi’s collection of short stories, titled *Agnigarbha*, 1978. It was later translated by Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak and included in her collection of stories, titled *Breast Stories*, 2010.

Mahasweta Devi wrote “Draupadi” for representing the subaltern Indian Society. It depicts the economic, political, social and sexual oppression of the Dalit women in tribal areas. They suffer from triple marginalization in terms of caste, class and gender. Dopdi and her husband Dulna join the Naxalite movement, representing the anguished tribals, who are under frustrated and fake independence. Here, Mahasweta Devi portrayed Dopdi as an illiterate, uneducated tribal woman, who is not considered as a part of mainstream Indian society. Also, she has a story of brutal rape and

excruciating torture from the society officials. But later we can identify Dopdi is no more a victim and she became a fighter as same as men.

The story very successfully portrays what actually happens to women when they are seen as the objects. Draupadi's worst experience in the shelter of Senanayak denotes the objectification of women. No matter what the circumstances are, she is always seen as an object of desire, a thing to win over. Draupadi was raped by an army of men, the next day they try to cover up their own deeds by clothing Dopdi. This act by man shows the hypocritical nature of society in large. They fantasize women, materialized her, objectify her but are hypocritical in society. By the end Draupadi acquires a new self-definition and becomes the active maker of her own meaning.

Devi's representation of Dopdi encapsulates what Spivak meant by a gendered subaltern. Spivak argues that "She is a heroic as Draupadi. She is also what Draupadi- written into the patriarchal and authoritative sacred text as proof of male power- could not be." (10)

The Sankritized name "Draupadi" given at her birth is also refused and a name 'Dopdi' closer to her tribal identity is adopted. Thus, Devi dislocates the epic princess Draupadi with Dopdi the tribal rebel, Devi is able to present voices and perspectives otherwise unspoken and unheard of. Through this work Devi rejects the mythologies about the subaltern female body, which is never questioned and only ever exploited. The character Dopdi gives the subaltern's identity whereas the hegemonic structures are represented through the policeman and officer Senanayak. Dopdi's body becomes the site for gendered resistance and she bears the torture when she is raped.

“Senanayak walks out surprised and sees Draupadi, naked, walking towards him in the bright sunlight with her head high. The nervous guards trail behind” (33). This line shows Draupadi’s refusal to be clothed goes against the phallogocentric power and the exploitation of the body gives her the agency to step away from the hegemonic patriarchy of the policeman.

What’s the use of clothes? You can strip me, but how can you clothe me again? Are you a man? She looks around and chooses the front of Senanayak’s white bush shirt to spit a bloody gob at and says, there isn’t a man here that I should be ashamed. Draupadi pushes Senanayak with her two mangled breasts, and for time Senanayak is afraid to stand before an unarmed target, terribly afraid.” (34).

Here her naked body symbolizes the power of marginalized that stops Senanayak to move ahead. Here she becomes an alternative voice to stand out. So here Draupadi subverts the physicality of her body from powerlessness to powerful resistance. “Draupadi” recognizes a women’s body as an asset through which they can resist the socio-political objectification of their bodies and can overcome the oppression. So, the story, in total, can be defined as a symbol of subaltern defiance.

The short story “The Hunt” is included in the collection of stories titled as *Imaginary Maps*, points out the experiences of the Oraon tribals and tribal life in post independent times. The story marks the victory of subaltern woman in the form of Mary Oraon speaking against the victimization and oppression on the basis of sex. She was categorized under the title untouchables and victims of caste, class and gender. She imparts voice to the people who have faced centuries of subjugation from external as well as internal colonizers and then recapture their entire lives as marginalized women. She is the subaltern speaking and hers is the voice of resistance saying no to the oppressors. Mary’s rebellion is a potent assertion of resistance against gender politics

and an attack on the incursion upon the tribal land and forests by feudalism, colonialism and global capitalism. She struggled for the economic freedom. Mary Oraon, an illiterate tribal girl protests the patriarchal standards and cultural codes of the upper caste Brahmins. As a result, the subaltern figure of Mary Oraon becomes a metaphor for tribals and marginalized people all over the globe. According to Spivak, in *Imaginary Maps* “the voice of resistance makes Mary an intellectual”. Mary, as a cultural agent, evidences how hard it is to support gender differences based on the superior and inferior categorization. She demonstrates the inconsistencies of patriarchal societies where gender stereotypes and limitations are mostly a socio-cultural and economic state rather than a divine or biological condition.

Mahasweta Devi examines the deep- rooted prejudices of race, class, and gender to achieve a holistic development of the tribals. Devi strongly believes that resistance to exploitation is essential and her need was to empower and promote the socio-economic development of tribal women through awareness and education. Thus, “The Hunt” underlines the significance of the act of violent protest as opposed to silent submission and it is the representation of the subaltern identity which consists of a female- consciousness and their struggle to redefine their identity. Also, it speaks about the position of woman in down trodden and gender discriminatory society.

“Petrodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirtha” is the story found in the collection of stories entitled as *Imaginary Maps*, express her serious concern for the mountain dwelling tribes of Madhya Pradesh who are being gradually erased from the map of the world. This story, in modern India, analysis the cultural and environmental issues of the tribal people. In order to present the situation from multiple points of view, Puran Sahay comes. Through him it is able to mark the mysteries and agonies of

tribals along with the greed and atrocities committed against the tribals by the mainstream.

Pirtha is a tribal region having a unique history of its own. They always had a traumatic experience with the outsiders and the government was unable to resolve the problems regarding the drought and famine of the tribal areas but they are insistent on watching the tribal dancing and singers during the Independence Day. Here it is evident that the poor people are objectified. They are portrayed as mere puppets dancing to the tunes of the powerful classes. The policies implemented by the government were not transparent and honest. Those policies are utilized by mainstream society by posing as fake tribals. Natives found that the arrival of the outsiders has caused the problems in their habitat. Before the invasion they reigned as kings. It thus resulted into the marginalization and they feel themselves as enslaves. Those cave paintings found at Pirtha reflect the devastation of their land. They explore how the intrusion of outsiders has brought of their culture.

The Pterodactyl therefore is not only the cultural symbol of the poor tribal world but it also represents the values of responsibility and commitment towards the tribals by the mainstream. Using the subaltern theory, it is easy to say that the tribal people also have a valuable and enriching history of their own. The writer highlights the idea of 'learning from below' which suggests that one has to approach the indigenous tribes in order to learn about the nature. The character in the story Puran later becomes as a subaltern and shares the experience. Puran makes the reader aware of the condition of the tribals as the subalterns who are ignored, exploited and enslaved by the main stream in the society. Those tribals are considered as "jungle", "brute" and "ignorant" due to their association with the nature. They are always exploited ignored

and enslaved by the mainstream. One from the outside can't understand the real nature of discriminated people until they are part of it.

The state that is centralized power is always patriarchal in nature, so weaker, marginal, down trodden people are always as a rule kept weaker, marginalized and down trodden. In this system the tribal, lower castes, the women are kept to the outside boundaries of power. The system won't allow those subalterns to speak out and to have a space inside the society.

The short story "Douloti the Bountiful" included in the collection entitled as *Imaginary Maps* deals with the ways tribals are entrapped in and exploited as bonded laborers and prostitutes. The story of Douloti proves Mahasweta Devi as a pure subaltern writer, because it shows the subalterns at different angles, roles and forms. Tribals once lived in the forest and mountain areas with distinctive cultures and self-sufficient economic systems, which were displaced and dispossessed from their forest lands.

The story revolves around Ganori Nagesia and his daughter Douloti. The loan for 300 rupees Ganori borrows from the moneylender and traps him as a bonded labor. His value was comparable to animals and his labor is all purpose. At certain stage Ganori became useless and he is no more a profit to the moneylender. Thus, one can say that tribals value is stripped from their human dignity; they are measured and treated only according to their use value and marketability. The inhuman and mechanical treatment of tribes is also revealed when Ganori takes away the little girl – Douloti and makes her engaged in prostitution. When goes in detail with the female tribes, can find the double exploitation. Here, not only those moneylenders who determine her fate as bond-prostitute, but also the father who lets his daughter takes on

his unpayable debt. Thus, tribal women are doubly exploited not only in the terms of caste and gender but also by capitalist and patriarchal Indian society. Women existence is reduced to gender roles and duties in their patriarchal households.

Substituting her sexualized female body for her insolvent father's laboring body; Douloti is further degraded as a sexual object to be traded in market. Once sold in the brothel, tribal women are exploited by and for the newly emerging capitalists in the business of commercial sex trade. They are unable to seek protection and security whether from their households in the tribal community or the changing socio-economic relations of the postcolonial society. Thus, they exist as victims of double exploitation by the patriarchal system.

So here, the subalternity is portrayed by Mahasweta Devi in her short stories namely, "Draupadi", "Douloti the Bountiful", "The Hunt" and "Petrodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirtha". After going through the works, it can be safely argued that Devi has raised the issues of subalternity most strongly than any other Indian writer through her works. The naked and brutal picture of the all forms of the subalternity has been depicted in a clear-cut manner. Mahasweta Devi had mixed her up many tribals groups and their experiences to show the conditions of subalterns. The author had created a space where the voice of the marginalized women, the most unprivileged and the most downtrodden sector of the society to come front.

## CONCLUSION

One remembers Mahasweta Devi as a saga of writing on subalterns. As a writer and social activist Devi included powerful themes like social realism, caste, and most important, allows the reader to know the struggles faced by the most defenseless people in our society.

Gayatri Spivak in her article “Can Subaltern Speak?” gives answer to the title of her article as “No”, subaltern have no voice. Once a subaltern speaks, they are no longer subaltern, they become ‘other’. Women by their sheer numbers can be called the largest minority to be thrown aside and oppressed. For a long period of time, the patriarchal elite culture posed as if she was not a human being. On the socio-political scene she was a showpiece to be held high or a flesh piece to be violated to bring disgrace to the clan, or group or nation she belongs to. Thus, a woman was always politically and socially treated as an object and not as an individual.

Thus, while going through the works of Mahasweta Devi, one can find the gendered subaltern’s place in the patriarchal society and their relation with the state. Those subalterns at their peak of being oppressed fought and reacted against it.

So, in Mahasweta Devi’s “Draupadi”, Draupadi has been assigned to the position of ‘Other’ marginalized and was forced to pursue guerrilla warfare against imperial domination. She also constructed a language of her own by rejecting the binary structures of patriarchal discourses of the political, social and ideological forces of the society. Thus, the stories of Mahasweta Devi bring to light the subliminal traces of exploitation that have always stoked the fires of subaltern rebellion. Devi confronts the problematic and complexities that perpetuate women’s subalternity, the most

important being the traditional gendering. Devi portrays gendered subaltern in all their realities. Body takes a major place in her writings, gets into the speech and turns the discourse towards the other side. “The Hunt” shows the way of resistance and the belief about resistance towards exploitation is discussed. The story becomes the celebration of traditions that is compellingly relevant in contemporary times as well. So, this story concludes by upholding the need to empower and promote the socio-economic development of tribal women through awareness and education. “Douloti the Bountiful” gives the tragic consequence of colonialism, which paved the way for particular groups of people to inherit colonial power and use this power for the same purpose. It can be said that the tribes and nature, from being free subjects, have been re-created as bonded slaves for the capitalists to exploit. In “Petrodactyl, Pirtha and Puran Sahay” Mahasweta Devi aims to improve the tribal condition without destroying their tribal culture. Puran makes the reader aware of the condition of the tribals as the ‘subalterns’ who are ignored, exploited and enslaved by the main stream.

So, in conclusion, the portrayal of survival and resistance of downtrodden tribes, who have proved they to be the epitomes of survival, is located. Mahasweta Devi has directed to create a space where the voice of the marginalized groups, the most underprivileged and the most downtrodden sector of the society. So, Mahasweta Devi has played a crucial role in setting up a new paradigm in literature by giving it connectivity with larger political and social concerns. Along with it, Devi uses several images to warn the outer world that the tribal culture would be wiped out of history and so through her writings she fought for those subalterns’ rights and become the voice. The Hindu comments, for Mahasweta Devi, it was imperative to “make an attempt to tear the curtain of darkness, see the reality that lies beyond and see our own true faces in the process.” With her sharp mode of writing and activism, Mahasweta

Devi holds up a mirror to society. Many of the subalterns may not be able to read her work yet, but it's because of her that the stories are out there.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**Reading *Great Expectations* Through  
a Marxist Lens**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ANJANA.M**

**REGISTER NUMBER:DB18AEGR020**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Ms. TWINKLE THOMAS

March 2021

## Kannur University

### Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “**Reading *Great Expectations* Through a Marxist Lens**” is an authentic record of bona fide work carried out by **Anjana.M** under my supervision and guidance at the Department of Studies in English, Twinkle Thomas, Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Angadikadavu, Kannur University.

Twinkle Thomas

Sarath Krishnan

Project Supervisor

Dept.in charge

## Declaration

I, Anjana.M, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Reading *Great Expectations* Through a Marxist Lens” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Twinkle Thomas of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College. I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

ANJANA.M

DB18AEGR020

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**ANJANA.M**

**CONTENT**

	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	1
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
Reflecting the lines of Marxism theory	2-6
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
A journey through, <i>Great Expectations</i>	7-16
<b>Chapter 3.</b>	
Reading <i>Great Expectations</i> Through a Marxist Lens	17-23
Conclusion	24
Works consulted	2

## **Introduction**

Marxism is a social, political, and economic philosophy named after Karl Marx. It examines the effect of capitalism on labor, productivity, and economic development and argues for a worker revolution to overturn capitalism in favor of communism. Marxism posits that the struggle between social classes—specifically between the bourgeoisie, or capitalists, and the proletariat, or workers—defines economic relations in a capitalist economy and will inevitably lead to revolutionary communism. The main objective of this thesis is to point out Marxist views of Karl Marx. This research attempts to explore the effects of Marxism. The thesis also examines how the Marxism theory has applied.

The first chapter introduces Marxism theory focusing mainly on Karl Marx. The second chapter introduces Charles Dickens and his novel based on which the thesis is carried out. The third chapter attempts to explore the Marxist elements in the novel. The conclusion is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out in the third chapter.

## Chapter 1

### Reflecting the lines of Marxism theory

Marx addressed the matters of alienation and exploitation of the working class, the capitalist mode of production and historical materialism. He is famous for analysing history in terms of class struggle, summarised in the initial line introducing The Communist Manifesto (1848): "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles"( Marx and Engels 36).

Some Marxist schools of thought place greater emphasis on certain aspects of classical Marxism while rejecting or modifying other aspects. Some schools have sought to combine Marxian concepts and non-Marxian concepts which have then led to contradictory conclusions. It has been argued that there is a movement toward the recognition of historical and dialectical materialism as the fundamental conceptions of all Marxist schools of thought. This view is rejected by some post-Marxists such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, who claim that history is not only determined by the mode of production, but also by consciousness and will.

Marxism is a social, political, and economic philosophy named after Karl Marx. It examines the effect of capitalism on labor, productivity, and economic development and argues for a worker revolution to overturn capitalism in favor of communism. Marxism posits that the struggle between social classes—specifically between the bourgeoisie, or capitalists, and the proletariat, or workers—defines economic relations in a capitalist economy and will inevitably lead to revolutionary communism.

Marxism is a social, political, and economic theory originated by Karl Marx, which focuses on the struggle between capitalists and the working class. Marx wrote

that the power relationships between capitalists and workers were inherently exploitative and would inevitably create class conflict. He believed that this conflict would ultimately lead to a revolution in which the working class would overthrow the capitalist class and seize control of the economy.

Marx's class theory portrays capitalism as one step in the historical progression of economic systems that follow one another in a natural sequence. They are driven, he posited, by vast impersonal forces of history that play out through the behavior and conflict among social classes. According to Marx, every society is divided among a number of social classes, whose members have more in common with one another than with members of other social classes.

Capitalist society is made up of two classes—the bourgeoisie, or business owners, who control the means of production, and the proletariat, or workers, whose labor transforms raw commodities into valuable economic goods.

Ordinary laborers, who do not own the means of production, such as factories, buildings, and materials, have little power in the capitalist economic system. Workers are also readily replaceable in periods of high unemployment, further devaluing their perceived worth.

To maximize profits, business owners have an incentive to get the most work out of their laborers while paying them the lowest possible wages. This creates an unfair imbalance between owners and the laborers whose work they exploit for their own gain. Since workers have little personal stake in the process of production, Marx believed they would become alienated from it and resentful toward the business owner and their own humanity.

The bourgeoisie also employ social institutions, including government, media, academia, organized religion, and banking and financial systems, as tools and weapons against the proletariat with the goal of maintaining their position of power and privilege.

Ultimately, the inherent inequalities and exploitative economic relations between these two classes will lead to a revolution in which the working class rebels against the bourgeoisie, seizes control of the means of production, and abolishes capitalism.

Thus Marx thought that the capitalist system inherently contained the seeds of its own destruction. The alienation and exploitation of the proletariat that are fundamental to capitalist relations would inevitably drive the working class to rebel against the bourgeoisie and seize control of the means of production. This revolution would be led by enlightened leaders, known as the vanguard of the proletariat, who understood the class structure of society and who would unite the working class by raising awareness and class consciousness.

As a result of the revolution, Marx predicted that private ownership of the means of production would be replaced by collective ownership, under socialism first and then communism. In the final stage of human development, social classes and class struggle would no longer exist.

Marx and Engel's ideas laid the groundwork for the theory and practice of communism. Communism advocates for a classless system in which all property and wealth are communally, rather than privately, owned. Although the former Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, among other nations have had nominally communist governments, there's never actually been a purely communist state that has completely eliminated personal property, money, and class systems.

Socialism predates communism by several decades. Early adherents called for more egalitarian distribution of wealth, solidarity among workers, better working conditions, and common ownership of land and manufacturing equipment. Socialism is based on the idea of public ownership of the means of production, but individuals may still own property. Rather than arising out of a class revolution, socialist reform takes place within the existing social and political structures, whether they be democratic, technocratic, oligarchic, or totalitarian.

The written work of Marx cannot be reduced to a philosophy, much less to a philosophical system. The whole of his work is a radical critique of philosophy, especially of G.W.F. Hegel's idealist system and of the philosophies of the left and right post-Hegelians. It is not, however, a mere denial of those philosophies. Marx declared that philosophy must become reality. One could no longer be content with interpreting the world; one must be concerned with transforming it, which meant transforming both the world itself and human consciousness of it. This, in turn, required a critique of experience together with a critique of ideas. In fact, Marx believed that all knowledge involves a critique of ideas. He was not an empiricist. Rather, his work teems with concepts (appropriation, alienation, praxis, creative labour, value, and so on) that he had inherited from earlier philosophers and economists, including Hegel, Johann Fichte, Immanuel Kant, Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and John Stuart Mill. What uniquely characterizes the thought of Marx is that, instead of making abstract affirmations about a whole group of problems such as human nature, knowledge, and matter, he examines each problem in its dynamic relation to the others and, above all, tries to relate them to historical, social, political, and economic realities.

Marxism is both a critical approach that wants to always question the mainstream policy-driven approaches to IR theory and a classical approach via the philosophical and sociological tradition of its namesake, the philosopher Karl Marx (1818–1883). In fact, Marxism is the only theoretical perspective in IR that is named after a person. Of the range of great thinkers available to us, Marx may not automatically qualify as being the most ‘internationalist’. In fact, most of Marx’s (and his sometimes co-author Friedrich Engels’) work was not primarily concerned with the formation of states or even the interactions between them. What connected their interests to IR was the industrial revolution, as this event was ultimately what Marx was witnessing and trying to understand. He, with Engels, developed a revolutionary approach and outlined a set of concepts that transcended national differences while also providing practical advice on how to build a transnational movement of people. Workers from factories across the world – the proletariat – were to organise themselves into a politically revolutionary movement to counter the exploitative and unequal effects of capitalism, which were accelerated and expanded by the industrial revolution. This vision of a potential link between the bulk of humanity as a global proletariat is where, and how, Marxism enters IR from a different vantage point to other theories.

## Chapter 2

### A Journey through *Great Expectations*

Charles Dickens is regarded as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. *Great Expectations* is his penultimate completed novel. It depicts the education of an orphan nicknamed Pip. Pip serves as both the young protagonist of *Great Expectations* and the story's narrator looking back on his own story as an adult. With this two-level approach, Dickens leads the reader through young Pip's life with the immediacy and surprise of a first person narration while at the same time guiding with an omniscient narrator who knows how it will all turn out. The adult narrator Pip will foreshadow future events throughout the story by using signs and symbols.

On Christmas Eve, around 1812 Pip, about seven years old, is visiting the graves of his parents and siblings in the village churchyard, where he unexpectedly encounters an escaped prisoner. The convict scares Pip into stealing food and tools from Pip's hot-tempered elder sister and her amiable husband, Joe Gargery, a blacksmith, who have taken the orphan in. On early Christmas morning, Pip returns with a file, a pie, and brandy, though he fears being punished. During Christmas Dinner that evening, at the moment Pip's theft is about to be discovered, soldiers arrive and ask Joe to mend some shackles. Joe and Pip accompany them as they recapture the convict, who is fighting with another escaped convict. The first convict confesses to stealing food from the smithy, clearing Pip of suspicion.

Several years later a lawyer named Mr. Jaggers appears and informs Pip that an anonymous benefactor has made it possible for him to go to London for an education; Pip believes that the money is from Miss Havisham, who does not dissuade him of the notion. Once in London, Pip is taught to be a gentleman by Matthew Pocket and his son

Herbert, the latter of whom Pip met years earlier at Satis House. Also receiving instruction is the slow-witted and unlikable Bentley Drummle.

As Pip and Magwitch attempt to leave London via a boat, the police and Compeyson arrive. The two convicts end up fighting in the Thames, and only Magwitch surfaces; Compeyson's body is later recovered. The injured Magwitch is arrested, convicted, and dies awaiting execution. A despondent Pip is arrested because of his debts, but his failing health prevents him from being jailed. Joe subsequently arrives and nurses Pip back to health. Joe also informs him that Miss Havisham has died. After Joe leaves, Pip discovers that his brother-in-law has paid all of his bills. Pip later accepts a job offer at the Cairo branch of Herbert's firm, and he enjoys a simple but content life. After more than 10 years away, he returns to England and visits the place where Satis House once stood. There he encounters Estella, who is now a widow. As they leave, Pip takes her hand, believing that they will not part again.

Pip presents an interesting, and prophetic, relationship between the boy and the bullying man. At first, the relationship appears to be based solely on power and fear. The man yells at the boy only to get what he wants, a file and some food, and the boy only responds for fear of his life. And yet, after they part, the young Pip keeps looking back at the man as he walks alone into the marshes. The image of the man holding his arms around him, alone on the horizon save a pole associated with the death of criminals, is strikingly familiar to the initial image of young Pip, holding himself in the cold, alone in the churchyard with the stones of his dead parents. For a moment, then, the relationship seems to warm. They share a common loneliness and a common marginalization from society, the orphan and the escaped convict. Even while he is afraid, Pip instinctively displays a sympathetic reaction.

This initial meeting, between a small boy and a convict, will develop into the central relationship in the book. It is the relationship which will cause Pip's great expectations for himself to rise and fall. Pip runs home to his sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, and his adoptive father, Joe Gargery. Mrs. Joe is a loud, angry, nagging woman who constantly reminds Pip and her husband Joe of the difficulties she has gone through to raise Pip and take care of the house. Pip finds solace from these rages in Joe, who is more his equal than a paternal figure, and they are united under a common oppression.

During the dinner, Pip nervously steals a piece of bread. Early the next morning, Pip steals food and a pork pie from the pantry shelf and a file from Joe's forge and runs back to the marshes.

The reader's sympathy once again is directed at Pip who not only lost his parents but is being raised by a raging, bitter woman. A common criticism inherent in many of Dickens' novels is the abuse of children in society at large. Although he paints Mrs. Joe in a rather humorous light at times, the reader is still keenly aware of the fear in which this poor child grew up.

Character names in Dickens' works are often codes which reflect a characteristic of the person or their station. Mrs. Joe's name can be decoded to reflect humorous irony on Dicken's part. Although the wife of Joe has taken both his names in the classic patriarchal manner (usually connoting that the wife is the property of the man) the Gargery household is anything but patriarchal. In fact, her husband is treated as little more than a child and Pip and he are the submissive ones.

The next morning, Pip sneaks out of the house and back to the marshes. He finds a man, wet and cold and dressed like a convict, but he turns out to be a different convict from the man who had threatened him the night before. This man has a badly

bruised face and wears a broad-brimmed hat. He runs away from Pip without speaking to him. Pip finally finds his man and gives him the food. The man reacts with anger when Pip tells him about the other convict. Pip leaves him filing at his shackle and returns home.

The second meeting of Pip and the convict is much more civil and sympathetic than the first. Pip even puts away his fear to say, "I am glad you enjoy it," as the convict eats. Since he stole the food and file, Pip is now the convict's partner in crime and feels closer to the man.

Great Expectations is sometimes called, among other things, a mystery or suspense novel, and in this chapter we see elements of that genre. Dickens uses secrets as a way of heightening suspense throughout the novel. Someone is always hiding something from someone else. Sometimes these secrets are clear to the reader and makes the reader a partner in crime with the characters, as we are with Pip last as he sneaks around his house, terrified of getting caught, stealing food. Other times the reader is left out of the secret but we are given the impression that it is an important thing that we need to find out, as in the case of the two convicts. We know that there is some connection between the two that is important to the story but we are given very few clues to help us.

Pip returns home to find Mrs. Joe preparing the house for Christmas dinner. She has invited Mr. Wopsle, the church clerk, Mr. Hubble the wheelwright and Mrs. Hubble and Uncle Pumblechook who was a "well to do corn-chandler" who "drove his own chaise-cart." The discussion over dinner was how fortunate Pip should feel about being raised "by hand" by Mrs. Joe and how much trouble she has gone through in that endeavor, though Pip's opinion was never requested. Mr. Pumblechook nearly chokes on some brandy after the meal and Pip realizes that he poured tar water in the brandy

bottle when he stole some for the convict. Mrs. Joe becomes too busy in the kitchen to afford a full investigation, but then announces that she is going to present the pork pie. Sure that he is going to get caught, Pip jumps up from the table and runs to the door, only to meet face to face with a group of soldiers who appear to be there to arrest him.

The suspense grows in this chapter as the reader and Pip fearfully await the discovery by Mrs. Joe of the things which are missing from the kitchen. The apprehension is kept light, however, with a foolish dialogue between the adults over how much trouble Pip is to raise for Mrs. Joe. Mr. Pumblechook is presented as a loud mouth idiot, full of himself. The only sympathetic character is Joe, who continues to make gestures of support toward Pip. Dicken's little social commentary here is clear: It is often the dim witted and poor (Joe) who act with more grace and charity than wealthy loud mouths (Mr. Pumblechook and Mr. Wopsle) who claim that they do.

The soldiers do not want to arrest Pip but they do need a pair of handcuffs fixed by Joe. They are invited in, Mr. Pumblechook offers up Mrs. Joe's sherry and port, and Joe gets to work on the handcuffs in the forge. They are, in fact, hunting two convicts who were seen recently in the marshes. After Joe fixes the handcuffs, he, Pip, and Mr. Wopsle are allowed to follow the soldiers into the marshes. They soon find the two convicts wrestling each other in the mud. The one with the hat accuses the other, Pip's convict, of trying to kill him, but the other replies that he would have done it if he really wanted to. Instead, he had been the one who had called for the soldiers and was willing to sacrifice himself just so the one with the hat would get caught again.

The bring the two back to a boathouse where Pip's convict, eyeing Pip, admits to stealing Mrs. Joe's pork pie by himself, thus getting Pip off the hook.

Joe and Pip watch as the two convicts are brought back to the prison ship.

The reader is presented with the question of why the two convicts are fighting each other. Pip's convict goes so far as to say that he deliberately got himself caught, just so he could make sure the man with the hat would go back to prison. What hatred did this man have that would make him go back to prison just to see another suffer as well?

The relationship between the convict and Pip continues to grow as well, even though they do not speak and the convict hardly looks at him. The convict obviously wants to protect the boy and, suspecting Pip may be threatened, takes the blame for stealing the pork pie. The two are, once again, united in secrecy.

Joe, Pip, and Mr. Wopsle walk back home. Pop decides not to tell Joe the truth about his file and the pork pie -- he is afraid of losing his respect. When they return, the topic of discussion is the question of how the convict managed to get into the locked house. Through his bombastic overbearance, Mr. Pumblechook's argument wins: the convict crawled down the chimney. Mrs. Joe sends Pip to bed.

Pip's fear that Joe would "think worse of me than I was" if Pip told him about the file and pork pie is a fear that Pip will revisit throughout his young life. Joe is the only friend in the world for Pip, he is his entire society. Pip fears to lose this companionship by telling the truth. In the future, Pip will struggle with telling the truth because of the fear that society will think less of him.

Pip describes a little of his education with Mr. Wopsle's great aunt, a "ridiculous old lady" who had started a small school in her cottage. The education, as Pip describes it, is less than satisfactory, but Pip does learn some basics from Biddy, an orphan girl who works for Mrs. Wopsle.

While doing his homework one night, Pip discovers that Joe is illiterate. Joe explains that he never stayed in school long because his father, a drunk and physically abusive to him and his mother, kept him out. Joe goes on to explain to Pip that, because of his father, Joe stays humble to Mrs. Joe. "I'm dead afraid of going wrong in the way of not doing what's right by a woman," he says. He let's Mrs. Joe "Ram-page" over him because he sees how difficult it is to be a woman, remembering his mother, and he wants to do the right thing as a man. Pip has new understanding and respect for Joe.

Mrs. Joe comes home, quite excited, and proclaims that Pip is going to "play" for Miss Havisham, "a rich and grim lady who lived in a large and dismal house." Uncle Pumblechook suggested Pip to Miss Havisham when she asked if he knew any small boys. Pip was to go tomorrow and spend the evening at Uncle Pumblechook's in town.

Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight mark a key turning point in the novel, separating Pip's young childhood in the humble company of Joe from the beginnings of greater expectations in the company of higher society.

The chapter presents a relationship between Joe and Pip which is growing in love and respect. Joe is at the bottom of the social hierarchy, and, particularly, at the bottom of his household's hierarchy but Pip finds new respect for his position. "I had a new sensation of feeling conscious that I was looking up to Joe in my heart." The image is almost ideal: the young Pip and Joe sitting next to the fire, Pip admiring him and teaching him the alphabet.

Dickens contrasts this humble setting with the opportunity presented at the end of the chapter by the noisy entrance and rather insolent announcement by Mrs. Joe. She introduces the first of Pip's "great expectations" in the form of the job given to Pip "to play" for Miss Havisham: "...this boy's fortune may be made by his going to Miss

Havisham's." Although little is known about the wealthy woman, and less is known exactly how Pip is supposed to "play," the opportunity is one where Pip will be in the company of a higher social and economic class of people.

Pip spends the evening at Mr. Pumblechook's and is brought to Miss Havisham's after a meager breakfast. They are met at the gate by a young woman, Estella, "who was very pretty and seemed very proud." Estella lets Pip in, but sends Mr. Pumblechook on his way. She leads him through a dark house by candle and leaves him outside a door. He knocks and is let in. There he meets Miss Havisham, a willowy, yellowed woman dressed in an old wedding gown. She calls for Estella and the two play cards, despite Estella's objection that Pip was just a "common labouring-boy." "Well," says Miss Havisham, "you can break his heart." Estella insults Pip's coarse hands and his thick boots as they play.

Smarting from the insults, Pip later cries as he eats lunch in the great house's yard. He explores the yard and the garden, always seeing Estella in the distance walking ahead of him. Finally, she lets him out of the yard and he walks the four miles home, feeling low

Pip's first taste of "higher society" is a bitter one, and it leaves him ashamed and embarrassed rather than justifiably angry. Pip is, in fact, just a toy for both Miss Havisham, who wants him to "play," and Estella, who treats him roughly while at the same time flirts. Pip, torn between being insulted and his attraction to Estella, opts to feel ashamed of his upbringing -- so much so that he "wished Joe had been rather more genteelly brought up." His new found respect and love for Joe was being spoiled by his embarrassment of being brought up in a lower class family.

Pip is forced to talk about his day to Mrs. Joe and Mr. Pumblechook. Pip lies in a fantastical matter, making up stories about dogs being fed veal and Miss Havisham lounging on a velvet couch. He lies, partly in spite, but also because he is sure that the two would not understand the situation at the Satis House even if he described it in detail..

Later, Pip tells Joe the truth, and also confesses that he is embarrassed about being a "commoner" because of his attraction to Estella.

Joe reassures him that he is not common, he is uncommon small and an uncommon scholar. Referring to Pip's lies, he adds, "If you can't get to be uncommon through going straight, you'll never get to do it through going crooked."

Joe's analysis, though phrased in what Pip would call "common" language, is accurate: Pip is trying to become "uncommon" by lying about his experiences. Pip made up lies about the Satis House with the intention of glorifying it in front of the eager Mr. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe, both of whom eat it up. While Pip is naively honest in admitting to Joe that he wants to become uncommon, he is intelligent enough to know that he can become uncommon by being dishonest, or, as Joe would have it, "crooked."

One of the main themes of the book is spelled out in this chapter, specifically, the desire to rise above one's social station. Dickens, writing this book toward the end of his life, is speaking directly of his own youthful desires and those of his father as well. As the story of Pip unfolds and we witness the different ways in which Pip tries to climb the social ladder -- by making up fantastical stories in this case -- it will be interesting to listen to the running commentary made by the narrator, the older Pip, who, like Dickens himself, is looking back on this theme and reflecting on how it affected his happiness later on in life.

On the way home, Pip goes into a pub to pick up Joe. He finds Joe sitting with a stranger, a man with one eye pulled closed and a worn hat on his head. The man asks Joe all kinds of personal questions, some about Pip's relation to him, the whole time staring at Pip. At one point, the man stirs his drink with Joe's file -- the file Pip stole to give to the convict! As Joe and Pip depart, the stranger hands Pip a coin wrapped in paper.

When they get home, Pip realizes that the paper is actually a two pound note. Thinking it was a mistake (though Pip knows somehow that it wasn't) Joe runs back to the pub to give it back but the man is gone.

Pip, excited at the beginning of the chapter by the prospect of educating himself to become uncommon, is reminded of his common, and somewhat illegitimate, past by the stranger in the pub. As he goes to sleep, he is bothered by the fact that it is uncommon to be "on secret terms of conspiracy with convicts."

The man clearly knew something about Pip assisting the convict and wanted Pip to know that he did. How he knows remains a mystery, but Pip's immediate fear is how his past will "haunt" him as he tries to climb out of his common background.

## Chapter 3

### Reading *Great Expectations* Through a Marxist Lens

Marxism applies to the novel *Great Expectations* in many ways. In Marxist terms, the money changed Pip's social identity and at the same time alienated him from his own being. He did nothing to actually earn the money. Therefore the alienation Pip experiences is more severe. However, in the end Pip does realise his own self-deceit. Pip is at last compelled to confront soberly his situation in life, his relations to others. Only through his move between classes and back again is Pip capable of awakening to the reality of life: class is merely a divisive social construct.

Social mobility, or class mobility, was made more possible after the death of feudalism by the emergence of private ownership. However, as Marx states in *The Communist Manifesto*, "the modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonism... but [has] established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones" (62).

Therefore, an individual can move between classes, but at a price; both a monetary one, as well as one of a social nature. This is evident in the entirety of *Great Expectations*, while Pip goes from proletariat to hobnobbing with the upper crust of London society in university studies and smoking rooms. Through the journey of Pip we see how these new divisions in class are no less oppressive than those during the previous feudalist period. The first time Pip truly realises the difference between classes is after his first encounters with Miss Havisham and Estella at Satis house.

As part of the bourgeois class who inherited land and wealth from her father, Miss Havisham begins negatively shaping Pip's conception of his own social status as a "common labouring-boy" ( Dickens 60).

She literally embodies the bourgeoisie in Marxist terms: staying in her old wedding dress for years and letting the house around her deteriorate, because "in bourgeois society... the past dominates the present" ( Marx and Engels 76). After Pip initially visits Satis House, his want to become a 'gentleman' grows. In the presence of Miss Havisham, Pip sees the life of leisure. For instance, unlike at the marsh with Joe in the forge, Miss Havisham does nothing except 'play', as she calls it ( 58). First, he laments the job working with Joe as a blacksmith. He proclaims it dirty, harsh work after experiencing the leisurely days at Satis House. Simultaneously in a conflicted state, Pip does not turn his back on Joe yet admiring his hard working nature. However, once the young protege of Miss Havisham, Estella, asserts an influence on Pip he worries.

The thought of Estella seeing him do the work of the proletariat is upsetting. Pip believes if she were ever to witness this she would never talk to or want to see him again. He sees himself not as "distinguished and happy" like he once thought working for Joe would make him feel. Rather he feels "dusty with the dust of small-coal... [with] a weight upon [his] daily remembrance to which the anvil was a feather" (107). Therefore, the influence of both Miss Havisham and Estella grow on Pip seducing him away from the proletariat. In turn his former proletariat mind is then warped. From this point on, Pip becomes obsessed with class mobility seeking to push his way upward into the bourgeoisie.

The snobbish Mr. Jaggers arrives soon after Pip starts spending time at Satis House. He is there to announce a wealthy benefactor wishing to fund the boy's move between classes. Funnily enough, Pip assumes it is Miss Havisham. This makes him feel important and thrusts him into a transition. In this new upper class life Pip finds himself far removed from work. Marx believed labour was a good thing only as long as "the relation of the worker to the product of labour" (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844) remains free of alienation. In the newly industrialised world of the late 18th century and into the middle of the 19th century, many people were alienated from the fruits of their labour. That is to say, the labourers in factories and cotton mills using machinery were producing "wonderful things" for the bourgeois, those who own the means of production, augmenting their capital. For the workers, this only meant "privation" as they became more like machines themselves (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844)

Given a sum of money with which to transform himself into a gentleman, Pip is completely alienated from the activity of labour. Pip makes his way using money he did not earn. There is no personal meaning to his capital. He is alienated even from the money through which he enters into a higher class. "In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality" (Marx and Engels 76). Therefore, it is the money which basically moves independently between classes. Pip is dependent on this gifted money for everything, robbing him of personhood. Later in the novel, Pip begins lamenting the fact he had not "risen to manhood content to be partners with Joe in the honest old forge" (272). With Joe, making a living was honest. The money he earned at the forge would have given him more personal pride, a sense of himself and his identity.

Whereas the money Magwitch provides only serves to alienate him from the class in which he was born, his true needs, the people around him and, effectively, the proletariat. In addition, Pip finds a totally new world open up to him via money. Pip imagines his anxieties assuaged by means of capital: “If I could have kept [Joe] away by paying money, I certainly would have paid money” (218). The social relationships between Pip and others are alienated, just as Pip finds himself alienated from his own being. Subsequently, Pip’s alienation is reversed by seeing Joe once again and discovering Magwitch as the mysterious, anonymous benefactor.

Engels and Marx view written history as the history of class struggle. In similar fashion, as does Pip’s former mentor Joe Bargery believe the world works in such terms: “Life is made of ever so many partings welded together ... Divisions among such must come, and must be met as they come” (224). Perhaps the most visible instance of a recognition of class divisions comes when Pip is visited by Joe at his new place in London. Even when Pip went back to visit at his old home in the marsh, Dickens did not impart such an intense recognition by any of the characters. However, once Joe and his perceived common identity come to London it is as if Pip is confronted with his old life in an upsetting juxtaposition.

Joe himself recognises this well enough, as he tells Pip: “I’m wrong in these clothes. I’m wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off th’ meshes. You won’t find half so much fault in me if you think of me in my forge dress” (224). Joe has succumbed to the expectations of society playing the part of the class to which he supposedly belongs.

His identity is completely bound up in his work, his designation as proletariat. Without the proper clothes of his trade, he does not even feel normal or right. He is literally uncomfortable, perceiving himself out of place. Having Joe in his presence only exacerbates these feelings of shame and pushes Pip further into the mindset of the bourgeoisie. In opposition, Pip does recognise he is from a lower class. He aims to act and appear as part of the bourgeoisie.

One of the only ways Pip relates back to the world of the blacksmith he experienced is through a classical piece by Handel: the Harmonious Blacksmith (179). The great expectations of Dickens' title come to bear on Pip who confronts what is expected of him, as a member of the upper class. Because of this he begins to reject Joe and his old status of blacksmith apprentice. On the contrary, once Pip discovers the identity of his mysterious benefactor this prompts him to face his own newly formed prejudice as an upper class gentleman.

Magwitch, formerly a member of the lumpenproletariat, somehow tears himself from those moorings and gains capital, which Marx defines as "accumulated labour" (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 ). Marx saw the lumpenproletariat as a group which will never attain class consciousness, technically of no use to any kind of social production. Less amicably, Marx saw them as the "passive putrifying of the lowest layers of old society" (The Communist Manifesto ( Marx and Engels 72)). However, Magwitch defies this definition due to his unusual class consciousness. It is his desire to strike back at the ruling class which drives him to work, in order to pay for Pip's education as a gentleman. On one hand, Magwitch helped Pip. On the other hand, Marx might disagree. It is through the mysterious donation of Magwitch that Pip becomes alienated from his being. Nevertheless, if the former criminal had not helped Pip move from proletariat to bourgeoisie, the latter may never have reached a point of

respective class consciousness. Pip's journey towards becoming a 'gentleman' has taken him full circle and brought him back to the lower class. Furthermore, the realisation Pip has come to over the course of the novel have transformed his views concerning the poor life he initially led. No longer does he see the gentlemanly world in which he lived as a sort of Exodus from the life of a blacksmith.

As the old criminal reveals he was the anonymous benefactor, Pip tells us: "the abhorrence in which I held the man, the dread I had of him, the repugnance with which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he had been some terrible beast" (320). As a young boy and a firm member of the proletariat, Pip was willing to give Magwitch food and help him. Now, after his transition to a member of the bourgeoisie, Pip finds himself repulsed by the criminal as being the source of his class mobility. Ultimately, this disgust finally drives Pip into a space where he transcends his alienation through realising his own estrangement as a new member of the bourgeois class.

Even the title of Charles Dickens *Great Expectations* demands a particular interpretation. Social class comes along with certain expectations forced upon individuals: how to appear, how to present oneself based on financial status, with whom one should be seen and associate. In his own life Dickens dealt with the disparity between the rich and the poor; in Marxist terms, the gap between proletariat and bourgeoisie.

The author's father wound up for a time in debtors jail. Such policies targeting the poor were particularly worsened during the industrial revolution and the bold emergence of capitalism. This also brought about class mobility, not at all common during the days of feudalism. Coming to fame and recognition after such hardships, Dickens understood the ins and outs of society in terms of class struggle.

Through the character of Pip, and to a lesser extent the criminal Magwitch, Dickens explores how a member of the Marxian proletariat was able to make his way into the bourgeoisie. Pip also experiences the inner struggle of rejecting his given social status and those in his former social sphere. By the end of the novel Pip's experience as a member of the bourgeoisie ultimately helped him towards a realisation of class consciousness.

It took Pip leaving the marshes and entering into city society for him to realise, as Marx writes in the *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*: "The human being is in the most literal sense a political animal, not merely a gregarious animal, but an animal which can individuate itself only in the midst of society" (223). This transition from proletariat to bourgeoisie was necessary in order for Pip to wake from a sleep of ignorance and helps him finally comprehend the idea of class as a socially constructed system of division between individuals.

## Conclusion

*Great Expectations*, one of the best novels of Charles Dickens, undoubtedly relies upon the Marxist concepts. The trace of Marxist theories put forward by Karl Max are undeniably present in the novel through its characters. Dickens uses Pip's complex and altering relationships with Estella, Joe, and Magwitch to show the subjugation of the working class from the privileged. When analysed through the main theme of the novel, this thesis finds out that the essence of Marxism is evidently present in the novel. Based on the study carried out in the third chapter, this thesis declares that the novel *Great Expectations* undoubtedly relies upon the Marxist concepts.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**MIRRORING FREUDIAN PATRIARCHY IN *WISE CHILDREN*: A  
THEORETICAL EXPOUND.**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ANJANA SAJI PS**

**Register No: DB18AEGR021**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

June 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Mirroring Freudian Patriarchy in *Wise Children: A Theoretical Expound*” is a bonafide work of Anjana Saji PS, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Anjana Saji PS, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Mirroring Freudian Patriarchy in *Wise Children*: A Theoretical Expound” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

ANJANA SAJI PS

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR021

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ANJANA SAJI PS

## Table of Contents

	<b>Page no.</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter 1	4
Role of Psychoanalysis and Freudian Patriarchy in Caters <i>Wise Children</i>	
Chapter 2	8
Family Saga of Two Sisters and the Oppression Faced as Illegitimate Daughters.	
Chapter 3	15
Oppression of Daughters	
Conclusion	25
Works Consulted	27

## Introduction

The story of Angela Carter's life begins on the 8th of May 1940, when she was born in Eastbourne as Angela Olive Stalker where she lived with her grandmother, a fervent storyteller who was also a feminist. Carter's gracious writing style and daring postmodernist subject matter quickly gained appreciation in academic circles. *Several Perceptions*, published in 1968 was awarded the prestigious Somerset Maugham Award. A successful literary career seemed to lurk around the corner. Carter could have capitalised on her growing reputation, but in 1969 she took on what seems to be a personal mission of empowerment. In her final novels, Carter found a balance between optimism and negativism, narration and theoretical sophistication. The novel I will be discussing is her last one: *Wise Children*, published in 1991. *Wise Children* turned out to be Angela Carter's "swan song". Shortly after its publication, she met her untimely death. In February 1992, at age 51, the imaginative author succumbed to lung cancer. Sadly, she did not live to see the peak of her success. After the reports about her death, Carter's books sold out within a day. And during the academic year 1992-3, the British Academy received no less than forty proposals to study the magic-storyteller. The anecdote goes that this was more than the number of concepts the Academy received about the entire eighteenth century. Carter's postmodern fiction is definitely vivid and rich enough to inspire further academic research in the decades to come.

A pattern of transforming empowerment is easily recognisable in many of Carter's novels. She often sets off with presenting her readership with a traditional fictional world, inhabited by characters that slavishly fill out their prescribed roles in a patriarchal framework. The portrayal of victims of conventional society is meant to awaken the reader to the victimising nature of an exclusive patriarchy. The

protagonists in Carter's stories are often outcast women and remarkably, their oppression will help them to realise that mythic universals are simply not true. This will make it easier for these characters to stand up against their submission. When reading deeper into the novel, it becomes obvious that Carter does not believe in a permanent topsy-turvy world. The envisaged worlds prove to be utopias, rather than attainable objectives for humanity. The narrator will have to open up to the limits of transgression. It becomes clear that, especially for women at the outside of society, a revolutionary change is nearly impossible to procure. Carter seems to defend a more gradual transformation, but she leaves it up to her readers to design their idea of a „happy ending“. The suggested future of her fiction is never stable, always debatable. As such, *Wise Children* illustrates how its writer rejects the “obvious truths of androcentric plot structures [and strives to] cheat the inevitability of closure” (Boehm 86). This quality renders Carter's final novel into an ambivalent tale which successfully counterpoises optimism and negativism. This approach aligns with the author's refusal to fully invest herself in one ideological movement.

In my exploration of Carters final novel, instead of putting forward one abstract theoretical frame, I will more or less follow the emancipatory structure employed in *Wise Children*. I believe that the subject matter of the novel allows a hands-on, constructive analysis with a fusion of relevant theories and a discussion of the fiction discussed.

In the first part of this project, I set off with a study of the oppressive conditions which the narrating protagonist has to live in. She suffers from traditional hierarchical dualities which are embedded in the world: the dominance of legitimacy over illegitimacy and of high culture over low culture. In *Wise Children*, these dualities by and large coincide with the dominance of men over women. Hence, I will

discuss the female emancipation within the family and on the cultural scene; but I will also cast a look at how a low culture will manage to oppose the elitist conduct of members of high culture. The focus of my research is on the main characters of the novel, yet I must note that in side stories our narrator refers to many more instances of female oppression. An exploration of these story lines could prove interesting material for further study. In the second part of this dissertation, I cast a look which tools Carter presents her characters with in their attempts to topple patriarchy. The carnivalesque atmosphere of *Wise Children* is essential in the construction of a subversive platform. However, it has its flaws as a device of emancipation. The female protagonist has grown to wise to believe in a revolution. I aim to indicate how *Wise Children* explores psychoanalytical theory and Freudian patriarchy by actively connecting to a range of theories. The ensuing multiple character of the novel renders it into a complex and intriguing work which will continue to produce new interpretations and topics of study.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Role of Psychoanalysis and Freudian Patriarchy in *Caters Wise Children*.**

Sigmund Freud's creation of psychoanalysis was at once a theory of the human psyche, a therapy for the relief of its ills, and an optic for the interpretation of cultural and society. Despite repeated criticisms attempted refutations, and qualifications of Freud's work, its spell remained powerful well after his death and in fields far removed from psychology as it is narrowly defined. Sigmund Freud was the founder of psychoanalysis and the psychodynamic approach to psychology. Freud believed that the human mind was composed of three elements: the id, the ego, and the superego and Freud's theories of psychosexual stages, the unconscious, and dream symbolism are still popular among psychologists and people.

Psychoanalysis can be defined as method of treating mental disorders, shaped by psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes unconscious mental processes and is sometimes described as "depth psychology." The psychoanalytic movement originated in the clinical observations and formulations of Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, who coined the term psychoanalysis. His led to a new conception of the structure of personality: the id, ego, and superego. The id is the unconscious reservoir of drives and impulses derived from the genetic background and concerned with the preservation and propagation of life. The ego, according to Freud, operates in conscious and preconscious levels of awareness. It is the portion of the personality concerned with the tasks of reality: perception, cognition, and executive actions. In the superego lie the individual's environmentally derived ideals and values and the mores of family and society; the superego serves as a censor on the ego functions. In the Freudian framework, conflicts among the three structures of the personality are repressed and lead to the arousal of anxiety. The person is protected from

experiencing anxiety directly by the development of defence mechanisms, which are learned through family and cultural influences. These mechanisms become pathological when they inhibit pursuit of the satisfactions of living in a society. The existence of these patterns of adaptation or mechanisms of defence are quantitatively but not qualitatively different in the psychotic and neurotic.

Sigmund Freud presents a critical examination of the patriarchal assumptions that have shaped psychoanalytic concepts of fatherhood since the inception of this discipline. Patriarchy is founded upon the symbolic power of the father and yet there has been a long-standing cultural silence shrouding men's parental roles and relationships in experiential terms. The subsequent tension between the symbolic presence and substantive absence of fathers is built into the heart of orthodox psychoanalytic theory, being enshrined in Freud's foundational concept of the Oedipus complex. In particular, the Oedipus complex is premised upon the father's absence from the pre-oedipal sphere, perpetuating an image of paternal authority legitimated by men's distance from, and difference to, the naturalized domain of mother-child relations.

At the core of this discussion is a critical analysis of key sites of silence and contradiction in Freud's account of the Oedipus complex that are attributed to the negation of paternal intimacy in early infant relationships. Patriarchal thought lays claim to the authority of the father as the symbolic origin of male privilege. This universalizing appeal to "rule of the father" stands alongside a deep-seated reticence for parenting to be conceptualized as a significant dimension of male experience. In comparison with the historical wealth of images celebrating the enduring strength and intimacy of the mother-child bond, the paternal relationship has remained relatively hidden from the cultural gaze. This gendered imbalance reflects a long-standing

assumption that childcare is an essentially and exclusively female activity; a naturalized constant that has provided a vital underpinning of the cultural supremacy of the male. Although fatherhood has traditionally formed the bastion of patriarchal privilege, this ideological system has rested upon the tacit negation and devaluation of the potential depth and complexity of men's parental relationships.

The curious tension between the symbolic presence and substantive absence of fathers evident in patriarchal thought is embedded at the heart of psychoanalytic theory. From this perspective, psychoanalysis can be characterized as a quintessentially patriarchal discourse. Indeed, psychoanalytic theory recreates the fundamental paradoxes of patriarchy by giving central place to the father as a symbolic figure of authority while eclipsing men's relationships with their infants under the shadow of the omnipresent nurturing mother. From its inception, psychoanalytic theory has been thoroughly imbued with allusions to the symbolic power of father. Most poignantly, the paternal role is attributed with fundamental significance in the formation of the individual psyche and of civilization itself. This characterization of the paternal role is enshrined in Freud's foundational concept of the Oedipus complex, which retains central place as the cornerstone of psychoanalytic theory.

The Oedipus complex places fatherhood at the centre stage of psychoanalytic theory; being foundational in essence, to the emergence of individual identity, in structure, to the (re)production of patriarchal culture, and in significance, to the creation of psychoanalysis. Although the conceptual framework of psychoanalysis has effectively marginalized the father as a remote figure lurking on the child development, the patriarchal heritage of this tradition ensures that the male parent is ultimately not without influence. Rather, throughout psychoanalytic theory, the power

of the father has been defined through his absence; an absence that demarcates the male's ontological difference from the naturalized sphere of maternal embodiment and thus confirms the father's cultural supremacy. This characterization of the father as an absent authority at once confounds the apparent centrality of fatherhood within psychoanalytic discourse while reinforcing the symbolic reach of paternal power. Indeed, in being exerted through his absence, the power of the father is effectively detached from the materiality of the individual, signifying the ubiquity of patriarchal dominance beyond its incarnation within any individual male.

However, this theme also echoes more widely across the central schools of psychoanalytic thought, where the potency of the father can be seen to operate as male Superior figure. From a cultural perspective, the psychoanalytic conceptualization of the symbolic role of the father clearly carries strong religious overtones, with the omnipotence of God, the procreator, providing an archetypal metaphor of a materially absent yet symbolically present father. The primary importance bestowed upon the father in the Oedipus complex thus acquires additional potency by invoking long established systems of belief that sustain a patriarchal culture; the masculinization of the origins of individual and collective development resonating with the power of creativity ascribed to the Judeo-Christian God as the omnipotent father. As we can see Freudian psychoanalytic discourse is shot through with allusions to the symbolic authority of the father. Thus, although the assumption of the mother's monopolization of childcare masks the potential presence of males within early infant relations, on closer inspection, it can be seen that the power of the father's superiority.

## Chapter 2

### **Family Saga of Two Sisters and the Oppression Faced as Illegitimate Daughters.**

*Wise Children* is a magical realist novel by Angela Carter. First published in 1991, the family saga follows the daily lives of two sisters who claim to be the unacknowledged daughters of a great Shakespearean actor, Sir Melchior Hazard. Carter's final completed novel, critics believe it is the most bewitching and imaginative work of her career. She is best known for her novels *Nights at the Circus* and *The Magic Toyshop*.

Dora and Nora Chance are identical twins who spent their youth working as minor actresses. Popular in their hometown, they have always felt like celebrities. Dora narrates the story in the form of a memoir; having just turned 75, she feels it is time to sum up her life. Interestingly, the novel coincides with Carter's own terminal lung cancer diagnosis. The twins celebrate their seventy-fifth birthday together at home. The date, April 23, is also William Shakespeare's birthday, which the twins think is very poignant. Sharing memories from their childhood, they talk about their parents. Everyone thinks their father is Perry Hazard, a gregarious, eccentric actor who took the girls all over the world on his travels. The girls, however, don't believe Perry is their real father. They think their father is Perry's twin brother, Melchior. Melchior is a legendary Shakespearean actor who worked during the 1920s. Today is also his one-hundredth birthday. He doesn't acknowledge his daughters, although he once admitted he is their biological father. He gave Perry legal guardianship because he didn't want to ruin his career by raising children. One day, Tristram, Melchior's son, visits the sisters. He is worried because he can't find his girlfriend, Tiffany. He last saw her on a television show, and she didn't seem herself. She was drunk, high, or simply delusional. After some prompting, Tristram admits Tiffany is pregnant and she

doesn't want the bad. Naturally, the sisters worry about her safety, but before they go looking for Tiffany, the police call around. They have found Tiffany's body in a river. The incident shakes Dora, leading her to reflect on her childhood again. She remembers fancying Melchior before she knew he was her father. Dora reflects on how she and Nora got into acting. They started in seedy, rundown theatres. They didn't enjoy acting much but it made them feel closer to their absent father. Perry encouraged them because it meant he could spend time alone with them, traveling around theatres. It is implied that he sexually abused the girls. During the 1929 Wall Street Crash, everyone loses his or her money. The girls dance in music halls and sleep with actors. They sometimes share the same boy by swapping identities. The boys never know the difference because the girls are beautiful. Dora and Nora spend their adolescence looking for love in all the wrong places. One day, Melchior asks them to star alongside him in a Shakespearean play. The girls are overjoyed, thinking it means that Melchior wants to acknowledge them. Unfortunately, Melchior doesn't care about them. He just thinks they're pretty and will look good in his play. Eventually, he moves to Hollywood, where he works as a film producer. He gives the girls minor parts in his films. They never progress any further in acting.

Melchior marries a beautiful actress and together they have two daughters, Saskia, and Imogen. He acknowledges these girls and raises them as his own. Dora and Nora find this terribly distressing but they don't say anything because they don't want to lose Melchior's love. When Melchior has two sons, Gareth and Tristram, he stops paying attention to Dora and Nora because his family is big enough. Gareth grows up and becomes a priest. Dora and Nora never see him again. Tristram sleeps with Saskia regularly, much to Dora's amusement. Meanwhile, Saskia throws her mother down the stairs because she didn't get an acting part that Melchior had

promised her. Saskia's mother moves in with Dora and Nora because Saskia terrifies her.

The play ends with Melchior's one-hundredth birthday party. Melchior invites the twins especially because he plans to make a formal announcement. For the first time, he acknowledges Dora and Nora as his legitimate daughters. Melchior's wife makes her own announcement—Melchior isn't Saskia or Imogen's father, Perry. Perry rounds the evening off with another staggering revelation. The twins' grandmother, Grandma Chance, is their birth mother. The twins find this amusing and it doesn't bother them in the least. Dora sneaks off to sleep with Perry because she can't fancy Melchior anymore. They plan to live forever because they want to see Tristram's children grow up. Orphaned at birth, the twins are adopted by the questionably respectable Mrs. Chance, who gives them lots of love and dancing lessons. On stage, they enjoy moderate success, but they are consistently disappointed by their father's refusal to acknowledge them. When they are grown, he makes partial amends by taking them with him to Hollywood to appear in a Shakespearean film. Hollywood offers the sisters their big, if corrupt, chance, but they refuse to take it. They return to England, "sadder and wiser girls," but with their innocence and goodness intact. Over the years, their vaudeville career declines. At the nadir of their fortunes, they are invited to Melchior Hazard's one hundredth birthday party, where they at last find love and acceptance in a final scene of "laughter, forgiveness, generosity, reconciliation."

Amid its improbable events and comic exuberance, the book makes several serious points. It shows that families may comprise the unlikeliest conjunctions of people, bound by love, not law. Accordingly, there is no such thing as legitimacy or illegitimacy. Further, by repeatedly calling attention to its own artifice yet

nevertheless persuading the reader to suspend disbelief, the book demonstrates that illusion prevails over reality. In its determined cheerfulness, the book asserts that the difference between comedy and tragedy lies not in subject matter but in treatment. Yet, by exhorting the reader to look on the bright side of things, the narrative suggests that although for the moment comedy is centre stage, tragedy is always waiting in the wings. The last in a line of wildly inventive novels associated by many critics with postmodernism and magic realism, *Wise Children*, published just before the author's death from cancer, is in many respects Angela Carter's gentlest and most conciliatory work. Written as the first-person memoir of seventy-five-year-old Dora Chance, the introspective half of a twin sister song and dance team, *The Lucky Chances*, the novel re-creates five crucial periods in the sisters' lives, each of which centre on an encounter between the twins and their natural father, Sir Melchior Hazard, the greatest Shakespearean actor of his day. Through these encounters, the novel explores the relationships between legitimacy and illegitimacy, fathers and children, reality and illusion, and tragedy and comedy.

The five parts of the book, complete with dramatis personae, self-consciously recall the five acts of a Shakespearean comedy. Part one, the exposition, opens on the twins' current life in a shabby house on the wrong side of the Thames, where they live with Wheelchair, their father's aged first wife; numerous cats; and fading photo albums of their years as music hall hoofers. Then the narrative flashes back to their unpropitious birth to a scullery maid known only as Pretty Kitty in a boarding house on the bedraggled fringes of show business. They are adopted by the questionably respectable proprietor, Mrs. Chance, who, discovering late the joys of motherhood, gives them lots of love, dancing lessons, and a taste for unconventionality.

Part two, chronicles their childhood and adolescence. On their seventh birthday, Grandma Chance takes them to see Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers on stage, an experience so intoxicating that they set their sights on a musical career. On the same occasion, Grandma Chance spots their father in the audience, a discovery that awakens in them an unquenchable longing for his approval and love. All this while, they are financially supported by Peregrine Hazard, their father's twin brother, a magician and adventurer who lets on to the world that he is the girls' natural father. When they turn thirteen, Peregrine mischievously takes them on an impromptu backstage visit to their father, who fails to acknowledge them, a failure that Dora considers "the bitterest disappointment...before or since". At Melchior's disavowal, Peregrine declares: "It's a wise child that knows its own father...But wiser the father who knows his own child". In late adolescence, their lives take a turn for the better as they gain fleeting fame, money, and admirers. Dora loses her heart to Nora's boyfriend, whom she persuades Nora to lend her for her sexual initiation. Although Dora really loves him, she never discloses to him the impersonation but returns him to her sister. Years later, she explains this choice. "I love her best and always have." On their seventeenth birthday, their father partially acknowledges them by inviting them to appear with him in a musical revue based loosely on the Bard. A few years later, Melchior, rich and famous, invites them to his newly acquired manor house, which he intends to make the country home of the Royal Family of the British Theatre but which resembles "a permanent stage set." When the house confirms its impermanence by burning down, Melchior announces that he will take all of his houseguests, including the twins, to Hollywood to make a film version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, scripted by Peregrine Hazard, "with additional dialogue by William Shakespeare."

Part three, is a Hollywood extravaganza, complete with a famous actresses, ever-hopeful starlets, and ever-predatory casting couch directors. In this world of excess in everything, all films run over schedule and budget, their fantasy scenes too realistic and their reality too fantastic. Hollywood offers the sisters their big chance, but they blow it: Nora forsakes stardom for paste and bambini with her boyfriend, Tony; Dora flees marriage to movie mogul Genghis Khan, who has designated her to bear his son and heir. In the hilariously raucous climax to this episode, the planned triple marriage of Nora to Tony, Dora to Genghis Khan, and movie star Delia Delaney (née Daisy Duck) to Melchior Hazard turns into a melee in which Tony's Italian mother reclaims her erring son, Dora reworks the Shakespearean "'substitute bride' bit" to marry Genghis to his pining former spouse disguised as Dora, and Delia and Melchior run off to two months of marital misery before landing in divorce court. The twins return to England as "sadder and wiser girls," but with their radical innocence and essential goodness miraculously intact.

Part four underscores the sourness of their return to a home and family in which they remain outsiders. Invited to the twenty-first birthday celebration of Melchior's legitimate twin daughters, Saskia and Imogen, Dora and Nora see themselves permanently outcast and unloved as both Melchior and Peregrine dote upon the legitimate twins who, like the evil sisters of a folktale, return love with cruelty and ingratitude. At the nadir of their fortunes, dismayed at the reported suicide of their spurned and pregnant goddaughter Tiffany, they receive an invitation to the one hundredth birthday party of Melchior Hazard, to which they determine to go. Defiantly arrayed in garish finery, with Melchior's first wife in tow, they arrive at Melchior's mansion on the right side of the Thames. The sedate festivities are interrupted by a series of escalating crises, among them Wheelchair's confession to

Melchior that Saskia and Imogen are Peregrine's daughters, not his, and Saskia's attempt to get rid of her father by slipping poison into his birthday cake. When everything that could possibly go wrong has done so, the family's ill fortunes are reversed by a series of wild surprises. Peregrine returns from the jungles of South America bearing remarkable gifts that completes the twin's deepest desires, Tiffany reappears (very much alive), Wheelchair's evil daughters make amends, and the party culminates in a scene of "laughter, forgiveness, generosity, reconciliation" that exceeds even the joyous conclusions of Shakespearean comedy. The central concerns are the relationship between illusion and reality. In every contest between them, illusion is the victor. As the story treats the theme of illusion, it calls attention to its own narrative. As a result, the book is relentlessly, almost remorselessly, cheerful.

Through its conscious manipulation, the book demonstrates that the difference between comedy and tragedy lies not in subject matter but in treatment. Or, in the words of the book, "Comedy is tragedy that happens to other people." Never does the book more clearly reveal its power than when it confesses its self-imposed limitations, for despite the constant reminder of its artifice, the narrative is so joyful and its optimism so compelling that the reader again and again suspends disbelief. By repeatedly exhorting the reader to look on the bright side, however, the narrative continually evokes the dark if hidden side of things. At this moment, the books seem to say, comedy is centre stage, but tragedy is always waiting in the wings. The novel ends with Dora and Nora being presented with the twin babies of the missing son Gareth to look after – a gift from Peregrine. They realise that they "can't afford" to die until they've seen their children grow up. The final line of the story is a message constantly conveyed throughout the novel: "What a joy it is to dance and sing!"

### Chapter 3

#### Oppression of Daughters

*Wise Children's* demythologising the presentation of the traditional world as Carter conceives it. The patriarchal men in her story embrace their inherited status and consistently invent arguments to maintain a dominant position. However, according to the narrator these men are not entitled to their unquestionable reign. They derive power mainly from the oppression of others and the unwarranted appropriation of serious culture. The narrator of the story balances between indignation about her own position and yet a desire to become a legitimate part of the patriarchal matrix. Eventually, she can break through her position of illegitimacy which will allow her to evaluate patriarchal institutions in a more objective way. In her text, Carter proclaims the deficit of traditional society and evokes the idea of an alternative kind of world. In *Writing from the Front Line*, Sarah Gamble identifies *Wise Children* as Carter's "boldest deconstruction of the patriarch". The patriarchal figure is always present in her fictional work. He is typically a dandy-like persona whose façade is not just a pose. It is vital to his survival in the world. The patriarch is never the controlling force in the text, yet he is often "the object of its compulsive fascination". As predators, Carter's protagonists are fascinated by this figure since they will have to attack him. Several women in the novel will discover ways to stand up to their disadvantaged position in the family and in culture. By striving for self-empowerment, these protagonists will finally be able to put patriarchal society into perspective

Psychological oppression set of in *Wise Children* are presented with the distinguished Hazard family. This well-known troop of performers constitutes a beacon for the common man to look up to they represent the pinnacle of legitimacy and especially in British society. Outside the holy bonds of matrimony however, a

very different story lurks, anxious to be told beyond the boundaries of respectability, the Hazard family hides bastard offspring. To sketch this family in which absolute powers are essential, I will draw up a fruitful comparison to the power dimensions in a monarchy. More than one critic has already pointed out a likeness between the Hazards and royalty Kate Webb even specifically mentions the Windsor family as a source of Carter's inspiration: Mirroring the collapse both of empire and royalty, the imbrications of, *The Royal Family* of theatre make them appear as vulgar and commercial as our latter-day House of Windsor. Like them, the Hazard dynasty become national sport, soap opera masquerading as news. Especially the crown imagery in the novel seems to support this royal metaphor. A more important parallel is the frequency of illegitimate royal offspring. Throughout the ages, rumours about bastard children of the king have continuously fascinated the court of Henry I, for example—who was the British monarch during the 12<sup>th</sup> century—was reputedly the biological father of 20 bastard children. And even in a 21st century context, discoveries of illegitimate royal children, such as Delphine Boel in Belgium, still cause quite the 8See the appendices for family trees which will make it easier to become acquainted with the Hazard-Chance family. The most important difference is that on paper, all children have been conceived either within wedlock or with an unknown partner. More explanatory details will follow in my text.

As a king indeed, the Hazard pater family as reigns over his subjects unquestionable and unapproachable. He refuses to care about the day-to-day worries of others and revels in his own superiority. The royal figure corresponds perfectly to how Carter prefers to paint her patriarchs. The illegitimate child and narrator of the family story, Dora Chance, also picks up on this imagery:

“There were rings on his finger, like a king or pope, and a big gold medallion round his neck” (WC198).

Her entire narration revolves around her cruel father, yet by contemplating his position, she finally reaches a stage of rebellion which is mostly expressed in her narration. *Wise Children* is presented as the first draft of the protagonist's revealing biography. As an insider she will attack the foundations of her father's realm, setting off with discussing how he cowardly neglected his illegitimate children.

In traditional society the father embodies a perverse Law in its façade of power, relying on the very thing it forbids: the daughter's desire". This type of power dimensions echoed in *Wise Children*. For his daughters, Melchior is a mythical object of fascination. His admiration strengthens his claim to legitimacy. The key to the father's status seems to be his persistent unavailability to his offspring, which grants him an erotic aura. To maintain the power balance, the patriarch does not reciprocate the attentions of his daughters. Instead, he betrays their commitment. Ultimately this results in complex feeling of frustration on their part and eventually these can even verge on desire. Obviously, the sexual tension in their relationship poisons the natural father-daughter relationship.

By granting Dora Chance the word, Carter seems to ironically subvert the destiny of Ida Bauer. In her narration, Dora does not suppress any aspect of her emotional life. Dora is consciously aware of these unexplainable sensations and feels the urge to vent them in her narration. When she is informed of who her father is, she experiences this controversial infatuation for the first time:

He was tall, dark and handsome. God he was handsome in those days. And smashing legs, which a man must have for Shakespeare.

I did piss myself when I saw him, in fact he has Such eyes!  
 Melchior's eyes, warm and dark and sexy as the inside of a  
 London cab at wartime. His Eyes. (WC57)

Dora is indeed able to reminisce on all her experiences with a great humour sense. I would however refrain from annihilating the negative effect of her situation. Whenever she is confronted with him, she swoons and desires intensely to be acknowledged and hence accepted into his legitimate family:

“Over the years, the curiosity turned into a yearning, a longing”  
 (WC57)”.

By attesting to her daughterly attraction, Dora boldly crosses the boundaries of the patriarchal matrix which stipulate a clear-cut division between the daughter and the father. Whereas Dora can openly and analytically discuss her ambiguous feelings towards her father, Melchior's legitimate daughters are hindered in expressing their feelings as they are officially his actual daughters. As such, their position is more comparable to the situation of Ida Bauer. However, in *Wise Children* the narrator focuses on a more cheerful side of life. By addressing how the patriarch relies on a seduction of the daughter, Carter succeeds in highlighting another weakness of the traditional societal structure. The connection she established to Freud's patient Ida Bauer a clever device in order to criticise the psychoanalyst's androcentric conception of the family in which the father figure cannot be questioned. By granting the word to his illegitimate daughters, it becomes abundantly clear that the myth of the ever-righteous patriarch is one to be shattered. Both pairs of twins crave his acknowledgment and this results in a complex sexual attraction towards their father figure. But from Dora's narration, it becomes clear how the fraud's patriarchal system

has produced its victims. At Melchior's centennial birthday party finally a gradual opposition against the phallic matrix unfolds. It is the elderly Lady Atalanta, accompanying the Chance twins at the party who decides to finally unravel two great family secrets. At last, a mother makes use of her knowledge about reproduction. Hereby, she succeeds in dismantling the legitimacy of the father. Not only does Melchior's first wife reveal his fatherhood of Dora and Nora. For the Chance twins, this is the signal to finally come forth as the daughters of Melchior Hazard. As soldiers about to be knighted, they sobbingly approach their father who at last recognises his daughters with the words:

I am the one who deserves to weep" (WC217). Contrary to what one might expect, these longed-for words do not have the earth-shaking effect Dora anticipated. She herself, just as the audience, lives through this revolutionary moment as a piece of theatre: "I could have sworn that then, the curtain came down." (WC217).

But only after being accepted by the legitimate family, Dora and Nora can start to question the value of a patriarchal model. They can finally begin to think of their father as only "the projection of their own desires, fuelled by the cultural myth of patriarchal authority". In the text, the eventual relative nature of legitimacy manifests itself immediately after Melchior's confession. Nora addresses the father she has always looked up to with a comradely;

Here, old man. [...] What about a dance? "" (WC217). 'Did you know, I sometimes wonder if we haven't been making him up all alone if he isn't just a collection of our hopes and dreams and wishful thinking in the afternoons. (WC230).

This later passage where in Nora ponders on the unsatisfying feeling the twins are left with. Clearly, in this passage, she describes how the girl snow realise that they have been living under the constant influence of myths. Later in this dialogue, Nora comments on her father with the idea what a fraud he is and thereby she exposes the patriarchal family model as fraudulent and bankrupt. The sisters finally acknowledge that they are not forced to follow in the ascribed duality between legitimate and bastard family. A possible transformation of this model however, does excite them. The resistance Dora and Nora offer is remarkable and inspiring because it changes the perception of our narrator. After this episode, the possibility of a different kind of future for the Chance twin sisters suggested. It must be noted however, that the sisters' victory over the patriarchal matrix is –objectively speaking–not as triumphant as it looks initially. First of all, one could see Melchior's confession as „too little, too late“. The patriarch celebrates his one hundredth birthday and the Chance twins have at that point spent seventy-five years as illegitimate children. It can be questioned how much any of the parties has to win or lose. More importantly however, Melchior is severely weakened when he finally chooses to acknowledge his illegitimate offspring. Dora even suggests that Melchior's confession might have been triggered by nothing but senility:

“I must admit it –I fear our father's softening of the heart was not unconnected to the softening of his brain” (WC203).

After being addressed on the street with Good God, weren't you Melchior Hazard, once? Melchior had started to suffer from increasing uncertainty. He even threw away his precious cardboard crown, thereby dethroning himself.

Patriarchal entity in the story when he eventually, surrenders to his biological children. Dora and Nora have attained a personal victory in finally dealing with their father, but Melchior's avowal does not compromise the status of the reigning patriarch as a mythical concept. On the contrary: in this instance, the public opinion could even applaud the old man. A mild reception is already hinted at when during his dance with Nora there does not remain "a dry eye in the house" (WC218). For the audience, Melchior has gained such an iconic status that an emotional confession erases his lifelong negligence of his daughters. No one will ever critically question him and a societal status quo persists. Therefore, in order to actively subvert patriarchy, Carter needed to include a more relevant example of the contestation of male oppression. This storyline is provided by Tiffany, the godchild of Dora and Nora, 'Our Tiff', as the twins call her, is the grand grandchild of "Our Cyn" a street girl whom Peregrine sent to the Chance House. She was taken in by Grandma Chance and started a matrilineal in the Brixton area. This family is completely free from any kind of patriarchal restraint. In Dora's description of "Our Cyn's" family tree:

" Men are not even awarded with a first name: Her kids were in and out all the time after she married that cabby[...] It was "our Cyn's" eldest, Mavis, who got off with a girl which resulted in our Brenda, whom we took care of when she had her bit of trouble and brought home our precious little Tiffany". (WC35,).

Clearly, the male component is hardly as important in "Our Cyn's" alternative family of Dora and Nora's life. For a moment however, Tiffany will succumb to the temptations of the traditional family myth. Yet, her matriarchal background will enable the girl to explicitly bring her controlling patriarch to his knees. Not surprisingly, the man whom she will tear to matrilineality is a system in which the

lines of descent are traced through the succession of mothers in a family shreds will be of Hazard signature. After seeing Tristram Hazard, one of Melchior's children with "My Lady Margarine", the young and naïve Tiffany falls head over heels in love with him. She becomes the suggestive hostess in his television show *Lashings of Lolly*:

"And there she was, every week, with her five-year-old's smile, offering the entire viewing public a peek down her cleavage while she sang out: „Yes sir! Lashings of Lolly!" (WC40).

Tristram lavishes the girl with gifts and, in Dora's opinion, treats her as a sexual object. Dora finds evidence of this in Tiffany's wardrobe which includes a shirt displaying the number 69: "Shows what he thought of her, really". Obviously, the Chance godmothers do not have a good eye in the situation, considering their own experience with Hazard men. And they are proven right. When Tiff becomes pregnant, Tristram breaks off the relationship and returns to the perverse affair with his (assumedly) half-sister Saskia. Initially, Tiffany goes through a phase of genuine female hysteria. In a dazed state, she shows up during a live episode of, *Lashings of Lolly*" in which she cannot do anything but singsong a haunting tune. As a total sign of humiliation, she pulls off her shirt to uncover her bare breasts and bulging belly. In tears, she finally addresses Tristram with: "You only lent it to me! Nothing was mine, not ever!" (WC46). Clearly, Tiffany dreamt of living within the she was under the impression that Tristram could offer her the (mythical) suburban dream. But then regnant girl ends up feeling robbed by her great love. After the live television show, she goes missing. When the family is notified of the discovery of a female body in "Father Thames", everybody assumes that Our Tiff has committed suicide. Tiffany's death by drowning in the, fatherly river symbolises her definite defeat by the patriarchal system.

In Carter's novel however, an end is rarely absolute. Infused with hope, *Wise Children* gives Tiffany the opportunity to return with a vengeance. On Melchior's birthday party, a truly subversive event indeed, Tiffany returns to the land of the living, escorted by Peregrine. Dora immediately observes a transformation in Tiffany's looks: "She'd got on a pair of overalls and those big boots, Doc Martens, but she looked lovelier than ever" (WC210). When Tristram sees her again, aware of the cameras, he is quick to get on his knees, ask for her forgiveness and finally propose. Not the girl she once was, Tiffany replies with a bawdy: „Fat chance! “. She continues to deal one blow after another: "Marry your auntie, instead" and "There's more to fathering than fucking, you know" (WC211). In "The Stars that Spring from Bastardising", Anne Hedger Feldt remarks that "this time, the mother is offered a choice, but deliberately rejects the model of the bourgeois family which first authorises the notions of legitimacy and illegitimacy". In this, Tiffany differs from her godmothers who eventually always dreamt of acting out the bourgeois fantasy with their father, despite their many disappointments. I believe that, dressed in overalls and Doc Martens, Tiffany assumes a temporary male persona and sets her own rules for society, just as the Hazard men have always managed to do. In fact, during this situation a complete gender reversal is displayed.

The masculinised Tiffany mockingly emasculates her patriarch. After her victorious confrontation, Tiffany will subscribe to the family model her foremothers have laid out for her. She will raise her –no doubt –daughter in a makeshift family just "Our Cyn" I will discuss this alternative lifestyle in the chapter about the utopian family model . With applause, Tiffany leaves the room. Whereas the applause after Melchior's avowal was directed at the patriarch, this time the angry woman receives appreciation and encouragement. In my opinion, Tiffany's rejection of the patriarchal

family modelist the most deconstructive and –at the same time –transform in *Wise Children*.

## Conclusion

In this project, I have investigated in which ways Angela Carter addresses the quest for female empowerment and patriarchal oppression in her final novel *Wise Children*. This project has attempted to offer an in-depth analysis of each aspect of the protagonists' mission to escape the mythical pretences of patriarchal society". In the first part of this project, my analyses have been focused on a discussion of several motives which Carter utilizes to draw a picture of female oppression. In *Wise Children*, she casts a look on male power enforcement in the family and on the cultural scene. Melchior Hazard is the ultimate anti-hero who anxiously tries to maintain his dominant position in society, but is easily exposed as a weakling. His predominant fear is to be unmasked as a fraud, a patriarch who lies claim on what is not rightfully his. In order to keep hold of his exemplary status, he cruelly casts out the illegitimate daughters he has brought into the world. Melchior attempts to fortify his status by assuming an exclusive position above his entire family. This unavailable stance is actually a strategy in order to solicit a constant admiration of his offspring.

This seduction of the daughter will help Melchior to overcome the anxiety of his paternity and defend his legitimacy. By addressing the complex father-daughter connection in her novel, Carter – in opposition to the theory of Freud – demonstrates how dominant men in society are excused of any responsibility towards their family. In *Wise Children*, the fraudulent family structure is dismantled when mothers finally make use of their knowledge about the reproduction of their children. After Dora and Nora are finally recognised as part of the Hazard lineage, they can come to question the myths on family they have been living by. However, Tiffany was able to reject these myths in a more active way when she emasculates a reigning patriarch: Tristram Hazard. Her intervention which receives an applause from the company indicates how

women have the right to forcefully reject the familial structures by which they are supposed to live. A second front on which the Chances have to strive for emancipation, is the cultural scene. The patriarchal figure in *Wise Children* appropriates the figure of Shakespeare in order to back up his claim to serious culture. Dora's narration however, exposes how Melchior is eager enough to have his vision compromised if there is money involved.

In *Wise Children*, all female performers on the surface conform to the myth of the seductive woman. By catering to the male gaze, they are able to survive in show business. For women it is less evident to make a cultural act however. Firstly, she challenges the patriarchal constructs which prevent women from expressing their emotions through art. Again, the deliberate silencing of Freudian figures can serve as an illustration of Dora's muted position in *Wise Children*. But Dora overcomes these limitations because she has a story to tell to the masses, but more specifically to the children she will raise. In this act of writing, she also has to battle a male-dominated literary heritage. As a narrator, Dora connects with the male literary heritage, but she clearly approaches her sources in an unconventional way. She includes fragments of texts from 'high' as well as 'low' genres and approaches these with the necessary irony. This female narrator acknowledges the ways of the past, but uses literature in such a way that it serves as a tool for her emancipation.

Hence, we can conclude that in *Wise Children*, Angela Carter offers an inside look into the fraudulent suppression by a gendered society and strives for an empowerment of its victimised women. The novel suggests several solutions to achieve a better societal future in the patriarchal matrix. However, it is even more so invested in asking questions.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE  
ANGADIKKADAVU**

**POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER ELEMENTS IN  
*SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE***

**Written by Kurt Vonnegut**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ANJANA VK**

**Register No: DB18AEGR022**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Anu p Thomas

April 2021

# **Kannur University**

## **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report **“Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder elements in *Slauterhouse-Five*. Written by Kurt Vonnegut** is a bonafide work of Miss Anjana VK, who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Head of Department

Ms. Anu P.Thomas

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Anjana V K, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Elements in *Slughterhouse-Five*” written by Kurt Vonnegut has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms Anu p.Thomas of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College. I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Anjana V K

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR022

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Anjana V K

## Table of Content

	Page No.
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	2
Trauma theory an introduction	
Chapter Two:	9
<i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i>	
Chapter Three:	14
Post-traumatic stress disorder elements in <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i>	
Conclusion	24
Works Cited	26

## Introduction

My project is entitled “Post-traumatic Elements in Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse- Five*”. This project discloses post- traumatic stress disorder symptoms in this book. It is an attempt to analyze the conflict between the will to deny horrible events experienced by the protagonists of the novel in World War Second and the will to proclaim them aloud.

This project divided into tree chapters. First chapter deals with Trauma Theory. This chapter states that the psychological distress symptoms including the inability to sleep, lack of concentration, flashbacks. It also explores the post structural, socio cultural, and post colonial theory.

The second chapter is about the novel *Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut. It is one of famous novel by him and it deals with various elements of trauma. The *Slaughterhouse Five* is the story Billy Pilgrim, the novel’s protagonist, has become “unstuck in time.” He travels between periods of his life, unable to control which period he lands in.

The third chapter deals with elements of trauma in *Slaughterhouse Five*. The protagonists are both subjected to the dialectic of trauma in that they find it difficult to remain clearheaded, to see more than a few fragments of the picture at one time, and to retain all the pieces and to fit them together.

## Chapter: 1

### Trauma: An overview

Trauma emerged as a concept of study in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with Jean Martin Charcot, a French physician working with traumatized women in the Piti Salpetriere Hospital in Paris, who first discovered the connection between trauma and hysteria. Freud influenced by Charcot's investigations during his early studies on hysteria in 1893 found the presence of dissociation in the hysteria. Pierre Janet a student of Charcot continued the study of trauma with particular emphasis on dissociation and traumatic memories. The initial focus in the study of trauma was personal experiences such as child abuse, illness, bullying, domestic violence, rape and death of loved ones. Gradually, victims of accidents, natural calamities and socio-political events such as wars and terrorist attacks lent a completely different angle to the study of trauma. The increase in untoward social-political events has created an insecure and vulnerable environment which has added to the magnitude of the traumatic experiences.

The two world wars became a landmark in the study of trauma. The soldiers were affected by what was termed as the "shell shock" syndrome, as they displayed reaction of extreme fear, high anxiety, inadequate guilt feelings, lack of responsiveness and repetition of the traumatic experiences in their dreams. A traumatic event causes a corrosive effect on physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual facets of an individual. Studies have revealed surprising changes in the structure of the brain as a consequence of traumatic experience.

According to Freud's text, the term trauma is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the victim's body but upon the mind of the victim. A trauma victim endures physical as well as psychological vehement condition. The attack resulted in political,

cultural, and social trauma which became problematic in a number of ways for the victims and for the whole world. Since Sigmund Freud was the first to delineate psychoanalytically the notion of trauma. Freud used the term hysteria to this psychological trauma on the basis of women's experiences in his *Project for a Scientific Psychology* [1895]. Later on this trauma came to be known as 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder' [PTSD], which included the "symptoms of what had previously been cancelled shell-shock, combat stress, delayed stress syndrome, and traumatic neurosis, and referred to responses both human and natural catastrophes".

Freud also uses the term "repetition compulsion" for the trauma theory that is "the belated and obsessive return of past events not properly assimilated into memory; disturbing experiences that had been repressed by the subject causing 'memories' from the unconscious to irrupt into the conscious mind." Freud accomplishes that the real trauma is produced by the clash between the two events when trauma occurs and "it does explain the importance of the temporal delay, which seems to be inherent to trauma and which Freud calls 'belatedness". The most prominent novels manifest the ways of uncritical recycling of paradigms inherited from orthodox trauma theory. One of the most debilitating effects of traumatic stress is a condition known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder [PTSD]. The current trauma literature suggests that many factors are related to the increased or decreased risk for PTSD. The probability of developing PTSD and the severity and chronicity of symptoms experienced is a function of variables, the most important being exposed to a traumatic event. It is therefore important to bear in mind that, even among vulnerable individuals, PTSD would not exist without exposure to a traumatic event.

According to the available sources from Lucy Bond "in 1980, PTSD was classified by the American Psychological Association [APA] to explain the

psychological symptoms exhibited by veterans of the Vietnam War” and after “ten years after the APA’s classification of PTSD in 1980, literary critics at Yale University established the foundations of contemporary trauma theory shifting attention from the specifically psychical to the more broadly cultural dimensions of the condition” [Bond 19]. Instead of attempting to espouse into armistice society and cope with conflict “PTSD, they exist in an unending moment of pre-and post-traumatic stress induced by a future they have already experienced and are perhaps destined to live through again” [19], that is why “their traumatic memories of the future collide with the violence and terror of the present as they struggle to prevent what has already scarred them. Their war is never over, nor, like a war declared on an abstraction, can it ever be over” [Bond 19]. The earnestness of the essential to measure the influence of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks and to interconnect the suppositions is replicated in the fact that several papers were published very quickly following the attacks.

Though the trauma is assimilated to the various nervous ‘shocks’, physical wounding, psychological damage, caused by industrial accidents and railway disasters, performed by supplement experience of an unprecedented event. Trauma is like the mental breakdown due to the complex denotations and it enables a trauma victim’s mind to re-establish the normal mentality. Trauma cannot be described properly in words just as cheapening, a reduction of its irreducible atrocity to something less threatening, more controllable”. But, the victim’s trauma and the trauma of their family are different from one another. Trauma encapsulate an injury to both the mind and the body, while a body injury that can be healed, it is very difficult to heal the mind because the wounding of the mind is much more complex as it is not experienced in real time, which makes it harder to register for victim’s consciousness. Sometimes trauma represents the vital inevitability of reconfiguring and transmuting the smashed

range of significance and appearance. In fact, Spiegelman's consideration seems the deepest one because he defines trauma as, "an external interruption" that follows witness, something that "resides in the temporality of the witness" and more exactly in time's standing still.

Cathy Caruth is the most important expert in trauma theory and trauma studies. She was influenced by Sigmund Freud and popularised his trauma theory in a broader sense. She wrote two of the seminal texts in trauma studies: *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* [1995] and *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* [1996]. Her concept regarding trauma finds a place in her introduction to *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. In *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, a collection of essays from various authors on memory and trauma, Caruth explains her inspiration and the key questions that trauma theorists are attempting to understand. She explains that her interest in trauma comes from her wanting "to understand its surprising impact: to examine how trauma unsettles and forces us to rethink our notions of experience, and of communication, in therapy, in the classroom, and in literature, as well as in psychoanalytic theory". Her interest in trauma theory led her to write *Unclaimed Experience*, which explores trauma and its relationship to literature, and is one of the most significant texts in trauma studies.

The experience of trauma victims merges both representation and remembrance and the trauma victims remain bothered by the belatedly repeated occurrences or image of the tragic event. Freud defined trauma "as the succession of the occurrence of the event followed by its suppression and finally by its return" [Verbestal 11]. Caruth extends Freudian understanding of trauma. While Freud believed that the victim forgets the event after it happened, "referring to its return to consciousness with the term *nachträglichkeit* [belatedness]," Caruth claims that "the victim is not able to forget

because he did not experience the event in the first place, due to ‘dissociation’” [verbetal 11]. The experience of trauma, “the fact of latency would thus seem to consist, not in forgetting of a reality that can hence never be fully known, but in an inherent latency within the experience itself” [*Unclaimed Experience* 17].

Caruth strongly believes that any traumatic event can be experienced on account of the vicarious form of flashbacks, physical impressions, or imaginings, which bring emptiness in someone’s life by making him or her linguistically disabled because “in its persistent intangible return, and ‘its repeated imposition as both image and amnesia, the trauma thus seems to evoke the difficult truth of a history that is constituted by the very incomprehensibility of its occurrence” [*Unclaimed Experience* 18]. Through this Caruth throws light on the multiple personality disorder of the trauma victim where the victim sees the whole tragic event or its happening from a distance. In this situation the trauma victim thinks as if the accident is really happening to someone else. It is only after a while, and in some cases through intense healing, the victim fully realizes that he not only involved in the tragic event but also traumatized by it.

Traumatic memories influence the decisions and control the behaviour to the extent that it may result in multiple personality disorder. The consciousness neglects the routine experiences the way in which it ignored the traumatic experience. Thus the individual becomes emotionally cramped, which further hampers the growth of his personality. The function of the mind is to integrate experiences as they occur and put the memories in proper context of time and place. An individual combines the memories of the incidents with the other events of his life. During this process of accumulation, many old or insignificant memories fade away. The memories which have a great impact get fixed in the mind. If the memories are traumatic they return in the form of hallucinations, flashbacks and nightmares. The memories are revoked when

a person faces similar situation. The victims may either re experience the trauma completely or live in the vague memory of the trauma or continuously switch from the traumatic memory to the routine life.

Trauma creates a fear in an individual, a fear for his own safety as well as for the safety of his loved ones. The traumatic experience puts the individual in a sphere near to death, which changes his entire attitude towards his life and the world. His helplessness to deal with the situation creates feelings of sinking self-confidence. His angle of viewing the world changes to that of distrust, doubt and a sense of being cheated. What you derive from an experience in normal situations is different from that under a traumatic impact. Trauma changes the equation of self and experiences. Cathy Caruth observes that when a traumatic incident takes place, the victim who escapes faces trauma. However, the impact of the trauma is experienced not immediately, but after a few days. This gap between the occurrence of the traumatic incident and the pathological symptoms of trauma is called latency period. The traumatic experience repeats itself in the form of dreams and hallucinations. A surprising fact is that the survivor of the traumatic incident is not able to remember the details of the traumatic incident exactly as it happened. The dreams are thus a literal representation of the traumatic incident as it has occurred. Thus, the full impact of the trauma is experienced belatedly. This belated realisation of the force of trauma makes the victim think of the traumatic encounter, and this absence compels him to constantly think about the incident. Thus the victim becomes possessed by the traumatic experience.

The effort to come out of the trauma becomes more traumatic than the experience of trauma itself. When the survivor narrates the traumatic incident with the purpose of healing, he is not able to provide a truthful account of what happened as the traumatic incident is not completely assimilated by him. Caruth draws our attention to

the fact that trauma escapes language. The traumatic experience is so sudden and overwhelming that it cannot be verbalised. It is very difficult to put the entire experience in words. Hence, counselling the trauma victims demands the sincerest kind of listening. Listening here is not just a simple act of hearing, but it is understanding and assuming the unspoken words and the silence. It demands a special ability to listen through the departure from the truth.

Caruth believes that it is difficult to express the traumatic experience, but she also agrees that once trauma is verbalised, the survivor is freed from it. Caruth attaches special importance to the studying literature to understand trauma. Freud too had made use of a literary text- a story from Tasso – to explain the concept of traumatic repetition in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Caruth believes that literature helps us to understand the mind and the heart. It can represent those aspects of human experiences that cannot be conveyed in ordinary modes of expression. Literature enables us to bear witness to event that cannot be completely known. It opens our ears to experiences that might have otherwise remained unspoken or unheard.

## Chapter Two

*Slaughter house five* is the story of Billy Pilgrim, a decidedly non-heroic man who has become “unstuck in time”. He travels back and forth in time, visiting his birth, death, all the moments in between repeatedly and out of order. The novel is framed by chapters one and ten, in which Vonnegut himself talks about the difficulties of writing the novel and the effects of Dresden on his own life. In between, Billy Pilgrim’s life is given to us out of order and in small fragments for the sake of clarity, this short summary will put Billy’s life in chronological order, although in the novel every chapter spans events over the course of many years.

This story is an autobiography of Kurt Vonnegut. He was an extremely popular American writer of humor and science-fiction novels and short stories. Vonnegut has particularly remained an important mentor for young pacifists, although his work has inspired a rather rabid cult following amongst others. His novels are known for their dark humor and playful use of science fiction, as well as for their serious moral vision and cutting social commentary. Although his work has sometimes been criticized for being too simplistic, these are many who consider his imagination and sense of humor to be singular and peerless. He is at once irreverent and highly moral, and this rare combination has made his voice integrate to American literature. On December 14, 1944 Vonnegut was captured in the bottle of the bulge. He was held as a Prisoner of War in Dresden, a beautiful German city with no major industries or military presence. He was there when the Allies bombed Dresden, an entirely unexpected attack. Vonnegut and the other Prisoner of War were some of the only survivors. They waited out the bombing in a meat cellar deep under the Slaughter House. This experience

would not only shape his world view, but would provide the direct inspiration to write this novel.

In the novel *Slaughterhouse Five*, the protagonist Billy is born in 1922 in Ilium, New York. He grows into a weak and awkward young man, studying briefly at the Ilium school of optometry briefly before he is drafted. Billy is assigned as a Chaplain's assistant and soon after his father dies in a hunting accident, he boards the ship to overseas to join the infantry regiment. After the regiment is decimated by the German army during the Battle of the Bulge, he and three others, including Roland Weary, they find themselves behind German lines. Before his capture, for the first time, he experiences the time shifting.

Billy and the other American Prisoner of War are temporarily shipped to a camp full of dying Russians and a few pampered British officers. Billy suffers a nervous breakdown so he takes a shot of morphine that again takes him to time – tripping. Billy and the other Americans are then moved to a prisoner camp in Dresden, a beautiful German city that has no major industries and no significant military presence. They are housed in building five, which was once used as a slaughterhouse. But in the span of one night in February of 1945, Dresden is bombed by American officers that led to the asphyxiation and incineration of 1, 35000 people including civilians and military personnel. Billy and the other POWs wait out the bombing in a meat cellar. The next day at noon, they come out and find a landscape that looks like the surface of the moon with no food and water, the POWs and four guards trek out to the suburbs. The American prisoners stay in an inked pers stable for a while, but soon the authorities round up POWs to excavate the city for bodies. In May, Russians take the area Billy's repatriated.

He returns to Ilium to finish optometry school. After getting engaged to the daughter of the school's owner, Billy has a mental breakdown and is committed to a veteran's hospital. There, he is introduced to the science fiction of Kilgore Trout by a fellow patient. After his release, he marries Valencia as planned. Her father is wealthy, and with a little help from him, Billy grows rich, Billy and Valencia have two children.

On the night of his daughter's wedding, Billy is kidnapped by aliens from the planet Tralfamadore. The Tralfamadorians exist in the fourth dimension, and consequently they have a completely different view of time. For them, all moments happen simultaneously and always. They take him to their world and put him in a zoo, where he mates with an actress called Montana Wildhack. Using a time warp, they sent him to the earth. He says nothing about the events until he suffers a head injury in a plane crash on his way to an Optometry conference in Montreal. His wife dies in an accident on her way to visit him. After he returns to his home, he feels that the time has arrived the world to know about what he has experienced. So, he runs off to New York and goes on a radio talk show to talk about his alien abduction experiences and the Tralfamadorian concept of time. His daughter Barbara, just twenty one years old, suddenly motherless and with a father who appears to be mentally unbalanced, takes care of Billy but feels a great deal of resentment and frustration.

Billy in a tape records about his death. He predicts that it will happen in 1976 after Chicago being hydrogen bombed by Chinese.

Billy is really receptive to the Tralfamadorian way of looking at things because he has been disconnected from time since 1944. He has seen his own birth and death many times, so he is uniquely qualified to believe that each independent moment is its own complete world. After all, this is both how Billy experiences time and how the

novel is told-scene by scene in tiny chunks of narrative that only make sense when you look at them all at once. The novel ends with Billy digging through the rubble of Dresden to find bodies for cremation. After finishing his job, he and his Prisoner of War pals are sent to a stable to wait out the rest of the war. When the war in Europe ends, the stable door opens. Outside, all is silence except for the sounds of the birds singing, “poo-tee-weet?”.

The novel begins with an epigraph come from the stanza of the Christmas Carol “Away from Manager”, that is

The cattle are lowing

The Baby awakes.

But the little Lord Jesus

No crying He makes.

The epigraph draws a comparison between Billy Pilgrim and Jesus Christ. Vonnegut describes Billy as crying very little even though he has witnessed many incidents worth crying about. The only time he cries is when he saw the miserable condition of the horses. Also, later as a civilian in Ilium, he has cried. Vonnegut through the epigraph is trying to show that how little Billy has shown his emotions during the war.

The Second World War, affected every part of the world during the years 1939-45. Along with the Second World War, was one of the great watersheds of 20th century geopolitical history. By the end of the war, most soviet POWs liberated from Nazi camps and many repatriated civilians were detained in special filtration camps where they were subjected to NKVD evaluation, and 226,127 were sent to the gulag as real or perceived Nazi collaborators. Japanese prisoners of war camps, many of which used as

labour camps, also had high death rates. The novel *Slaughter House Five* also explains the destructiveness of the war and the post – war life through the character Billy Pilgrim. The novel shows how the war has brutalized the innocent, weak young man Billy. The main character Billy Pilgrim and the other characters like Paul Lazzaro, Bernard O’ Harry and including the writer suffer from physical as well as psychological devastation caused by the war. Dresden bombing had made the characters emotionally and psychologically unstable even after the war. The material success and the post war life of the Billy speak about his life at surface level but at a deeper level, he is war – torn man. It can be understood that the inclusion of Tralfamadorians theory of fourth dimension is part of his hallucination as a means of escape from the real world.

## Chapter Three

### Post-Traumatic Elements in Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-five*

*Slaughterhouse-five* by Kurt Vonnegut is a probably handled science-fiction novel or a quasi autobiographical moral statement. It cannot ignore the destructive properties of war; it is also a categorization of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. During the world war second the protagonist experienced many horrible events. The psychological distress symptoms including the inability to sleep, lack of concentration, flashbacks and state of surrender are thus investigated in the character of Billy Pilgrim and the narrator as the two figures are suffering from PTSD. The protagonists are both subjected to the dialectic of trauma in that they find it difficult to remain clear headed, to see more than a few fragments of the pictures at one time, and to retain all the pieces and to fit them together. It is even more difficult to find a language that conveys persuasively what they have seen.

The narrator and the protagonist of Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, Billy Pilgrim, were traumatized in the Second World War. Thus the symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder can be traced in both characters. However, each seek for recovery in their own way, Billy time travel to the Tralfamadore and talk about it on a radio show and the narrator attempts to write a book about the massacre in Dresden. His will to keep in touch with his old war buddy for sharing memories of past demonstrates his struggle to prevail his outrage at the cruelties of war. It is an effort to put an end to his suffering from post traumatic stress disorder as the result of witnessing the cruelties of war. Although twenty three years have passed and the narrator is, at least apparently, living a secure life with a good job and a family yet he is

still suffering from the consequences of the traumatic event. His insomnia and involvement in alcohols and telephones late at night, the way he narrates his life events, the people around him and his experiences at war could be considered as clear examples in the regard. Indeed, it is him that is “unstuck” in time and his narration of Billy Pilgrim’s life story is a reflection of his internal conflicts.

O’ Hare, his ‘old war buddy’, is one of those he demands to keep in touch after years. Both attended World War II and were captured and imprisoned in Dresden, Germany, where they witnessed the bombardment of the city and the massacre of thousands of people. Almost twenty years after the incident he tends to write a book about the atrocities of war; he thus decides to reunite with Bernard for sharing old memories:

I have this disease late at night sometimes, involving alcohol and the telephone...And then, speaking gravely and elegantly into the television, I ask the telephone operators to connect me with this friend or that one, from whom I have not heard in years. (pp: 3-4)

The traumatic events appear to recondition the human nervous system; as a result, those affected by the disorder suffer from numerous types of sleep disturbances; it takes them longer to fall asleep and they are awoken more frequently during night than ordinary people( Herman 35-36). The narrator of the first chapter very clearly states that he is suffering from a disease; he knows there is something wrong with him though he might not be aware of the reasons behind such behaviors. As a matter of fact it is the memories of war that he is still suffering from. The influences of such an experiences on him are so strong that makes it impossible for him to forget it after almost twenty years. As a result his involvement with alcohol and telephone is an

unsuccessful attempt to tune out the repetitive stimuli. Unsuccessful in that event in such a situation all he tries to manage is to find O'Hare to share memories with him.

One of the other features of hyper arousal is the lack of concentration, the psychological arousal of a traumatized person continues unabated and the system of self-preservation goes on permanent alert as if the danger might return at any moment which might cause problem in concentration [Herman, 35]. This vividly traced in the narrator of the first chapter. The way he describes his time events is like following the stream of consciousness of a person who is unstuck in time. He is retelling his twenty-year lifetime experiences after World War, his marriage, his business, the process for writing his book, his reunion with his friend and their return to Dresden in a non-chronological order that the reader finds difficult to follow. The shift from one period to the other is sudden and random: As a trafficker in climaxes and thrills and characterization...I had outlined the Dresden story many times... I thought this bouncing was accidental. But I was mistaken. He had to show somebody what was in the bag, and he had decided he could trust me.

“There is a smashing thing”, he said. And we were flown to a rest camp in France, where we were fed chocolate malted milkshakes and all the other rich food until we were all covered with baby fat. Then we were sent home... [pp: 4-6]

While he tries to explain his difficulties in writing his book, suddenly he shifts to the battlefield at the end of the war and describing soldiers taking souvenirs. Among them is an Englishman who trusted to show his belongings to him. The time used in his paragraph is present as if he is experiencing the incidents at that moment. Yet all of a sudden he changes the subject to the end of the war when they were flown to rest camps. The way he describes their settlement at the event and this is the result making

fun of the rage and disgust he is still carrying within himself. During the years following the war he has not been able to forget what had happened to him, he was also unsuccessful to fulfill his dream of writing a book about it. The result is a man consequences of it. His lack concentration is one of the prominent results of it; his travelling to different time zones in the present and in the past.

One of the problem of traumatized people might confront is their inability to sleep. This characteristic was mentioned about the narrator of the story who made this point explicitly that he was suffering from a disease of sleeping late at nights. Billy Pilgrim, the protagonist of his story, is similar to him in this way. Yet the way he treats this problem is different:

Billy took off his tri-focals and his coat and his necktie and his shoes, and he closed the venetian blinds and then the drapes and he lay down the outside of the coverlet. But sleep would not come. Tears on the magic fingers, and he was jiggled as he wept. [pp:51-52]

As a wealthy man, Billy possessed a Georgian souse with all the facilities a rich man might have. One of this special furniture was a double bed with an electric blanket and a switch to turn on a gentle vibrator which was bolted to the springs of the box mattress. This vibrator called the Magic Fingers, was the idea of the doctor whom Billy took orders from due to Billy's complains about his weeping out of no reason every so often. The vibrator was indeed suggested by the doctor to help Billy take a nap every day, yet it was not helpful.

In her book *Trauma and Recover* Judith Herman [1992] states that the psychological changes of post-traumatic stress disorder are both extensive and enduring. Patients suffer from a combination of generalized anxiety symptoms and

specific fears. Instead of having a normal baseline level of alert, they have an elevated baseline of arousal in which their bodies are always on the alert for danger. The increase in arousal persists during sleep as well as in the waking state, resulting numerous types of sleep disturbance as a result people with post-traumatic stress disorder take longer to fall asleep, are more sensitive to noise and are awoken more frequently during the fact that traumatic events appear to recondition the human nervous system [p:36].

Though a wealthy and successful man in his business, Billy Pilgrim has not been able to overcome the grief and pain he has been carrying since the World War. He is living two kinds of life: on one hand is a Billy Pilgrim, an optometrist who is running his own business with five other optometrists working for him, netting over sixty thousand dollars a year. Also the owner a fifth of the new Holyday Inn and half of three Tastee-Freezes, a sort of frozen custard, stands. He is married and has two children, a daughter and a son. On the other hand is a Billy who is stuck in his memories of war, who suffers from insomnia and every so often finds himself weeping. This part of Billy's personality is kept for himself and his doctor is the person who knows about it.

The very first paragraph of chapter two which is indeed the beginning of the story about Billy Pilgrim clearly describes his states of mind. Billy's lack of control over his time travels makes the story more challenging for the reader to follow since Billy switches from a state of his life to the other frequently and often randomly. Chapters Two to Nine explore the the life events of Billy since his birth, even his pre-birth as seen by him. Until his death which is also predicted by him. The chronological Chain of events is as follows: he was born in 1922, attended war in 1944 when he experienced his first emotional breakdown, was captured in 1945 when he witnessed the bombardment of Dresden, three years later in 1948, got married to a daughter of a

wealthy optometrist and started his own business. In 1967 he was kidnapped by a saucer from the planet, Tralfamadore; in 1968 he was the only one who survived from a plane crash when he decided to tell the world about his life on Tralfamadore and finally his death in 1976 according to his own prediction:

Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time. Billy has gone to sleep a senile windower and awakened on his wedding day. He has walked through a door in 1955 and come out another one in 1941. He has gone back through that door to find himself in 1963. He has seen his birth and death many times, he says, and pays random visits to all the events in between.

Billy is spastic in time, has no control over where he is going next, and the trips aren't necessarily fun. He is in a constant state of stage fright, he says, because he never knows what part of his life he is going to have to act in next, [P:19]

What the reader confronts is a non-chronological state of event. For example, chapter two begins with a short biography of Billy to the year 1967 when he is a windower, has had a radio interview and a letter published about his experience in the planet Tralfamadore. During an argument with his daughter he travels in time to the battlefield in 1944 where he was first unstuck in time; there he traveled to his pre-birth, to the unpleasant memories of his childhood with his father, to 1965 when his mother passed the way; then to the New Years 'Eve in 1961; back again in 1944 he traveled to 1957 to his office, Finally the chapter ends with his being captured by the Germans in winter of 1944. This is the case for the rest of the chapters; full of flashbacks, random travels to the life time events from his birth in 1922 to his death in 1976. Therefore the reader needs to put these scattered pieces of reader needs to put these scattered pieces of puzzle together in order to make a vivid image out of it.

The system of self-preservation for a traumatized person goes on permanent alert and the psychological arousal continues as if the danger might return at any moment [P: 35]. One result of such a mood is lack of concentration. In the novel *Slaughterhouse Five*, it's not only Billy Pilgrim, but also the narrator of chapter one who is suffering from PTSD. Billy's being unstuck in time is an obvious proof; his time travels are also the result of lack of concentration of a narrator who is indeed suffering from the same disease.

The whole story of Billy Pilgrim is full of flashbacks to his unpleasant memories at war from 1944 to 1945, when he enlisted as a chaplain's assistance, was injured in an attack, imprisoned by the Germans in Dresden and witnessed the bombardment of the city. In chapters Two, Three and Eight, these flashbacks to are repeated for three times; in chapters six and seven, two times and the maximum of flashbacks belongs to chapter five in which he travels to the years 1944 and 1945 for five times. Some of these flashbacks happen during waking states resulted from small reminders that evoke traumatic memories; some occur as nightmare during sleep. For example when Billy was a on his way to Lions Club luncheon meeting in 1967, the neighborhood of Ilium's black ghetto reminded him of "some of the towns he had seen in the war"[P:48]. The scenes he passed by looked like "Dresden after it was fire-bombed" [P: 49].

In another scene while Billy was trying to sleep in his bed but was weeping instead, some crippled men rang the front door. These people were hired by a man to persuade people subscribe to magazines that were never delivered. One of these crippled men, who had only one leg, was on crutches; he was so jammed between his that his shoulder hid his ears. Observing these miserable people through his window, they appearance and the sound that their crutches made, reminded Billy of a time when

he and the rest of American prisoners were being marched to their boxcars by the Germans.

He closed his eyes, and opened them again. He was still weeping, but he was back in Luxembourg again. He was marching with a lot of other prisoners. Weary's eyes were tearful also. Weary was crying because of horrible pains in his feet. The hinged clogs were transforming his feet into blood puddings.[PP: 52-53]. Such an experience happened to Billy on his anniversary in 1964, while the barbershop quartet of optometrists was singing "That Old Gage of Mine". Gee, that song went, but I'd give the world to see that old gang of mine. And so on. A little later it said. So long forever, old fellows and gals, so long forever old sweethearts and pals \_ God bless 'm \_ And so on. [P: 142]

He gave psychosomatic responses to the changing chords; found himself upset by the song and the occasion. As the quartet continued their song, Billy was emotionally racked once again and "fled upstairs in his nice white home" [P: 145]. Since the presence of the quartet and their song reminded Billy of his memories of war and more specifically the destruction of Dresden in which expert for the American prisoners and their guards few people survived. Although twenty years had passed since the successful man, there were moments he could not help thinking about his past life such as his anniversary where he felt upset and hurt. His luxurious house and the glorious party was not the place where he felt at peace because he could not tune out the annoying reminiscences of war; as a result he escaped to his bedroom found refuge in his electronic mattress.

Billy was not moved to protest the bombing of North Vietnam, did nor shudder about the hideous thing she himself had seen bombing do. He was simply having lunch with the Lions Club, of which he was past president now. [P: 50]

According to Herman, events continue to register in awareness yet as though disconnected from their ordinary meanings and the patients may feel as though the event is not happening to them and they are observing from outside [P: 42-43]. This is exactly the reaction of Billy Pilgrim who was not moved by any of the discussions about Vietnam War, as if he had never witnessed similar atrocities in World War Second. Bombardment of Vietnam not only recalled memories about Dresden but also made him keep silence because Billy, despite his enthusiasm about living, had a new method for keeping going.

Some of the traumatized people may attempt to produce numbing effects by using alcohols, something which was frequently observed among soldiers in wartime. Billy Pilgrim, unlike the narrator of the first chapter, is not obsessed with alcohol very much. Yet there are only two situations in which he drinks. Once in 1961 on New Year's Eve:

It was New Year's Eve, Billy was disgracefully drunk at a party where everybody was in optometry or married to an optometrist. Billy usually didn't drink much, because the war had ruined his stomach, but he was snootful now, and he was being unfaithful to his wife Valencia for the first and the only time. [P: 37].

Ruined stomach was only an excuse for avoiding alcohol. The other time Billy was drunk was on his daughter's wedding night when he entered his daughter's bedroom and confronted the empty closet and drawers and some the possessions she

had not taken with herself. Her telephone rang; there was a drunk on the other end whom Billy could smell his breath of mustard gas and roses.

The analysis finds a clear connection between Billy's delusions and his trauma. A progression of his symptoms is identified and discussed in relation to his experiences in World War Second. the result show that Billy does indeed showcase strong signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which were most likely caused by a combination of childhood experiences and trauma during the war. This Post Traumatic Stress Disorder manifests itself through Billy's time travelling and alien encounters, which are used as a coping mechanism.

## Conclusion

The novel projects the consequences of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This paper scrutinizes the overall content, structure of the narrative through trauma approach and attempts to substantiate that Vonnegut has adroitly employed elements of post-trauma to convey his theme. Most have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but with time and good self-care, they usually better.

Here Billy struggles not with death, but his memories of war, which he can only escape by accepting the Tralfamadorian idea that time is simply an illusion, and the life between life and death is not as clear as “Earthlings” believe. The psychological distress symptoms including the inability to sleep, lack of concentration, flashbacks and state of surrender are thus investigated in the narrator and Billy Pilgrim as the two figures who are suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. These symptoms are analyzed in a way to call attention to the existence of unspeakable secret and simultaneously as means to deflect attention from it. The protagonists are both subjected to the dialectic of trauma in that they find it difficult to remain clearheaded, to see more than a few fragments of the picture at one time, and to retain all the pieces and to fit them together. It is even more difficult to find a language that conveys persuasively what they have seen.

It has been claimed in this study that both characters, the narrator and Billy Pilgrim, are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. However what both characters lack, is a balance between two extremes states of intrusion and constriction; the dialectic of these opposing states is the most characteristic feature of traumatic syndromes. As intrusive symptoms diminish, constrictive symptoms come to predominate. Therefore, while the trauma-related symptoms seem to fade over time,

they can be revived, even years after the event, by reminders. That is why nightmares and other intrusive symptoms recurred in the Second World War combat veterans of this novel after a delay of twenty years.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKADAVU**

**A TRAVERSE THROUGH THE LIFE OF DEETI IN *SEA***  
***OF POPPIES* BY AMITAV GHOSH**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ANN MARIYA THOMAS**

**Register No: DB18AEGR023**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Mr. Jince Joseph

June 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “A Traverse through the Life of Deeti in *Sea Of Poppies* by Amitav Ghosh” is a bonafide work of Ms. Ann Mariya Thomas, who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan  
Head of the Department

Mr. Jince Joseph  
Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Ann Mariya Thomas, hereby declare that the project work entitled “A Traverse through the Life of Deeti in *Sea Of Poppies* by Amitav Ghosh” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Jince Joseph of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College. I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Ann Mariya Thomas

08 June 2021

DB18AEGR023

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## Table of Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	3
Post-colonial Feminism: An Introduction	
Chapter Two:	10
<i>Analyzing Sea of Poppies</i>	
Chapter Three:	17
<i>Sea of Poppies: A Post-colonial Feminist Reading</i>	
Conclusion	28
Works Cited	30

## Introduction

Feminism and Postcolonialism began to exchange and dialogue forming a new interpretation space that is Postcolonial Feminist theory. Postcolonial Feminism originated in the 1980s as a critique of feminist theorists in developed countries pointing out the universalizing tendencies of mainstream feminist ideas and argues that women living in non-western countries are misrepresented. There is a very complicated relationship between post colonialism and feminism both in practice and theory. Some Post Colonialists who hold feminist positions believe that focusing only on racial politics is bound to ignore 'double colonization' situation of women under imperialist conditions.

In this project the illustration of the portrayal of women in Amitav Ghosh's novel *Sea of Poppies* is given. Manifestation of women in Amitav Ghosh's novels explores the emotional world of women with a historical background which facilitate the readers to recognize the feminine sensibility as well as their psychology at that period of time. The journey from feminine to female phase in the novel is demonstrated in this project. The objective of the project is to bring out social and cultural norms that made varying changes in the life of woman in the Postcolonial era by mainly focusing on the life of the character named Deeti in the novel by using Postcolonial Feminist Theory. The novel focuses on under – privileged, oppressed and exploited people. All the characters have lost their identity and being helpless due to socio-cultural norms and values.

In the first chapter, detailed description of Postcolonialism, feminism and Postcolonial feminism is given. Post colonialism is a process of resistance and reconstruction of Postcolonial theory that is continuous, and includes discussion of various experience such as slavery, displacement, emigration, suppression, resistance,

difference, racial, cultural and gender discrimination. Feminist criticism is concerned with the ways in which literature strengthen or undermine the economic, political, social and psychological oppression of women. Postcolonial feminist criticism is extensive and variable. Postcolonial Feminist criticism examines how women are represented in colonial and Postcolonial literature, and challenges assumptions which are made about women in both literature and society. Postcolonial feminist theory exerts pressure on mainstream postcolonial theory in its constant iteration of the necessity to consider gender issues.

In the second chapter, summary of the novel *Sea of Poppies*, a short character analysis and a brief description of the author of the novel is also given. The novel *Sea of Poppies* is written by an Indian English writer named Amitav Ghosh. His writings deal with the epic themes of travel and diaspora, history and memory, political struggle and communal violence, love and loss. The novel begins with the introduction of the character named Deeti. Then follows the detailed analysis of life of various other characters. Main focus is given to the character Deeti. In the third chapter, the detailing of the sufferings of women is illustrated. The way in which women became strong regardless of their sufferings is being mentioned. All the subjugation and sufferings Deeti have gone through in various stages of her life that is not at all fair in any case is being shown. Finally, the resolution of all these problems are given.

## Chapter One

### Post-colonial Feminism: An Introduction

Post colonialism is seen as a process of resistance and reconstruction of post-colonial theory that is continuous, and includes discussion of various experience such as slavery, displacement, emigration, suppression, resistance, difference, racial, cultural and gender discrimination. The term post-colonial stands for both the material effects of colonization and the huge diversity of everyday and sometimes hidden responses to it. Post-colonial studies point out the legacies of colonial era mainly in the economic field which reproduces the unequal relations between the metropolitan centres and their ex-colonies.

Franz Fanon is one of the first figures that comes to one's mind when the issue is post colonialism. Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) is a fundamental text in post-colonial literature. In this book, Fanon considers violence as a destruction form of native social forms without reserving the systems of reference of the economy, the customs of dress and external life. Another post-colonial work of Fanon is *Black Skin, White Masks*. Aime Cesaire, was an influential figure in shaping the ideas of current post-colonial writers. In *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955), which later becomes a classic text in post-colonial studies, Aime Cesaire says that colonization actually decivilizes the colonizers and brutalize them in the true sense of the world. Post-colonial criticism takes the form of literature, compose authors that critique Euro-centric hegemony.

Postcolonial theorists and historians have been concerned with investigating the various trajectories of modernity as understood and experienced from a range of philosophical, cultural, and historical perspectives. They have been particularly concerned with the ambiguous legacy of the enlightenment- as expressed in social,

political, economic, scientific, legal, and cultural thought. The legacy is ambiguous according to postcolonial theorists, because the age of enlightenment was also an age of empire, and the connection between those two historical epochs is more than incidental.

Feminist criticism is concerned with the ways in which literature strengthen or undermine the economic, political, social and psychological oppression of women. The term feminism is used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Simone de Beauvoir wrote that the first time a woman took up her pen in defense of her sex Pizan was Christine de Pizan who wrote *Epitre au Dieu d'Amour* in the fifteenth century. Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa and Modesta di Pozzo di Porzi worked in the sixteenth century. Marie Le Jars de Gournay, Anne Bradstreet and Francois Poullain de la barre during the seventeenth century.

Feminists and scholars have divided the movement's history into three waves. The first refers mainly to women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth Century. The second wave refers to the ideas and actions associated with the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s. The third wave refers to continuation of, and a reaction to the perceived in failures of second wave feminism, beginning the 1990s.

*The Second Sex*, a detailed analysis of women's oppression sets out a feminist existentialism which prescribes a moral revolution. As an existentialist, Simone de Beauvoir accepted Jean Paul Sartre's precept existence precedes essence; hence "one is not born woman, but becomes One." (3) Her analysis focuses on the social construction of woman as the other. Simone de Beauvoir argues that women have historically been considered deviant and abnormal and contends that even Mary Wollstonecraft considered men to be the ideal toward which woman should aspire. De Beauvoir argues

that for feminism to move forward, this attitude must be set aside.

Postcolonial feminist criticism is extensive and variable. Its analyses range across representation of women in once- Colonized countries and in western locations. Some critics have concentrated on the constructions of gender difference during the colonial period, in both colonial and anti-colonial discourses; while others have concerned themselves with the representation of women in postcolonial discourses, with particular reference to the work of women writers. Postcolonial feminist critics have raised a number of conceptual, methodological, political problems involved in the study of representations of gender.

Postcolonial feminist criticism examines how women are represented in colonial and post-colonial literature, and challenges assumptions which are made about women in both literature and society. Colonialism and patriarchy have been closely entwined historically, but an end to former colonies. Postcolonial feminists point out the ways in which women continue to be stereotyped and marginalized, ironically sometimes by postcolonial authors who might claim to be challenging a culture of oppression.

Prior to the 1990s, much Black, Hispanic and Asian theory, criticism and creative writing were overlooked by academia in the West. More recently, developments have taken place in feminist literary criticism, some of the best –known authors being Gloria Anzaldua, Chandra Mohanty, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Gayatri Spivak, Rey chow, Rosario Castellanos, and Cheryl Johnson-Odim. These critics reject earlier feminist approaches which assumed that women shared a common identity based on a shared experience of oppression. They reject the assumption that white middle-class women should be considered the norm, arguing that the concerns of such women are not necessarily those of all women, and that differences in the social positions of

women produce very different problems and responses, even in relation to the same broad issue.

Postcolonial feminism challenges traditional white western feminism for the latter's association with political liberation movements. Women around the world have very different histories with respect to their postcolonial inheritance, involving such experiences as imperial conquest, slavery, enforced migration, and even genocide. Thus, postcolonial feminists have argued for the rewriting of history based on the specific experiences of formerly colonized people, and their various strategies for survival.

Postcolonial feminist theory exerts a pressure on mainstream postcolonial theory in its constant of the repetition necessity to consider gender issues. Postcolonialism and feminism have come to share a tense relationship as some feminist critics point out that postcolonial theory is a male-centered field that has not only excluded the concerns of women, but also exploited them. Postcolonial feminist theorists have accused postcolonial theorists not only of obliterating the role of women from the struggle for independence, but also of misrepresenting them in the nationalist discourses. Edward Said's seminal study *Orientalism* itself accorded little attention to female agency and discussed very few female writers. Homi K. Bhabha's work on the ambivalence of colonial discourses explores the relationship between a 'colonizing' subject and a 'colonized' object without reference to how the specifics of gender might complicate his model. Critics such as Carole Boyce Davies who are suspicious of the male-centered bias of postcolonial critique often ask questions regarding presence of women in the theorizing of post coloniality.

Postcolonial feminist theory has always concerned itself with the relationship between White feminist and her indigenous counter-part. In their eagerness to voice the

concern of the colonized women, White feminists have overlooked racial, cultural and historical specificities that mark the condition of these women. Gayatri Spivak criticizes Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's essay "The Madwoman in the Attic" for ignoring the colonial context of Jane Eyre when celebrating Jane as a proto-feminist heroine and questions the role of Western or 'First World' feminists in addressing the concerns of 'Third World' women. Spivak argues that Jane's journey from subservience to female self-determination, economic security and marriage on her terms could not occur without the oppression of Bertha Mason, Rochester's Creole wife from Jamaica. She points out that Gilbert and Gubar read Bertha in relation to Jane, never as an individual self in her own right.

Postcolonial feminism reminds that, while some say exploited peoples should 'let colonialism go' because it was so many hundreds of years ago, the effects of colonial and imperial endeavours continue to oppress. Postcolonial feminism is a way to look beyond the whitewashing of feminism, and to understand the nuance of power, geopolitics and money that play in the oppression and exploitation of various people, and thus for each feminist to become accountable for their own actions and activism. In reality, feminism is not feminism unless it is postcolonial.

Postcolonial feminism has never operated as a separate entity from post colonialism; rather it has directly inspired the forms and the force of postcolonial politics. It focuses on the social challenges of everyday patriarchy, typically supported by institutional and legal discrimination; of domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape, honor killings, dowry deaths, female foeticide and child abuse. Feminism in a postcolonial frame begins with situation of the ordinary women in a particular place, while also thinking her situation through in relation to broader issues to give her the more powerful basis of collectivity. It will highlight the degree to which women are

still working against a colonial legacy that was itself powerfully patriarchal-institutional, economic, political, and ideological.

Postcolonial feminism as a concerted attempt aims to get the nature of gender inequality, gender politics, gender roles and relations, power relations and sexuality. Postcolonial feminism as a reactive discipline seeks to answer the question why women are treated as a second-class citizen, oppressed and enjoyed lesser opportunities than males. Post-colonial feminism sometimes considered as 'third world feminism' (the term used to describe reactions against contradictions and absences in feminism) born out of the critique aimed towards western feminism which is mainly a white discourse. Post-colonial feminism emerged out of the gendered history of colonialism. The history of colonialism is largely the history of exploitation of blacks, non-Western others. Post-colonial feminists argue that colonial oppression particularly racial, class, and ethnic has in large part overlooked women in postcolonial societies. Postcolonial feminists are critical of western forms of feminism, especially radical and liberal forms of feminism and their habit to homogenize and universalize women experiences of the whole world.

Postcolonial feminism explores in different contexts, women's lives, work, identity, sexuality, and rights in the light of colonialism and imperialism with gender, nation, class, race, and sexualities. Postcolonial feminists are closely associated with Black feminists because both strive for recognition not only by men in their own culture, but also by western feminists. Postcolonial feminists disapprove postcolonial tendencies to construct a single category of the colonized ignoring differences. They argue that colonial oppression undoubtedly hurt sentiments of both men and women but nature was quite different. Mary Daly, an American radical essentialist feminist in her 1978 book *Gyn/Ecology: The Mathematics of Radical Feminism*, like Simone de Beauvoir argues that religion, law, and science all are just to benefit patriarchy and to

define and delimit women. Postcolonial feminism is primarily concerned deplorable plight of women in postcolonial environment. By formulating a new postcolonial feminine ecriture, postcolonial feminists can provide new energy and authenticity to their transformation of society.

Postcolonial feminists argue for women emancipation that is subalternized by social, cultural, or economic structures across the world. Postcolonial feminists entertain and attempt the indigenization of both form and content. Heterogeneity is the key theme of postcolonial feminism. Postcolonial feminine writers are not interested in dismantling family order, custom, and tradition. They seek for balance, mutual respect and harmony. Postcolonial feminists seek to devalidate western feminist because they usually tend to universalize and homogenize women's issues, and moreover traditional roles.

If a woman is an earning lady, it is her extra attribute. In many cases less educated women torture family members doing nothing for their betterment because they think that it is the responsibility of men to bear the brunt of the family. In some other cases, women who are educated and conscious crave for self-identity and liberation from patriarchal clutches. In such cases true education is drastic need of the time. Postcolonial feminists engage more and more domestic spaces of women's lives. In short, 'postcolonial' feminism provides corrective measures to mainstream feminism.

## Chapter Two

### Analyzing *Sea of Poppies*

Amitav Ghosh, Indian-born writer whose ambitious novels use complex narrative strategies to probe the nature of national and personal identity, particularly of the people of India and Southeast Asia. He was awarded a doctorate from Oxford University. He has written for many publications including *The Hindu*, *The New Yorker* and *Granta*, and taught in universities in both India and the US. His writing deals with the epic themes of travel and diaspora, history and memory, political struggle and communal violence, love and loss, while all the time crossing the generic boundaries between anthropology and art work. Both his fictional and non-fictional narratives tend to be transnational in sweep, moving restlessly across countries, continents and oceans.

Works of Amitav Ghosh are: *The circle of Reason*, *The Shadow Lines*, *In an Antique Land*, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, *Dancing in Cambodia* and *At Large in Burma*, *Countdown*, *The Glass Palace*, *The Imam and the Indian*, *The Hungry Tide*, *Incendiary Circumstances: A Chronicle of the Turmoil of Our Times*, *Sea of poppies*, *River of Smoke*, *Flood of Fire*, *The Great derangement: Climate change and the Unthinkable*.

Awards received by Ghosh are: Sahitya Academy Award, Prix Medicis Étranger (France), Ananda Puraskar (India), Arthur C Clark Award for Best Science Fiction, Pushcart Prize, International e-book Award Grand Prize for Fiction (Germany), Hutch Crossword Book Award, Padma Shri (India), Grinzane Cavour International Prize (Italy), Dan David Prize (Israel), Man Asia Literary prize, Blue Metropolis International Literary Grand Prize (Canada).

*Sea of Poppies* begins with a vision Deeti, an Indian poppy farmer. She sees a

ship although she has never seen the sea. The novel focuses on the journey of Deeti and other several characters to reach the Ibis, a former slave ship turned migrant transporter, for a trip across the ocean to Mauritius, a penal and plantation colony of British Empire. The novel unfolds with the threat of war with China over opium in the backdrop and amid the changing relationship India's have with their land because of poppy farming. The novel follows the personal journey of a multi-racial, multi-ethnic cast of characters, showing how all of their lives are affected by the humble poppy.

Through the course of the novel, Deeti's life in India falls apart and she embarks on a journey across the ocean to Mauritius as an indentured worker. Her husband, an opium addict, dies and since she has no male children to inherit her land, she must either marry her brother-in-law or lose her land. She thinks about ritual suicide, but was rescued and escaped by Kalua, a lower-caste ox cart driver, eventually boarding the Ibis together. A second narrative stream follows Zachary Reid, a half black American sailor who sails on the Ibis from Baltimore and then disguises himself as a gentleman after most of the crew dies or deserts and he hires lascars to replace them.

Zachary has a budding romantic interest in Paulette, an orphaned French girl. Nearly forced into an arranged marriage with an Older English judge, Paulette escapes Calcutta by disguising herself as an old Indian woman and boards the Ibis as a migrant worker. Another narrative stream follows Raja Neel Halder, a high-caste Indian, who lives in luxury until he has found guilty of forgery and sent to Alipore prison. In prison he meets Ah Fatt, a Chinese convict and opium addict, and the two board the Ibis together headed for the English penal colony at Mauritius.

Baboo Nob Kissin, an Indian agent who handles indentured workers, transforms into a spiritual leader and boards the Ibis hoping to build a Shrine. Near the end of the

novel, when all of the characters and their fates have converged on the Ibis, Kalua accidentally knocks a guard overboard while others are trying to rape Deeti, his wife. Then the guards aboard the ship ties Kalua to the mast and begin whipping him. In the novels climax, Kalua bites through his fetters while he was being lashed and then grabs the whip, killing the man who was whipping him. The journey on the Ibis transforms those characters, helping them have behind former identities, and it unifies them.

The main characters in *Sea of Poppies* include Deeti, an ordinary village woman, an octoroon American sailor named Zachary Reid, an Indian Rajah called Neel Ratan Halder, and Benjamin Burnham, an evangelist opium trader. Deeti is the main protagonist of the story, a young woman of an upper caste, who lives in a village about 400 miles from the sea. She is married to Hukkam Singh, an opium addict, who was wounded in battle. She has a daughter named Kabutri, whose actual father is her brother-in-law Chandan Singh. When Hukkam dies, she decides to commit sati on his funeral pyre, rather than marry Chandan. She is rescued by Kalua, an untouchable whom she once saved. Together with Kalua she leaves her village for Calcutta. She boards the Ibis along with him, to become an indentured laborer in Mauritius.

Zachary Reid is the son of a White father and a quad room mother. He joins the Ibis as the ships carpenter, to escape racism. He soon rises to the post of a captain when all the original crew dies, with the help of Serang Ali and other lascars. He is given the post of a second mate in the second voyage of the Ibis.

Neel Ratan Halder is an Indian Raja whose family has been ruling the province of Rakshali for generations. His father was a lavish man, and taht along with the losses incurred in the opium trade with China leaves him huge debts. He approaches Burnham to sell of his properties to settle his debts, but Burnham asks for the Rakshali province to settle all his debts. When Neel Halder refuses, Burnham and his friends have him

tried in court for forgery, and is sentenced for seven years in Mauritius.

Benjamin Burnham is an unscrupulous trader and an evangelist who buys the Ibis, causing the fateful first journey of the Ibis from Baltimore to Calcutta, after which the ship is refitted. He has no issues about using opium for the sake of religion and vice versa. He and his wife raise Paulette when she is orphaned. When Neel Halder approaches him to sell his properties, he asks for his Zamindary. When Halder refuses, he falsely accuses him of forgery.

*Sea of Poppies* is set prior to the first Opium war, on the banks of the holy river Ganges and in Calcutta. The author compares the Ganges to the Niles, the lifeline of the Egyptian civilization, attributing the provenance and growth of those civilization to those selfless, ever flowing bodies. He portrays the characters as poppy seeds emanating in large numbers from the field to form a sea, where every single seed is uncertain about its future.

One of the themes in *Sea of poppies* by Amitav Ghosh is the traditional Indian weddings. In the book, the author reveals how women sang songs whenever a girl from their village got married. However, the men did not sing. Their silence showed some understanding of the pain the bride's parents went through because of their daughter leaving. Another theme that is highlighted in the novel is the opium trade. The story reveals that Ibis was shipping opium to China. Furthermore, it is set just before the opium war began. Ghosh further expounds on this theme by introducing characters such as the widowed opium farmer. The author narrates how opium was transported from poverty-stricken villages in India to its buyers in China. Another theme is the way in which the people of India have no control over their own fates.

The novel records the heinous system of caste discrimination practiced in Indian society. The caste system was a brutal oppressive mechanism that branded an

unfortunate section of the society as untouchables and thrust them to the periphery. For several millennia caste constituted the core of social life in India. It dictated the occupation and the social interaction of a person. The record of the afflictions and the humiliations to which Kalua is subjected speaks of the pathos of the untouchables existence in pre independent India. Kalua the ox driver was of the leather-workers caste and so was considered an untouchable. Hukkam Singh as a high-caste Rajput believed that the very sight of a person of low-caste would augur bad things. The wretched living conditions of the out-caste and the brutal treatment they were subjected to is truthfully portrayed through the life of Kalua. The untouchables were not allowed to have their dwelling in the precincts of the village.

The novel also presents the superstitious beliefs and practices in the society. People were immersed in superstitious beliefs. Deeti believed it bad luck to draw realistic pictures of people who were alive. The walls of her shrine had portraits of two brothers and a sister who had died in their childhood but her relatives who were alive were represented by diagrammatic images. To leave the dishes unwashed overnight was believed to invite an invasion of ghosts and hungry devil and so Deeti goes to fetch water from the river at night when she saw Kalua being humiliated by the zamindars. Certain things and food items were considered to be auspicious while unclean things were considered to be inauspicious.

British academic Dr. Christopher Rollason looks at Ghosh's use of language as 'daring' and 'even ground breaking'. He writes about the language of *Sea of Poppies* as 'English peppered with Indian terms from Bengali and Bhojpuri'. As Ghosh has depicted chapters from all the four corners of the world, they are naturally colorful and vibrant in their use of languages. Native Bhojpuri language of Deeti and Kalua is contrasted with the Bengali of Jodu and Baboo Nob Kissin. Raja Neel Ratan is an

example of code-switching as he has to deal with different classes of people. Paulette's Bengali is from her caretaker and when she uses English that is with a French intonation because of her French origin. Ghosh is the most experimental when he gives voice to sailors. Their different origin, lifelong travelling and pidgin give birth to a unique language. Ghosh's research with the nineteenth century sailor's language creates this hybrid language. Ghosh highlights the contextualization of language.

Amitav Ghosh does not always provide the translation or interpretation of the native words in his novels. He uses the context to provide the idea of the meaning of the word. In this way he skillfully engages to know the native word. One such situation is at the very beginning of the novel when Deeti lays 'dhoti and kameez' and prepares 'rotis and achar' for her husband. Ghosh shows how a situation or context can be expressed even with the economic use of language. Only the utterances of the zamindar's name by the judge- 'Neel Ratan Halder' announce the change of fate for the once powerful landlord. The use of different linguistic devices-like metonymic gap, code-switching, use of untranslated native words etc. are employed by Ghosh in *Sea of Poppies* to highlight the power of context in the use of language. The metonymic gap is one of the strong weapons Ghosh uses in this novel for language transformation.

Amitav Ghosh's use of translated words and expressions from the native languages of his characters is a remarkable feature in his novels. *Sea of Poppies* is no exception to this linguistic endeavour of its author. Starting from mundane household chores, the novel lists numerous untranslated native words from different aspects of Indian life including religion, cuisine, dresses etc. Some of the untranslated words of the novel are to let the foreign readers get introduced with the costumes of this region. For example, Ghosh uses the untranslated forms of some female costumes like 'Sari', 'Choli', 'dupatta', 'ghunta', 'khol' etc. An interesting aspect of language is shown in

the novel – that is –misinterpretation. Language can give wrong signals if they are not interpreted correctly. Ghosh shows language from both the native speakers' point of view and from the view point of the non-native users.

## Chapter Three

### *Sea of Poppies: A Post-colonial Feminist Reading*

It is very difficult to define feminism in a single line or a sentence as it is a wide and philosophical theory, but all those who had struggled for the rights of women-right to freedom, right to earn, right to vote and right for equality, came to be called feminists. The central concern that all the feminists share together is patriarchal system, in spite of different concepts of feminism. They regard that patriarchal system is a real villain which leads to all kinds of discrimination or devaluation against women. Patriarchy makes use of sexual differences so as to maintain an inequality between men and women. Femininity is not in-born but is only a social construction imposed on women by men to keep women down. There are three historical phases of woman writers- Feminine, Feminist, and Female. Feminine is the concept of womanhood where woman has to play traditional role in relation to patriarchal society. In this, woman is not aware of her rights or her identity. In the feminist phase woman strives for her rights and protests against male constructions. She tries to come out from the ideological form and demands for her right and autonomy. In female phase- woman tries hard for self-discovery and even becomes revolutionary for her identity individually.

Post-colonial feminism is mainly concerned with the representation of women in once colonized countries and in western locations. It concentrates on construction of gender difference in colonial and anti-colonial discourses with particular reference to the work of women writers. Post-colonial feminists suffer from 'double colonization' that is, it is the way in which women have simultaneously experienced the oppression and both colonialism and patriarchy. She has to resist the control of colonial power not only as a colonized subject, but also as a woman. Post-colonial feminism challenges the

traditional White western feminism for the association with political liberations movements. Women around the world have very different histories with respect to their post-colonial inheritance involving such experiences as imperial conquest, slavery, enforced migration, and genocide. Thus, post-colonial feminists have argued for the rewriting of history based on the specific experiences of formerly colonized people, and their various strategies for survival.

In the novel *Sea of Poppies*, Indian women's pain, anxiety, exploitation, subjugation helpless identity and revolutionary attitude in patriarchal society are represented. In the novel, the character 'Deeti' is presented as the representative of Indian women. The novel opens with a simple village girl Deeti who is living by the river Ganga, some fifty miles away from the Banaras. Patriarchal society and system dominated her life since her childhood till the end of the novel.

Hukkam Singh, by comparison, had seemed a good prospect, not least because Deeti's own brother, Kesari Singh, had proposed the match. The two men had belonged to the same battalion and had served together in a couple of overseas campaigns; Deeti had her brother's word that her prospective husband's disability was a minor one. (Gosh, 30-31)

Deeti is a girl who has many problems regarding her stars, her fate was totally ruined by Saturn- that is a planet that exercise great power on those born under its influence, often brings discord, unhappiness and disharmony. She expected of having a worse marriage life. Her marriage is a result of patriarchal domination. Hukkam Singh had various disabilities and all those was hidden from her. Deeti was in a situation to marry Hukkam Singh, because her own brother, Kesari Singh has proposed this match without knowing her desire. She was not able to say a word against this marriage.

There is a wide gap between the age of Deeti and Hukkam Singh.

You should know, he said at last that is my first wife. She's kept me alive since I was wounded: if it weren't for her, I would not be here today. I would have died of pain, long ago. It was when he said these words that Deeti understood what the future held: she remembered how, as children, she and her playmates had laughed at the afeemkhors of their village- the habitual opium eaters, who sat always as in a dream, staring at the sky with dull, dead eyes. Of all the possibilities she had thought of, this was one she had not allowed for; that she might be marrying an afeemkhor- an addict. (34)

Starting of her marriage life itself has made her in a situation that she had never thought of and never wanted to have in her whole life. She had no idea of what a person her husband is. On her first night only, she came to know that he was an opium addict. He was also invalid and impotent. At this point only she realized how her life will be going on. In the very first night of their marriage, Hukkam Singh made her inhale opium. This all mark the beginning of her not interested, unhappy, suffering life. She even dislike to watch an opium addict sitting by the side of her village. But she was dumped into a life where she had to spend her whole left years until her death with a man who is an opium addict. She has now entered into a life that she wished never to choose. But the societal norms and her powerlessness took her to be part of such situation. All she can do now is to led the life that she considers a burden to its full and try to manage her unsatisfied situation.

In her (mother-in-law) last days, when her mind was wandering, she often referred to Deeti as Draupadi's; when asked why, she would murmur drowsily; because the earth has never seen a more

virtuous woman than Draupadi of the Mahabharata, wife to five brothers. It's a fortunate woman, Saubhagyawati, who bears the children of brothers for each other. It was this illusion that confirmed Deeti's belief that the child in her belly had been fathered not by her husband, but by Chandan Singh, her leering, slack-jawed brother-in-law. (38)

Under the influence of opium that her husband made her inhale, she was raped by her brother-in-law, Chandan Singh with the help of Bhyro Singh and her mother-in-law. She was not aware of this heinous crime but one day under the influence of opium, her mother-in-law accepts that her daughter Kabutri fathered by Chandan Singh, her brother-in-law and not by her husband. This truth was a shock to her. She was helpless and nothing could be done at that right moment. Generally, in patriarchal society males control values, dreams, desires and personal affairs of the family and females have no choice but they have to be subjugated before their male's schemes. Same thing has happened with Deeti, she was raped unconsciously. So, rape like heinous crime is acceptable in Indian patriarchal society just to maintain the honour of the family than the honour of the woman. Chandan Singh as a sign of patriarchal system has always an evil eye on Deeti and was ready to exploit her every time.

Looking down on her daughter's dreaming face, Deeti smiled and decided that she wouldn't wake her after all; in three or four years the girl would be married and gone; there would be enough time for her to work when she was received into her husband's house; in her few remaining years at home, she might as well rest. (5)

The marriage life of Deeti was a very miserable one. She had not experienced a single moment of joy. All she had was the ruthlessness from her own family and from

the male dominated society. She now knows what will happen in a marriage life. Woman may not be able to do anything as they wish. There are various laws and rules constructed by the society and are imposed on them. There may not be any sort of rest in life. So, she lets her daughter to sleep peacefully as she like.

Kabutri-ki-ma! Chandan Singh shouted, listen: Hukkam Singh has passed out, at the factory. They said you should go there and bring him home. With that he has his reins a snap and drove off hurriedly, impatient for his meal and his afternoon sleep: it was typical of him to offer no help. (27)

This particular event shows the attitude of the patriarchal society towards women. Hukkam Singh is the brother of Chandan Singh, even then he just informed her what the officials of the factory have told him to inform her. And he just leaves the place in a hurry to have his meal. No sign of concern was shown by him towards the family. He had no mentality of helping them. No consideration was given to Deeti who was having no idea about what to do next. This shows how men in the society do nothing in favour of others and always does things for their own benefit. They always try to degrade them for what they did and also bully them for what they do not do. She was discriminated as a woman and he never helped her in her difficult situation, rather he left without showing a bit of human concern.

Chandan, like the other males in the society, regards Deeti as an object of entertainment who can be used after the death of her husband for personal need. So, he said to her:

Listen to me Kabutri-ka-ma, he said. You know very well how your daughter was conceived, why pretend? You know that you would be childless today if not for me...And this is why I say to you: wouldn't

it be best for you to do willingly now what you did before without your knowledge. Your husband and I are brothers after all of the same flesh and blood. (157)

It is evident that Chandan is the one who takes Deeti to a situation that she is not expecting. Deeti is a representative of the double marginalized society. Chandan is trying to misbehave towards her seeking happiness and pleasure for himself. He looks forward for his own satisfaction and never considered the situation through which she is going on. He is trying to take advantage of her and tries to make her loyal to him. This thought is always stuck in the mind of all men and has no change for so long. Women are being suppressed and oppressed by both patriarchy and colonial powers. They are being marginalized, sentenced to injustice and even made silent in all ways. Women are not allowed to take individual decisions. They were never given the right to do so. All they did was just to act loyal and to obey what the male dominated society inject them to do.

But Deeti now is well aware of her right, respect and identity so she retorts with anger to him: “Listen to my words: I will burn on my husband’s pyre rather than give myself to you.” (158)

She is ready to accept Sati system and be burnt in the pyre of her husband than to live with Chandan. Here she tries to fight against the norms of patriarchal society that makes her suppressed to the grounds. She considers living a life of disgrace is worse than dying in the pyre of her husband. This is a result of what the patriarchal society thinks about women, they regard women as a means of attaining both physical and mental pleasure for their life and never consider what her condition is. They are considered of no worth and are always downtrodden. The life situation makes women to depart this life and attain eternal life. All that they need is to lead a life with

happiness, freedom and to feel themselves with some qualities without any hesitation.

“A man on horse never meant anything but trouble for a lone woman, and where there were four, riding together, the signs of danger were all too clear: Deeti lost no time in hiding herself among the poppies.” (56) This shows how the life of woman going on in the then time. They were not at all safe outside their house. Even if there is a woman walking alone without a male companion, all they need to face was harassment, both physically and mentally. They were not at all having any idea of what is going to happen in the very next moment. Deeti feels insecurity when she saw some man coming on horse. Many thoughts went on across her mind of being spoiled. She hid herself somewhere as a prevention of safeguarding her life and body. The colonial powers and patriarchal society have imposed that much pressure to their life. All that could be done was to walk away from the scary and harmful one in a significant and effective way.

A rude surprise was waiting at the Carcanna: after her gharas of opium had been weighed, counted and tested, Deeti was shown the account book for Hukkam Singh's plot of land. It turned out that at the start of the season, her husband had taken a much larger advance than she had thought: now, she meagre proceeds were barely enough to cover his debt. She looked disbelievingly at the discoloured coins that were laid before her: Aho se ka karwat? She cried. Just six dams for the whole harvest? It's not enough to feed a child, let alone a family. (155)

Deeti's husband had left over a huge burden for her. All that she thought of doing was spoiled within minutes. She was expecting a decent amount after selling her gharas of opium. But they listed out the amount that he borrowed in advance and gave a

small amount in return to her. But that was useful for nothing at all. She cried out at them by saying that it is impossible to feed a child with this amount. They have shown no sympathy or empathy towards her and her daughter. A single coin was not added to it. This all highlight the rudeness and selflessness of the society. Women are always being degraded, their cries and efforts are given no values. All they did was just making them suffer more and more. It was very difficult for a woman to grow a child alone in the then society. They were always under surveillance from each nook and corners. And if the child is a girl, it will be a big headache for the mother to look after her alone. She needs to act as a shield that will always protect the child from the evil eyes of men in the society and their surroundings. The patriarchal society never considers women in any aspects. All they did was just to rule upon her in each and every term of the society. All rights were denied by the society even if it is to be allowed and to be considered as a right itself.

“You people always come here and talk about being hungry, but tell me, who’s ever seen a peasant starve? You just like to complain, all the time khichir- michir....” (155). The authoritative persons of the society always make false statements about the poor and downtrodden women. They say that all they have is luxury life, but even then, they always cry that they are not having anything and they are starving. This is the actual situation of the poor. But the society always mocks them when they express or reveal their truth to the society. They are living in a post-colonial society and they are also being colonized again and again by the male dominated society, that is, the patriarchal society. They are being suppressed, oppressed and ill-treated. They are not even able to answer the call of hunger in their life. All they do is avoiding it as it is a difficult task for them to make it silent and be in a peaceful state of mind. Human being, whether men or women become beast in front of hunger. The right of stopping

starving was denied by the higher male authorities. This is a problem to be resolved at any cost. Denying what a person must be offered is a punishable offense but it is not done because the society is a male dominated one.

Her frugality was not lost on the shopkeeper who happened to be also a prominent Seth and moneylender. What's happened-ji, O my sister-in-law? he said, with a show of concern. Do you need a few rice bright Benarasi rupees to see you through till the Shravan harvest?

Deeti resisted the offer till she thought of Kabutri: after all the girl had just a few years left at home- why make her live through them in hunger? She gave in and agreed to place the impression of her thumb on the Seth's account book in exchange for six months' worth of wheat, oil and gurrh. Only as she was leaving did it occur to her to ask how much she owed and what the interest was. The Seth's answer took her breath away: his rates were such that her debt would be forfeit. Better to eat weeds than to take such a loan: she tried to return the goods but it was too late. I have your thumbprint now, said the Seth, gloating. There is nothing to be done. (156)

Deeti had a very bad experience while selling her crop. While leaving back with the amount she has acquired, she stops to buy some grains, pulses for home. She bought things that are of a very cheap quality and rate. Then with a concern the shopkeeper asked her whether she need some grains in advance. She at first refused but when she thought about her daughter planned to place her thumb impression on Seth's account book. At last, before leaving only she asked the details of the amount she owed and about its interest. The reply of Seth was like a rock that fell on her head. She tried to return the goods but was too late for that and nothing was there that she can do. She

is being trapped inside a web from which it is hard for her to escape. The patriarchal society is the web which always degrades, harden and exploit her life conditions. She being in a worst situation seeks empathy from others but all that occur in her life was just the opposite. Life is unpredictable, one can never know what is coming ahead. And that is what always happened in Deeti's life.

This was actually a trap into which Deeti have fell without any effort. Her intention was very clear and genuine, but the Seth set a huge trap for her. She was a very innocent and carefree woman both inside and outside. She went on trusting people. It was the so-called patriarchal society that always makes her suffer more and more. They always take advantage of all the situation in which women are going on. The society never gives a chance for them to lead a peaceful and stressless life. Here the situation of Deeti is becoming more and more dramatic. She in a way is trying to resolve problems without disturbing others but in her case just the opposite thing is happening. It is very difficult for her to come across this particular situation. She in a way is suffering more and more problems that is caused by the patriarchal society. The trickery of man led her to fall in their trap without any difficulty for them. And all the loss is for her alone.

It is clear that the character Deeti is a double colonized one, first by the colonial powers and later by the patriarchal society itself. This is totally exhibited in the novel. She as a representative of the oppressed and suppressed one is colonized in a twofold way by Imperialism and male dominance. Here it is evident that the character had always gone through various sufferings both physically and mentally. She experienced suppression from her own family. She was not given any value in her childhood life and even in her marriage life. All she had was to suffer and had no moment of happiness. The patriarchal society always sees woman as a vehicle for seeking pleasure.

No human values were attributed to them. Woman, whether they are rich, poor, strong, weak, educated, illiterate, want to live with respect, name and as a partner. Today women are right conscious enough and feel comparatively freer. All females remain docile and submissive till marriage but after that they fight for rights- social, cultural, economic- getting radical if not possible through submission.

## Conclusion

Postcolonial Feminism is a form of feminism that developed as a response to feminism focusing solely on the experiences of women in Western cultures and former colonies. Postcolonial Feminism as a new feather wishes to bring into light the problems of women of the Third world nations. Postcolonial feminism cannot be regarded simply as a subset of postcolonial studies, or alternatively as another variety of feminism. Rather, it is an intervention that is changing the configurations of both postcolonial and feminist studies. Postcolonial Feminism is an exploration and at the intersections of colonialism and imperialism with gender, class, nation, race and sexualities in the different contexts of women's lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality and rights.

Postcolonialism involves the discussion of experiences such as slavery, migration, suppression and resistance, difference, race, gender and place. Postcolonialism seeks to remove negative stereotypes about people and places. Feminist literary criticism is literary criticism informed by feminist theory, or more broadly, by the politics of feminism. It uses the principles and ideology of feminism to critique the language of literature. Postcolonial Feminism states that women are oppressed by both patriarchy and the colonial power, and that this is an ongoing process in many countries even after they achieved independence. Thus, women are colonized in a twofold way by imperialism and male dominance.

The novel *Sea of poppies* by Amitav Ghosh is the intertwining stories of several people who find themselves aboard the Ibis, a former slave ship, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The principal characters are aboard the ship under varying and more and less desirable circumstances, and employing varying levels of deception. The novel takes colonialism under a backdrop of drug smuggling and human trafficking. One of the

main characters is Deeti, the entire novel looks forward the life of this particular character.

The analysis evidently explicates and the Postcolonial Feminist theory in accordance with the novel *Sea of Poppies* by Amitav Ghosh. From the novel, it is evident that the life of a women in a postcolonial world is very much difficult. Things are happening beyond imagination in this world. In the novel the life of Deeti exhibits the harsh reality of life. She was subjected to the inhuman behaviour of the patriarchal society. Women were always treated as inferior subjects. They had no standard position in the society. All they received was humiliation. Deeti's life was completely filled with sorrows, miseries, suppression, oppression, and abuses that are of both physical and mental. The escape from the hands of the so-called patriarchal society was very difficult. Deeti at the end received each and everything that she had not far gone through. She was freed from the cage formed the male centered society.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**FRAGMENTED AND METAFICTIONAL ELEMENTS**  
**IN DORIS LESSING'S *THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ANSHA ANTO**

**Register No: DB18AEGR024**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Twinkle Thomas

February 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Fabrication of Metafictional Elements in Doris Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook*” is a bonafide work of Ansha Anto, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Twinkle Thomas

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Ansha Anto, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Fabrication of Metafictional Elements in Doris Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Twinkle Thomas of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

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Ansha Anto

DB18AEGR024

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Ansha Anto

## Table of Contents

Introduction	1- 3
Chapter One	
<i>The Golden Notebook</i> as a Fragmented Narrative	4- 12
Chapter Two	
Metafiction	13- 26
Chapter Three	
Theoretical perspective of <i>The Golden Notebook</i>	27- 33
Conclusion	34- 35
Works consulted	36- 37

## Introduction

The prime objective of this project is to study the fragmented and metafictional elements in the novel *The Golden Notebook*. In literature, fragmentation is a broad term for literary techniques that break up the text or narrative. Fragmentation is characteristic of postmodernism. Fragmented narratives, jumble up the sequencing of a story, challenging the reader to piece together the different components of the story to make a sense of it. Metafiction is a self-conscious literary style in which the narrator or characters are aware that they are part of a work of fiction. Often most closely associated with postmodern prose, metafiction involves a departure from standard narrative conventions, in which a self-aware narrator infuses their perspective into the text to create a fictional work that comments on fiction. Metafiction is used to analyze literature. It's a way to parody, judge, and dissect contemporary writing, and also is a traditional tool which the writers use

The project consists of three chapters. The first chapter of the project describes the concept of fragmentation. *The Golden Notebook*, is not only about fragmentation, but also structurally is fragmented. As a blocked woman writer, a politically committed writer, a mother, a wife, or a mistress, these disparate identities of Anna Wulf and the complex articulation of her experience show itself on a number of different ontological levels. Words are not anymore reliable as they “lose their meaning suddenly“ and for Anna, “the gap between words are supposed to mean, unbridgeable”.

Lessing divides her book into parts, each associated with a different colour - Black, Red, yellow, Blue. Anna's identity crisis sometimes her motherhood, sometimes her role as a lover to Michael that dominates the crisis. After writing the four notebooks each colour symbolizes her different and fragmented identities.

The second chapter deals with metafiction. Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously questions the relationship between fiction and reality. Metafiction functions through the problematization rather than the destruction through the concept of 'reality'. Frame analysis and play theory are areas of contemporary social investigation which illuminate the practice of metafiction. Everyday reality is 'reality per excellence'. It imposes itself massively on consciousness that we may doubt its reality. The 'meta' levels of fictional and social discourse might shift our notion of reality slightly but can never totally undermine it.

In this novel 'reality per excellence' is represented by the misrepresentation in authentic language of 'free women' which freezes the everyday into a mocking parody of itself. Parody in metafiction can be regarded as another level of positive literary changes.

The third chapter deals with the theoretical perspective of *The Golden Notebook*. Lessing uses language as the main instrument for maintaining the everyday reality. Parody appears at the point of crisis in the development of the novel. The parody throughout *The Golden Notebook* expresses the division its heroine feels within herself. The narrative order of the novel, 'Free women' is presented first recording external, refined annihilated experience.

The Black Notebook presents the rejection of the past. The Red Notebook develops Anna's sense of public self - betrayal in her growing disillusionment, with the communist party. The Yellow Notebook presents a consciously fictive and parodic account of recent events in Anna's private life, The Blue Notebook attempts to reconcile past and present of Anna; which becomes implicitly parodic.

## Chapter-1

### *The Golden Notebook as a Fragmented Narrative*

The post-war period literature, or postmodern literature, is generally described with the adjectives duplication, contradiction, chaos, and fragmentation. However, fragmentation is the key concept among them as the term is employed in a wide range of fields.

Witnessing the failure of humanist ideal of wholeness, postmodern world has acknowledged its fragmented nature. On the other hand, fragmentation has become one of the popular concerns of postmodern novelists. This concern does not only show itself in thematic sphere, but also it echoes in the structures of many postmodern novels. In this respect, the Nobel Prize winner Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* is quintessential as the novel displays an almost obsessive concern in fragmentation. The book is not only about fragmentation, but also structurally is fragmented.

The fragmentation is the basic theme handled in the novel almost in an obsessive manner. Due to this fact, the theme of the fragmentation is well reflected in the structure of the novel with its disaggregated nature. The reflection of obsessive fragmentation in the form also generates a fragmented narrative strategy which in turn nourishes the formal and thematic fragmentation. British novelist, Doris Lessing as the "epeeist of the female experience, who with skepticism, fire and visionary power has subjected a divided civilization to scrutiny "I was honored with Nobel Literature Prize in 2007 at the age of 88, after a career of more than 50 years. However, it is an incontestable fact that her masterpiece, in other words what makes her the "epeeist of the female experience" is *The Golden Notebook*, a novel talking through its form.

Published in 1962, *The Golden Notebook* was an outstanding achievement as it is considered to be one of the first examples of postmodern British fiction. The book was controversial as it has inspired different interpretations and critical receptions since its first publication. As Lessing would later negate in her much-cited preface to 1972 edition of *The Golden Notebook*, while the novel was perceived as a text handling the issue of sex war or as a feminist manuscript by some, others interpreted it as a strongly political text reflecting the historical and cultural climate of the moment. . However, in the direct contradiction, Lessing, in the Preface, rejects especially the claims that define *The Golden Notebook* as a feminist text and points out her intention clearly: "My major aim was to shape a book which would make its own comment a wordless statement: to talk through the way it was shaped".

It was in *The Golden Notebook* that Doris Lessing tried her hand more boldly in the female experience. It was not just this thematic indulgence with the female experience that made this novel a major achievement of her career. It was the structural play that gave its shape to the novel which consequently made it a novel written before its time. In other words, Lessing in this novel, without hesitation plays with the traditional novel form and explores, accommodates and comes up with new models to communicate the epic of the female experience in the postmodern fragmented world. *The Golden Notebook* was widely praised and became one of the influential novels of the post-war English literature.

*The Golden Notebook* is the embodiment of Lessing's dissatisfaction with the established conventions of the realist tradition and also the modernist fiction. Lessing, in fact, searches for new models to

communicate the experiences of a blocked woman writer, who spent her youth in Africa, became first an active and then, a disappointed communist, who was a politically committed writer, a mother, a wife - or a mistress sometimes woman. These disparate identities of Anna Wulf and the complex articulation of her experience show itself on a number of different ontological levels. However, Anna Wulf suffers from the disability to describe "the real experience". In the novel, there is a constant emphasis on dissolution and thinning of language. Words are not anymore reliable as they "lose their meaning suddenly" and for Anna, "the gap between what [words] are supposed to mean, and what in fact they say seems unbridgeable". Besides, the stories which are mere products of language also suffer from this anxiety since a story may be read as a parody, an irony or seriously. For Anna, this fact is another expression of the fragmentation of everything, the painful disintegration of something that is linked with what (she feels) to be true about language, the thinning of language against the density of our experience". The book's obsessive thematic concern on the fragmentation, that is the breakdown of a blocked writer, is well echoed in the structural and formal characteristics. Lessing divides her book into parts, each associated with a different color. The first part is titled as Free Women which, in Lessing's words "is a conventional short novel, about 60,000 words long, and which could stand by itself".

This short novel or novella is divided in itself with four different notebooks - Black, Red, Yellow, Blue - ensuing each Free Women section. There are five Free Women sections each followed by these notebooks. Following these coloured notebooks *The Golden Notebook*, which is also followed by the last Free Women section which operates,

physically speaking, like a conclusion part, appears. The protagonist of the novel is Anna Wulf who is with an income sufficient to make her living. However, she believes that this novel was just a "lying nostalgia, a longing for license, for freedom, for the jungle, for formlessness". Owing to this dissatisfaction with her first novel which took its place in the traditional stream with its realist bearings, she is in a desperate search for new models to relate her experience in a more truthful manner. Yet, Anna is obsessed with the fragmentation. Her attempts to come up with a suitable and reliable method in order to achieve a kind of wholeness constantly results in frustration. As a matter of fact, it is Anna's attempts to recover from the block that renders the book so fragmented and divided.' She wants to impose an order upon the chaos of her life. She admits that the only kind of the book which interests her is "a book powered with an intellectual or moral passion strong enough to create order, to create a new way of looking at life". However, her attempts only prove that the reality that she struggles to reflect is itself split.

Free Women is written in the third person omniscient narrative; sections have an objective and authoritarian voice. Its rational voice and ordered structure can be associated with the elements of the conventional realist novel. For instance, Free Women achieves an ending unlike notebooks. In a sense, Free Women is a parody in its flatness and orderliness when compared to the chaotic and fragmented notebooks. This comparison also emphasizes and stresses the fragmented nature of the notebooks. The Free Women sections are crucial for the text since they provide the reader with the necessary information and function as the skeleton for the structure of the novel. However, there are differences between the notebooks and the Free Women sections. For instance, when

compared to the highly subjective first person account of notebooks, the Free Women sections give the sense of a highly controlled narrator with a tight formal structure. Yet, the Free Women sections appear dissatisfactory with the lack of a tension and suspense which characterize the notebooks. The first Free Women section starts with the sentence: "The two women were alone in the London flat". However, in the inner Golden Notebook, it is realized that this sentence is offered by Saul Green to Anna, to make it the first sentence of the next novel. Then, unlike the apparent idea, it is clear that the Free Women is born out of the notebooks. In other words, the Free Women is the fictionalized version of the notebooks.

In the notebooks, Anna attempts to examine her life in disparate styles and perspectives. The memoirs from Africa constantly haunt her; communism disappoints her, as a woman she is still dependent on a man and is defined in terms of male discourse; as a writer, she is dissatisfied with the common models and suffers from the writer's block. All of these aspects of Anna found their voices in the separate notebooks. The Black Notebook is divided into two columns, headed 'Source' and 'Money' and written in the first person. In it, Anna deals with her past experiences in Africa, mostly her frustration both in the African blacks' internal conflict and the oppressive attitude of the whites upon them. Due to her block, the notebook ends with pastiches and copied materials. In the red notebook, Anna relates her experience with the British Communist Party. Day by day, Anna's unease with the party grows, and finally, she decides to leave the party. Again, this notebook ends with the newspaper cuttings about violence. In The Yellow notebook, Anna writes a novel called "The Shadow of the Third," which is in fact her fictionalized life. It also bears

her comments on the process of writing it. The narration is the third person omniscient.

The Blue notebook consists of Anna's diary writings. It is, in fact, an obvious attempt to keep a factual account of what happens rather than fictionalized version. Mainly, it deals with Anna's mental break-down, her block and sessions with psychotherapist. Yet, she cannot unify these disparate perspectives of her life in a single piece. Finally, in the golden-colored notebook, Anna synthesizes the various experiences kept separate in the other books, so that they approximate to a kind of wholeness.

Lessing seems well aware that in the fragmented world, employing disintegrated and multiple narratives is the best way to articulate the fragmentation of the protagonist. Each notebook of the novel is attributed to the fragmented identities of Anna Wulf, who is, in fact, in quest of a unified The Extra-digenetic level (the real writer, Doris Lessing) The digenetic level (fictitious writer, Anna Wulf.) The hypo-digenetic level (fictitious writer, Ella) The hypo-hypo digenetic level (Ella's novel)identity. Apart from the abovementioned roles - the writer, the Communist- Anna has to carry in herself roles of a mother and a lover and finally the role of Free Woman.

Anna's identity crisis traces a fluctuating mood. Sometimes it is her motherhood that turns the scale, but sometimes it is her role as a lover to Michael that dominates the crisis. After writing the notebooks of four different colors each symbolizing her different and fragmented identities, Anna Wulf writes the Golden notebook in which she sums and accommodates the voices admitting that "it's been necessary to split myself up, but from now on I shall be using one only". However, as

mentioned above, the final part of the novel takes the reader back to the beginning which also points out that the best and the final solution for Anna Wulf is to accept the fragmentary nature of her life and the surrounding world. Then, it can be asserted that this device of multiple narratives functions as a structuring mechanism of the plot, and through the use of multiple narratives, the fragmentary nature of the novel is again emphasized. The major aspect of Anna's break down is essentially her fictional creation Ella.

The assonance in the names and the two double letters in the middle obviously suggest the connection between Ella and Anna. However, in the course of the Yellow notebook, the narrative of Ella gets so complex and mature that Ella becomes a separate character free from Anna. It is also noteworthy that in the narrative of Ella, neither communism, nor Alrica is mentioned. The account of Ella is strictly devoted to the relationship between man and woman. As if she acknowledges this idea, Anna writes: I see Ella, walking slowly about a big room, thinking, waiting. I, Anna, see Ella. Who is, of course, Anna. But that is the point, for she is not. The moment I, Anna, write: Ella rings up Julia to announce, etc., then Ella floats away from me and becomes someone else. I don't understand what happens at the moment Ella separates herself from me and becomes Ella. No one does. It's enough to call her Ella, instead of Anna'

Surprisingly, the account of Ella, or "The Shadow of the Third", is left incomplete by Anna. Ella does not suffer from a self-division unlike Anna who experiences this self-division and expresses it through the separate notebooks. Even though Ella does not shatter or fall into pieces, the Yellow Notebook does break down in its narration. The last part of

the Yellow Notebook is full of short stories or short drafts of writing entitled like "A Short Novel or "Romantic Tough School of Writing". In other words, in spite of Ella, the narrative is broken down and fragmented into the tiny pieces. "The process of psychological breakdown of Anna reaches its peak in the fourth installment of the Blue notebook and in the Golden notebook, whereas it corresponds to the last sections of the Free Women.

When compared with the long, intense first-person account in the Blue and Golden notebooks", the narrative of the Free Women is shorter, more dispassionate" with its third person account (Hite, 1989: 92). Their endings are also different. The Free Women presents a conciliatory ending in which the two women kiss and separate - Molly is married, and Anna decides to devote herself to the social concerns. This ending recalls the traditional realism. *The Golden Notebook* also ends with a separation - this time Anna and Saul separates. However, this separation will give birth to *The Golden Notebook* thanks to the assistance of Saul Green. *The Golden Notebook*, in fact, has an unconventionally open ending. Moreover, in the course of narratives, or in the struggle of the truth that takes place between the notebooks and the Free Women, Lessing does not privilege one narrative over the other. Neither of these narratives provides the reader with the satisfaction of a wrapped-up ending. In other words, Lessing diagnoses the problem as the fragmentation, breakdown or disintegration

Lessing's idea concerning the fragmentation and unity, then, resembles to a jigsaw puzzle. In a jigsaw puzzle in order to form the whole picture, the tiny pieces should be put in their accurate places. Each individual item is meaningless separately and needs other items to acquire

a meaning. *The Golden Notebook* proposes readers to acknowledge the fragments. The novel promises a unity on condition that each individual item of this unity is granted a meaning and an acknowledgment. Denying, limiting, ignoring or excluding any item in this multi-pieced unity is not proposed as a solution in the novel. Instead of ignoring them, the novel suggests that the whole and the united picture can have a meaning thanks to the fragments that compose it. In other words, *The Golden Notebook* anticipates a postmodern understanding of the unity and fragmentation that would be announced by the critics like Lyotard and Hutcheon decades after the publication of the novel. As this quality of the novel makes it explicitly a novel ahead of its time, it also denotes that while the novel seems to carry a modernist tension for the unity, this tension is transformed into a postmodern understanding of the fragmentation."

## **Chapter 2**

### **Metafiction**

Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically questions the relationship between fiction and reality. It also explores the possible functionality of the world outside the literary fictional text. Over the last twenty years, novelists have tended to become much more aware of the theoretical issues involved in constructing fictions. Their novels have tended to embody dimensions of self-reflexivity and formal uncertainty. All metafictional writers explore a theory of fiction through the practice of writing fiction.

Metafiction pursues questions such as how human beings reflect construct and mediate their experience of the world. It recast such issues in terms of contemporary philosophical, linguistic or literary theory. The study of characters in novels may provide a useful model for understanding the construction of subjectivity in the world outside novels. Thus literary fiction becomes a model for learning the construction of 'reality' itself. In fiction the arbitrary linguistic system are required in order to explore the relationship between the world 'of' the fiction and the world 'outside' the fiction.

The term metafiction might be new, but the practice is as older than the novel itself. Metafiction is defined as a tendency or function inherent in all novels. This form of fiction offers insights into both the representative nature of all fiction and the literary history of the novel as genre. By studying metafiction, the novel is given its identity.

The language of fiction is always self-conscious. Mikhail Bakhtin has defined the process of relativization as the 'dialogic' potential of the novel. Metafiction foregrounds the essential mode of all fictional language. The language of fiction is always to some extent dialogic. The novel assimilates a variety of discourses that always question and relatives each other's authority. Realism is often regarded as the classic fictional mode which suppresses this dialogue. This conflict of languages and voices is apparently resolved in realistic fiction through their subordination to the dominant 'voice' of the author. Novels which Bakhtin refers to as 'dialogic' resist such resolution. Metafiction 'displays' and rejoices in the impossibility of such a resolution and thus reveals the basic identity of the novel as genre.

Metafictional novels tend to be constructed on the principal of a fictional illusion and the laying bare of that illusion. The lowest common denominator of metafiction is to create fiction and do make a statement about the creation of that fiction. These two processes breakdown the distinctions between "creation" and "criticism" and merge them into the concepts of 'interpretation' and 'deconstruction'.

This oppositional process is present in all fiction and is likely to emerge during 'crisis' periods in literary history of the genre. Its prominence in the contemporary novel is unique. Contemporary fiction breaks down traditional values which are uncertain, insecure, self-questioning and culturally pluralistic. The forms of fiction in the nineteenth century, realism are derived from a firm belief in a commonly experienced, objectively existing world of history.

Contemporary metafictional writing makes a sense that reality or history is provisional. The materialist, positivist and empiricist worldview on which realistic fiction is premised no longer exists. It is hardly surprising that more and more novelists have come to question and reject the forms that correspond to this ordered reality.

The novelists are motivated by the absence of a clearly defined avant-grade 'movement'. The confrontations of the post-modernist writers are different from that of the modernist writers. The experimental writers should establish a sense of shared aims and objectives.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century fiction, the individual is always finally integrated in to the social structure. In modernist fiction the struggle for personal autonomy can be institutions and conventions. This struggle necessarily involves individual alienation and often ends with mental dissolution. The power structures of contemporary society are, however, more diverse and more effectively concealed or mystified, creating greater problems for the post-modernist novelist in identifying and then representing the object of 'opposition'.

Metafictional writers examine the relationship between fictional form and social reality. They focus on the notion that 'everyday' language of 'common sense' is the language of the traditional novel. It is treated as one of the conventions of realism. Metafiction set up on opposition, not to 'objective' facts in the real world, but to the language of the realistic novel which has sustained and endorsed such a view of reality.

The metafictional novels thus situate its resistance ‘ within ‘ the form of the novel itself. Saussure distinguished between *langue* and *parole* which defines the language system and any act of individual difference that takes place within this system. Each metafictional novel self-consciously sets its individual *parole* against the *langue* of the novel tradition. Metafiction converts negative values of literary conventions into the form of a potentially constructive social criticism.

The metafictional response to the problem of how to represent impermanence and a sense of chaos, in the permanent and ordered terms of literature, had a much more significant influence on the development of the novel as genre. Metafiction offers both innovation and familiarity through the individual reworking and undermining of familiar conventions.

Some metafictional novels employ parody self-consciously. They take as ‘ object ‘ languages the structures of nineteenth century realism and of historical romance or of fairy -tales. The parody of these languages defamiliarizes such structures to undermine the authority of the omniscient author. Thus the reader is distanced from the literary conventions and from conventional ideologies and can therefore be enjoyed and remains in the consciousness of a wide readership. They are given active role in the construction of the ‘ meaning ‘ of the text as compared to the contemporary realist novels.

Patricia Waugh examines some alternative definitions of self-conscious writing. These similar modes have been termed ‘the introverted novel ‘, ‘the anti-novel ‘, ‘irrealism ‘, ‘surfiction ‘, ‘the self-begetting novel ‘, ‘fabulation

‘ etc. All like metafiction imply a fiction that self – consciously reflects up on its own structure as language . All these offer different perspectives on the same process. But the terms shift the emphasis in different ways. The ‘self – begetting novel ‘ is described as an account usually first person, of the development of a character to a point at which he is able to take up and compose the novel we have just finished reading. The emphasis is on the development of the narrator, on the modernist concern of consciousness rather than the post – modernist one of fictionality. Metafiction is a telling of individual invention and spontaneous fabrication at the expense of external reality or literary tradition. Metafiction has continuous involvement in mediation of reality through linguistic structures and pre – existent texts.

Metafictional writing may include all or some of the strategies that critics have discussed. Metafiction is not a sub – genre of the novel, but as a tendency with in the novel which operates through exaggeration of the tensions and oppositions inherent in all novels. Thus it expresses the dilemma of all art.

In all metafiction, there is a complex implicit interdependence of level in it. The reader is always presented with embedded strata immediately above or below. The fictional content of the story is continually reflected by its formal existence as text and the existence of the text with a world viewed in terms of ‘ textuality’ .

Metafictional novels reject the traditional figure of the author as a transcendental imagination fabricating, through an ultimately monologic discourse and structures of order. It will replace the forgotten material

text of the world. The ‘author‘ is a concept produced through previous and existing literary and social texts. ‘Reality‘ too is also constructed and mediated in a similar fashion. ‘Reality‘ is fictional and can be understood through an appropriate ‘reading‘ process. Metafiction actually explores the concept of fictionality through an opposition between the construction and the breaking of the illusion.

Metafiction lays bare the conventions of realism. It does not ignore or abandon them. Very often realistic conventions supply the ‘control‘ in metafictional texts, the norm or back ground against which the experimental strategies can foreground themselves. It doesn’t abandon the ‘real world‘ for narcissistic pleasures of the imagination. It re-examines the conventions of realism in order to discover a fictional form that is culturally relevant and comprehensible to contemporary readers. Metafiction also helps us to understand how the reality we live day by day is similarly constructed and similarly ‘written‘. In short we can say that metafiction is an elastic term which covers a wide range of fictions.

Metafiction is a mode of writing in a broader cultural movement often referred to as post modernism. Post modernism is term often expressed as ‘awkward‘ and faintly epigones. Post modernism exhibit the same sense of crisis and loss of belief in an external authoritative system of orders as that of modernism. Both post modernism and modernism affirm the constructive powers of the mind in the face of apparent phenomenal chaos. Modernist self-consciousness does not systematically flaunt its own condition of artifice in the manner of contemporary metafiction

The writing of the text is the most fundamentally problematic aspect of that text. Metafiction is just one of post modernism. All contemporary experimental writing displays some explicitly metafictional strategies. Any text draws the reader's attention to its process of construction by frustrating his or her conventional expectations of meaning. The ways of such narrative codes are based on particular ideologies whether real or imaginary presenting in a natural or eternal manner.

According to Joseph Frank, self-reflexive ness in modernist texts generates "spatial form". With realist writing the reader has the illusion of constructing an interpretation by referring the words of the text to objects in the real world. For reading such texts, the reader must follow the complex web of cross-reference and repetitions of words and images which function independently to the narrative codes of causality and sequence. He became aware that 'meaning' is constructed primarily through internal verbal relationships, and it will achieve a 'spatial form'. Such organization persists in contemporary metafictional texts, but merely as one aspect of textual self-reflexivity. 'Spatial form' itself function in these fictions as the object of self-conscious attention.

POST-modernism clearly does not involve the modernist concern with the mind as itself, the basic of an aesthetic, ordered at a profound level and revealed to consciousnesses at isolated 'epiphany' moments. It shares some of the philosophies of modernism, its formal techniques seem to have originated from novels like *Tristram Shandy* or *Tom Jones*.

For contemporary writers, the mind is not a perfect aestheticizing instrument. It is not free, and it is as much constructed out of and with language. The substitution of a purely metaphysical system cannot be accepted by the final metafictionist as final structures of authority and meaning. Contemporary reflexivity implies awareness both of language and meta-language, of consciousness and writing.

For metafictional writers the most fundamental assumption of composing a novel is basically not different from composing or constructing one's 'reality', writing itself rather than consciousness becomes the main object of attention. Questioning not only the notion of the novelist as God, but also the authority of consciousness, of the mind, metafiction establishes the categorization of the world through the arbitrary system of language. Sometimes the modernist writer's style fits closest with that of the post-modernist mode of writing.

Despite parody, stylization and imitation of non-literary discourses, the main focus of a metafictional novel is the problematic relationship of language and 'reality'. Each of the parodies of literary style presents a direct and problematical relationship between style and content. It is a fact that language is not simply a set of empty forms filled with meaning, but it actually dictates and circumscribes what can be said and perceived.

The modes of literary self-consciousness characteristic of modernist and post-modernist writing tries to examine the concerns of contemporary metafiction. It is in relation to some of the changes in the way in which

reality is mediated and constructed by cultural theory and practice outside the strict domain of the 'literary'. Literature should not be analyzed as a form of expression which simply sets up its own traditions and conventions totally apart from those that structure non-literary culture. If metafiction is to be seen as a positive stage in the development of the novel, then its relevance and sensitivity to the increasing and diverse manifestations of self-consciousness in the culture as a whole have to be established.

Two leading ideas in the field of sociology are the notion of history/reality as a construct, and the idea of 'framing' as the activity through which it is constructed. Such non-literary cultural developments are used as a response to metafictional technique.

A frame may be defined as a construction, constitution or build which establish order, plan, system etc. underlying support or essential sub-structures of anything. Modernism and post-modernism claims that the historical world and works of art are organized and perceived through such structures or 'frames'. Everything in life and in novels is framed. Contemporary metafiction, in particular, foregrounds 'framing' as a problem. It examines framing procedures in the construction of the real world and of novels. Metafictional novel discusses the arbitrary nature of beginning and of boundaries.

Contemporary metafiction draws attention to the fact that life, as well as novels, is constructed through frames. It is difficult to know where one frame ends and another begins. Contemporary sociologists argued that there is no simple dichotomy as 'reality/fiction'. Frames in life operate like

conventions in novels. They facilitate action and involvement in a situation. Analysis of frames is the analysis of the organization of experience. In fiction, it involves analysis of the formal conventional organizations of novels. Frames are essential in all fiction. They become more perceptible as one moves from realist to modernist modes and are explicitly laid bare in metafiction.

In metafiction novels, obvious framing devices range from stories within stories. The concept of 'frames' includes Chinese box structures such as those which contest the reality of each individual 'box' through a nesting of narrators. The infinities of texts within texts draw out the paradoxical relationship of 'framed' and unframed and of 'form' and 'content'. There is ultimately only 'content' and it will never be discovered in a 'natural' unframed state.

One method of showing the function literary conventions is to show when they malfunction. Parody and inversion are two strategies which operate as frame breaks. The alteration of frame and frame-break provides the essential deconstructive method of metafiction. The nineteenth-century fiction may be metalingual which functions mainly by forming a bridge between the historical and the fictional world's. One is merely a continuation of the other, and thus not metafictional.

Sometimes certain novelists destroy the illusion of self-contentedness and appeal to the reader. Such intrusions reinforce the connection between the real and the fictional world and reinforce the reader's sense that one is a

continuation of the other. In metafictional texts such intrusions expose the ontological distinctness of the real and the fictional disguise its distinctness.

Metafictional novels strengthen such reader's sense of an everyday real world while problematizing his or her sense of reality from a conceptual and philosophical point of view. As a result of metafictional undermining of the conventional basis of existence, the reader may revise his or her ideas about the philosophical status. Each reader does it with a new awareness of how the meanings and values of that world have been constructed and can be challenged or changed. To some extent each metafictional novel is a fictional 'mythology' which aims to unsettle our convictions about the relative status of 'truth' and 'fiction'.

According to Freudian notion, literary fiction is a form of play, where play is an important and necessary aspect of human society. Metafictional writers view play in the light of this notion. Metafiction points out that, play is a relatively autonomous activity, which has a definite value in the real world. Play is facilitated by rules or roles, and metafiction operates by exploring fictional rules to discover the role of fiction in life. It aims at how each 'play' our own relatives. The most important feature shared by fiction and play is the construction of an alternative reality by manipulating the relation between a set of signs as 'message' and the content or frame of that message.

Literary fiction, as a form of play, shifts signification in the same way. In fact the shifts of context is greater because fiction is constructed with detachability from specific context. Language does not have to refer

to objects and situations immediately present at the act of utterance. It does not have to be directly indexical. All play and fiction require 'meta' levels which explain the transition from one context to another and set up a hierarchy of contexts and meanings. The main concern of metafiction is precisely the implications of the shift from the context of 'reality' to that of 'fiction' and the complicated interpenetration of the two.

Metafiction draws attention to the process of recontextualization that occurs when language is used aesthetically. In that case, language is used 'playfully'. The more 'playful' a literary work, the more such Metalanguages are needed if the relationship between the 'real' and the 'fictive' world is to be maintained and understood. In metafictional novels, the nature of this relationship is the subject of enquiry. Metalingual commentary is thus foregrounded as the vehicle of that enquiry.

Metalingual insufficiency results in a failure to distinguish between hierarchies of messages and contexts. Here the historical world and the alternative or fantasy world merge. In metafiction they are always held in a state of tension, and the relationship between 'play' and 'reality', the concept of 'pretence'.

The levels of fictional and social discourse might shift our notion of reality slightly but can never totally undermine it. Language is the main instrument for maintaining this every-day reality. Texts which move towards a breakdown of the language system can be seen as resisting assimilation in to the terms of the everyday. They attempt to unsettle our notion of the 'real'. Doris Lessing's protagonist Anna, in *The Golden Notebook*,

loses her precarious hold on this everyday life when she feels at a pitch where words mean nothing. In this novel 'reality par excellence' is represented by the misrepresentation, in authentic language of 'Free women' which freezes the everyday into a mocking parody of itself.

There are two poles of metafiction. One accepts a substantial real world whose significance is not entirely composed of relationships with language. The other one suggests escape from the prison house of language and either delights or despairs in this. The first one employs structural undermining of convention, or parody, using a specific previous text or system for its base. Novelist like Fowles, Sparr, Vonnegut, Lessing etc. use this mode of language for their writings. Language is so pre-eminently the instrument which maintains the everyday. The second one is represented by those writers who conduct their fictional experiments even at the level of the 'sign'. It actually disturbs the 'everyday'.

Some critics do not give attention to the centrality of language in constructing everyday reality. It is this exposure of 'reality' in terms of 'textuality', which has provided the main critique of realism. They bring out the fact that language 'constructs' rather than 'reflects' everyday life and meaning resides then in their reference to objects outside the text.

Parody in metafiction can be regarded as another level of positive literary changes. Parody is double-edged. A novel that uses parody can be seen either as destructive or as critically evaluative and breaking out into new creative possibilities.

Russian formalist theory of literary evolution views parodic devices in a positive way. They offer valuable insights by viewing cultural and formal perspectives, based on metafiction. It also offers an optimistic view of metafictional strategies within the evolution of the novel. Metafiction suggests not only that, writing history is a fictional act, ranging events conceptually through language to form world model, but that history itself is invested, like fiction, with unrelated plots which appear to interact independently of human design.

## Chapter – 3

### Theoretical perspective of *The Golden Notebook*

As metafiction is a term referred to post-modernism, Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* (1962) uses Chinese-box structures, which is typical of modernism. Here writing of the text is the most fundamentally problematic aspect of the text. *The Golden Notebook* becomes an experimental writing which displays some explicitly metafictional strategies. It draws reader's attention to its process of construction by frustrating his or her conventional expectations of meaning. It is based on particular ideologies which are presented as transparently 'natural' and 'eternal'.

Doris Lessing uses language as the main instrument for maintaining the everyday reality. She tries radically to unsettle our notion of the 'real'. Lessing's protagonist, Anna in *The Golden Notebook* loses her precarious hold on this 'everyday life' when she feels 'at a pitch where words mean nothing' because in this novel 'reality par excellence' is represented by the misrepresentation, inauthentic language of 'Free women' which freezes the everyday-British life at its roots' - into a mocking parody of itself.

Parody appears again and again at points of crisis in the development of the novel. This phenomenon seems to be paralleled in the personal developments of novelists themselves. Doris Lessing wrote *The Golden Notebook* with its continual parodies of style and its 'Free women' outer frame which parodies conventional realism to resolve a personal crisis in her development as a writer. A 'writer block' caused by her feeling that

subjectivity is in authentic. She finally achieves, through the women's movement, a creative release in her realization that 'writing about oneself is writing about others'.

The theme of 'the artist' had to relate to another subjectivity when I began writing there was pressure on writers not to be subjective..... Anna's stammer was because she was evading something. Once a pressure or a current has started there is no way of avoiding it: there was no way of 'not' being intensely subjective: it was, if you like, the writers task for that time. (Lessing, 12)

A metafiction text which draws on a whole plethora of parodist effects, both stylistic and structural, is Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*. The novel uses parody both to achieve a comic effect by exposing the gap between form and content, and to reveal frustration and despair. The novel is constructed from five notebooks, divided into four sections, each 'framed' by a section of a novel called 'Free Women', which also provides the outermost frame of *The Golden Notebook* itself. Everything in the text is apparently written by the central protagonist- Anna, freeman is searching for a means of fixing and relating her several identities- as a woman, writer, mother, lover, communist- and she decides to separate them out into different notebooks, that her experiments with style serve only to undermine it as a reality- defining concept, and she is finally saved only by her recognition of an insight.

'Free women', the 'realistic' novel which Anna writes, based on the experiences of the notebooks, is precisely such an expression of the need for categorization to preserve sanity. However, the novel as a whole and particularly the fifth notebook, into which all the others finally breakdown, *The Golden Notebook* shows 'truth' to reside in middle and breakout of this constricting outer frame. Anna reflects:

The essence of neurosis is conflict. But the essence of Living now, fully, not blocking off what goes on is conflict. In fact I have reached the stage where I look at people and say he or she, they are whole at all because they're in block off at this stage or that. People stay and one by blocking off. (456)

But they live- which is true sanity by not doing so Lessing's novel itself exists within these terms allowing some of the essence of living now to escape the necessary novelistic formal 'blocking off'.

The parody throughout *The Golden Notebook* expresses the division its heroine feels within herself. It also expresses the division for wholeness for an end to the split, divided unsatisfactory way they all live. Her search is partly for a reconciliation of the woman Anna with the artist Anna. For her, this role conflict can be resolved through the submergence of the individual self into the collective unconscious by means of the artistic process. But Anna as woman cannot accept this sacrifice of self. She loses faith in the ordering possibilities of art and language and experiences dreams which share the same quality of false art, caricature parody. Anna comes to learn that all

representation involves some parody, but she has further to learn to distinguish between the authentic parody of true art and the false representation of inauthentic art. 'Free women' the novel she writes, is the ironic end of self discovery. It also represents the ironic and of self discovery of Doris Lessing the novelist in its parody of realism and its revelation of the extent of the inadequacy of realist writing.

She felt a new sensation, like a hallucination, a new and hitherto not understood picture of world. This understanding was altogether terrible, a reality different from anything she had never visited. It was not being depressed or being unhappy or feeling discouraged the essence of the experience was that such words, like joy or happiness, were meaningless. (565 )

The inauthenticity of realism is explored in the yellow Notebook. It represents a sort of halfway stage in the petrification of experience as it is mediated through the form of the traditional realist novel. In the yellow Notebook Anna offers a more stereotypical fictionalized version of herself ( Ella)

They both considered themselves very normal, not to say conventional women. Women, that is to say, with conventional emotional reactions. The fact that their lives never seemed to run on the usual tracks was because, so they felt, or might even say,

they never met men who were capable of seeing what they really were. As things were, they were regarded by women with a mixture of envy and hospitality and by men with emotions which so they complained - were depressingly banal. Their friends saw them as women who positively disdained ordinary morality. (164)

This allows her to draw on the conventions of popular romance to explore aspects of personality that she cannot face directly in the Blue Notebook. Her diary 'Free woman' is the final stage of petrification. This frame overtly parodies the conventions of Realism. It offers an apparently well made plot and well placed climax. Characters are introduced through formal case histories. 'The divided self' theme is presented discursively and analytically. The frame presents a wholly dissatisfying version of Anna's experience. It is clearly a deliberate aesthetic strategy on Doris Lessing part to lay bare the conventions of any contemporary experience and in particular the experience of women.

The structure of Free women is circular beginning and ending in a room with Molly and Anna. Even this is exposed in its inauthenticity by the novel as a whole. Experience does not describe perfect circles. The Golden Notebook is conical in shape. The notebook begins with the historical events set in vast south African plains of the Black Notebook and ends in a small room in the present of writing about the individual self.

The narrative order of the novel, 'Free women' is presented first, recording external, refined annihilated experience. The Black Notebook then presents the rejection of the past. It reveals the fallibility of memory and offers parodic versions of a novel previously written by Anna, 'Frontiers of war', about her South African experience. This novel is rejected as unhealthy, 'personal' and 'obsessive'. The Red Notebook develops Anna's sense of public self-betrayal in her growing disillusionment with the communist party. The Yellow Notebook presents a consciously fictive and parodic account of recent events in Anna's private life. The Blue Notebook attempts to reconcile past and present Anna's through a diary account which becomes implicitly parodic. Finally the reader is taken into The Golden Notebook which is 'inside' Anna. Thus parody and representation becomes the same process.

Within each notebook there is also a gradual breakdown into a more personal vein, large-scale political and social concerns coming to focus on a single individual in each space. The Blue and Gold, the two 'personal' notebooks, become more complex and creative, full of textures, colours and imagery that relate the inner to the outer world. Finally, time breaks down and leads to a confused state.

“And now it was terrible, because I was faced with the Burden of recreating order out of the chaos that my life had Become. Time had gone, and my memory did not exist, and I was unable to distinguish, and I was unable to distinguish Between what I had invented, and what I had known, and I Knew that what I had

invented was all false. It was a whirl, An order less  
 dance, like the dance of the white butterflies In a  
 shimmer of heat over the lamp sandy vile". (538 )

Anna breaks down from the novel form itself. She can only become whole by 'going down' in to herself.

"This was the 'break down's he had foreseen, the 'cracking Up'. Yet it did not seem to her that she was even slightly mad, but rather that people who were not obsessed as she was with the inchoate world mirrored in the news papers were all out of touch with an awful necessity. Yet sheknew she was mad."(564 )

In that case, the novel performs the same act of subversion. The reader is forced to enter the process of the construction and breakdown of this fiction. He or she experiences the enlightenment and creative release provided by all successful parody through the parody of social and fictional convention. Doris Lessing has not formulated a viable alternative to the traditional novel or a viable alternative politics to the male defined discourses of the communist party. She achieves a measure of release which breaks her own writers block.

This 'release' function is central to parody and metafiction. It operates on textual, psychological , generic and historical levels.

## Conclusion

Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* displays all the aspects of a metafictional novel. As an experimentalist Lessing brings out certain ideologies that interconnects life and art. It is considered as a remarkable attempt aiming at her matured vision of life. Her play on language makes the whole novel, an everyday reality. One of the most considerable works like *The Golden Notebook* is a carefully organized, clumsily written novel. The book's strength lies purely in the wide range of Lessing's interests.

In *The Golden Notebook* Lessing relates the concept of mental fragmentation to the disintegration of fictional form. It is in many ways a traditional narrative subjected to a process of disordering. It can be seen both as a wayward development of the kind of nineteenth century realist fiction admired by Marxist critics and as an attempt to come to terms with an intelligent woman's sense of private and public diffusion.

Doris Lessing problematizes the aspect of writing the text, which is typical of a metafictional novel. Her use of language enables us to examine the relationship between fictional form and social reality, she thereby, naturalizes the power structures of 'everyday language' and its traditional mode to realism. A metafictional novel like *The Golden Notebook* has a pre-eminent role in mediation of reality through linguistic structures and pre-existent texts.

Metafictional novel like *The Golden Notebook* examines 'frames' as a construction, constitution and organization of the real world and of the whole novel form. It deconstructs the simple dichotomy like 'reality/fiction'. Frame operates in life as well as in novel in a unique manner. So Lessing considers

frame as essential ingredient in her fiction. Such metafictional novels considers the paradoxical relationship between 'form' and 'content' where 'content' could only be discovered in a 'natural' unframed state.

As a metafictionist, Lessing uses an established mode of fiction which lays bare the conventions that individual works of the mode share and fuses them with each other to extrapolate an 'essence'. This is then displaced through exaggeration and the substitution of a new content, so that the relationship of form to content, as in the joke, is itself laid bare. The joke, however elicits both this and a release within the system of literary history.

Parody in metafiction is more than a joke. Metafictional novels like *The Golden Notebook* are, often regarded as escapist. This is Partly a consequence of their tendency to assimilate so called 'escapist' popular forms. It suggests how novels are responsible in socio-cultural terms and in terms of the novel itself.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE  
ANGADIKADAVU**

**FIVE DARK DAYS OF JIMMY: A PSYCHOANALYTIC  
READING OF DEAN KOONTZ'S *LIFE EXPECTANCY***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Arts

**BETSY JOSEPH**

**Register No. DB18AEGR025**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Anu P Thomas

March 2021

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## Bonofide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “ Five Dark Of Jimmy; A Psychoanalytic Reading of Dean Koontz’s *Life Expectancy*” is a bonofide work of Miss.Betsy Joseph who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan.

Department in charge.

Anu P Thomas

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Betsy Joseph, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Five Dark Days Of Jimmy : A Psychoanalytic Reading of Dean Koontz’s *Life Expectancy*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Anu of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree ,title, or, recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu.

Betsy Joseph

DB18AEGR025

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## Table of contents

	Page No
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Psychoanalytical Theory and Pleasure principle	3
Chapter Two: The time has come back for part of back	10
Chapter Three: Five Dark Days of Jimmy ; Psychoanalytic Reading Dean Koontz's " <i>Life Expectancy</i> "	28
Conclusion	33
Works Cited	34

## **Introduction**

Every human being is special and different to each other. Even though the psychological factors are same in everyone. Sigmund Freud founder of psychoanalysis has proved that : ones behaviour is related to ones personality ,this system presented a beautiful blend of theory and practice. On the theoretical side it presented a theory to conduct and explain the human psyche and on the practical side it provided a method known as 'psychoanalysis' for the study of human behaviour, and also as a therapy for treating the mentally ill. When people experience negative emotions or impulse ,they often look for different ways to cope with these unwanted feelings . Sometimes people are aware of themselves doing this ,but in many cases,it takes places without conscious awareness. These defenses operate unconsciously to help reduce anxiety from things that people find threatening or unacceptable. While unconscious feelings or urges might be outside of awareness, they can still influence behaviour and create anxiety for the individual.

Life expectancy is one of the novel written by Dean Koontz. It was published in 7 December 2004 in United States.The Psychological novel tells about the five pivotal moments in the life of a self -proclaimed “lummoX” named James “ Jimmy” Tock . With his bestselling blend of nail-biting intensity, daring artistry, and storytelling magic .Dean Koontz returns with an emotional roller coaster of a tale filled with enough twists , turns ,shocks and surprises for ten ordinary novels. Here is the story of five days in the life of an ordinary man born to an extra-ordinary legacy -a story that will challenge the way you look at good of evil, life and death, and everything in between.

The present study is intended to prove that this novel '*Life Expectancy*' written by Dean Koontz comes under the genre of psychological novel and to find out the behaviour of Jimmy is close examined with the help of psychoanalytic theories to utmost the behaviour changes occurred in the life of Jimmy.

# **Chapter One**

## **Psychoanalytic Theory**

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century marking the beginning of modern psychology and with the pace of psychology the psychological analysis of literary texts evolved. This method of critiquing used the concepts advocated by noted sociologist, including Carl Jung, Alfred Adler and Otto Rank and above all Sigmund Freud. It was first used or developed as a method of therapy for neurosis by Freud, but very soon expanded it to account for many expanded development and practices in the history of civilizations including Warfare, mythology, religion, literature and other arts.

In the process of explaining literature psychoanalysis has been used and in the process literature has been used as a source for psychoanalytic conceptions. It noticed that literary criticism has used psychoanalysis theory to interpret literature and literature has also attempted to exploit and use psychoanalysis for creative purposes. Psychological criticism deals with the work of literature primarily as an expression, in fictional form, of the state of mind and the structure of personality of individual author.

If one look at the history of psychology one will find that psychology started from the medical profession . Entering into psychology, it spread into other fields of study and finally permeated literary studies as one of the different approaches to literature. The idea of psychoanalysis revolves a round the concept that people's actions are determined by their prestored ideas of the recurrent events .

According to Monte(1977), "Psychoanalytic theories assume the existence of unconscious internal states that motivate an individual's overt actions". The psychoanalysis movement therefore championed by Sigmund Freud (1859-1939). A later student of Freudian Psychology in the name of Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961)

redirect his view to suit his own social milieu in the understanding of psychoanalysis . It is Jung who sees the basic human behaviour in myths and legends. A later development of psychoanalysis embraced Alfred Adler who sees man as a social being . Adler says “ we are motivated by social needs, we are self conscious and capable of improving ourselves and the world around us”.

Psychoanalytic theory is a Re-narratization of a person's life . It has given much importance on the significance between the unconscious and thought processes . They believed that an awareness of this is therapeutic and vital to a healthy mind. Psychoanalysis emphasized on motives , it focused on hidden or disguised motives which helps to clarify literature on two levels , the level of writing itself and the level of character action within the text . Psychoanalysis gives emphasize on the subject and tries to explain what are the relationship of meaning and identity are to psychic and cultural forces. Psychoanalysis has a great importance in contemporary understanding of reading, meaning and the relation of literature to culture.

Psychoanalysis has been seen as a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders ‘by investigating the interaction of conscious or unconscious elements in the minds’. Psychoanalysis examines the articulation of our most private anxieties and the meanings to culture and gives u a perspective on them as cultural formations.

The psychoanalytic movement originated in the clinical observations and formulations of Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud , who coined the term Psychoanalysis. During 1890, Freud worked with the Austrian physician and psychologist Joseph Breuer in studies of Neurotic patients under hypnosis. Freud and his followers later extended the concept of anxiety to include feelings of fear, guilt and shame consequent to fantasies of aggression and hostility and to fear of loneliness caused by separation from a person on whom the sufferer is dependent. Freud's free

association techniques provided him with a tool for studying the meanings of dreams , slips of tongue, forgetfulness and other mistakes and errors in everyday life.

According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, personality develops through a series of stages, each characterized by a certain internal psychological conflict. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality argues that human behavior is the result of the interactions among three component parts of the mind: the id, ego, and superego. This theory, known as Freud's structural theory of personality, places great emphasis on the role of unconscious psychological conflicts in shaping behavior and personality. Dynamic interactions among these fundamental parts of the mind are thought to progress through five distinct psychosexual stages of development. Over the last century, however, Freud's ideas have since been met with criticism, in part because of his singular focus on sexuality as the main driver of human personality development. According to Freud, our personality develops from the interactions among what he proposed as the three fundamental structures of the human mind: the id, ego, and superego. Conflicts among these three structures, and our efforts to find balance among what each of them "desires," determines how one behave and approach the world. What balance one strike in any given situation determines how one will resolve the conflict between two overarching behavioral tendencies: our biological aggressive and pleasure-seeking drives v/s our socialized internal control over those drives.

The id, the most primitive of the three structures, is concerned with instant gratification of basic physical needs and urges. It operates entirely unconsciously (outside of conscious thought). For example, Bejin was stuck in traffic . He just wanted his vehicle to move! Enraged at the ssituatio,Bejin pulled his car onto the shoulder and

sped forward, not caring that he was clipping people's side mirrors as he tried to get ahead of the cars in front of him.

The superego is concerned with social rules and morals—similar to what many people call their “conscience” or their “moral compass.” It develops as a child learns what their culture considers right and wrong. If your superego walked past the same stranger, it would not take their ice cream because it would know that that would be rude. However, if both your id and your superego were involved, and your id was strong enough to override your superego's concern, you would still take the ice cream, but afterward you would most likely feel guilt and shame over your actions.

In contrast to the instinctual id and the moral superego, the ego is the rational and pragmatic part of our personality. It is less primitive than the id and is partly conscious and partly unconscious. It's what Freud considered to be the “self,” and its job is to balance the demands of the id and superego in the practical context of reality. So, if you walked past the stranger with ice cream one more time, your ego would mediate the conflict between your id (“I want that ice cream right now”) and superego (“It's wrong to take someone else's ice cream”) and decide to go buy your own ice cream. While this may mean you have to wait 10 more minutes, which would frustrate your id, your ego decides to make that sacrifice as part of the compromise—satisfying your desire for ice cream while also avoiding an unpleasant social situation and potential feelings of shame.

Freud believed that the id, ego, and superego are in constant conflict and that adult personality and behavior are rooted in the results of these internal struggles throughout childhood. He believed that a person who has a strong ego has a healthy personality and that imbalances in this system can lead to neurosis (what we now think of as anxiety and depression) and unhealthy behaviour's.

## **Pleasure principle**

In Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality, the pleasure principle is the driving force of the id that seeks immediate gratification of all needs, wants and urges. In other words, the pleasure principle strives to fulfill our most basic and primitive urges, including hunger, thirst, anger, and sex. When these needs are not met, the result is a state of anxiety or tension. Sometimes referred to as the pleasure-pain principle, this motivating force helps drive behavior but it also wants instant satisfaction. The pleasure principle is a term originally used by Sigmund Freud to characterize the tendency of people to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Freud argued that people will sometimes go to great lengths to avoid even momentary pain, particularly at times of psychological weakness or vulnerable conditions.

In psychoanalytic theory, the id is the part of the unconscious dedicated to pleasure and base drives. The pleasure principle is driven by the id. According to Freud, the id rules the personality in infancy and early childhood, and the ego and superego develop later. The influence of the ego and superego can mitigate the influence of the id, but the pleasure principle still remains an important part of the underlying personalities.

The pleasure principle is, as its name suggest; the drive to seek pleasure and to avoid pain. Freud seeks to discover and explain drives that move beyond this principle, and which escape its supposedly universal power. The foundation of the text is in the titanic opposition between “eros” (representing that which falls under the pleasure principle: life, creativity, reproduction, sexual connection and self-preservation) and “thangata's” (representing that which is beyond the pleasure principle: death, self-destruction, aggression and repetition).

## Reality Principle

According to Sigmund Freud, who conceived of the Psychoanalytic theory of personality, what he termed the reality Principle prevented one from doing something that might have landed one in trouble. To understand the reality principle, it's important to first have a grasp of how the two components of personality identified by Freud function. The id seeks instant gratification of needs, demands, and urges. If one acted according to what our id wanted, one might find oneself grabbing food off of another person's plate just because it looks so delicious or getting too friendly with someone else's spouse when one is feeling amorous. The id is ruled by the pleasure principle—the idea that impulses need to be fulfilled immediately. The ego, on the other hand, is the component of personality that deals with the demands of reality. It makes sure that the desires of the id are satisfied in ways that are effective and appropriate—in other words, the ego is ruled by the reality principle.

The reality principle forces to consider the risks, requirements, and possible outcomes as one make decisions by temporarily halting the discharge of the id's energy until a suitable time and place. In other words, the ego doesn't try to block an urge, but instead, it works to make certain the desires of the id are met in ways that are safe, realistic, and appropriate the reality principle and the pleasure principle are forever at odds. Because of the role the ego plays, it's often referred to as having an executive or mediating role in personality. The ego constantly engages in what is known as reality testing; it must come up with realistic plans of action that can satisfy our needs. Freud often compared the relationship of the id and the ego to that of a horse and rider: The horse represents the id, ruled by the pleasure principle and providing the energy to

race to satisfy needs and desires. The ego is the rider, constantly tugging on the reins of the id in order to steer a person to act in ways that are acceptable and appropriate.

The development of a healthy ego, one that leans on the reality principle to control impulses, delay gratification of a desire until it can be met appropriately, and so forth, is an important part of psychological development and one of the hallmarks of a mature personality. Throughout childhood, kids learn how to control their urges and behave in ways that are socially appropriate. Researchers have found that children who are better at delaying gratification may have better-defined egos because they tend to be more concerned with things such as social appropriateness and responsibility.

### **The Death Instinct**

After establishing the repetition compulsion as independent from the pleasure principle, Freud sets out to find a biological basis for its existence. He comes up with the idea of the “death instinct.” Freud argues that the compulsion to repeat is linked to an urge to return to an earlier state. He declares that “the aim of life is death” and proceeds to interpret an organism’s drive to avoid danger as a way of avoiding a short-circuit to death rather than a way to avoid death altogether.

Finally, turning back from the biological to the clinical via a detour through Schopenhauer’s philosophy, Freud manages to find a manifestation of the death instinct in the clinical condition of masochism.

Throughout this work, Freud admits to much use of ‘speculation’ and is often critical of his own methods. This awareness perhaps highlights the holes in his argument in a way that makes it easy to criticise. But in spite of this, Beyond the

Pleasure Principle remains an important text. It paved the way for discussions about the mind's attacks on itself, negative narcissism, and addiction to near-death experience

### **Life Instinct**

Sigmund Freud's theory of drives evolved throughout the course of his life and work. He initially described a class of drives known as the life instincts and believed that these drives were responsible for much of our behavior. Eventually, he came to believe that life instincts alone could not explain all human behavior. With the publication of his book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in 1920, Freud concluded that all instincts fall into one of two major classes: life instincts or death instincts.

Sometimes referred to as sexual instincts, the life instincts are those which deal with basic survival, pleasure, and reproduction. These instincts are essential for sustaining the life of the individual as well as the continuation of the species. While one tends to think of life instincts in terms of sexual procreation, these drives also include such things as thirst, hunger, and pain avoidance. The energy created by the life instincts is known as libido.

In his early psychoanalytic theory, Freud proposed that Eros was opposed by forces of the ego (the organized, realistic part of a person's psyche which mediates between desires). In this later view, he maintained that life instincts were opposed by the self-destructive death instincts, known as Thanatos. Behaviours commonly associated with life instincts include love, cooperation, and other prosocial actions. The life instincts are focused on the preservation of life, both of the individual and of the species. This drive compels people to engage in actions that sustain their own lives, such as looking after their health and safety. It also exerts itself through sexual drives, motivating people to create and nurture new life.

## Chapter Two

### **The time has come back for part of back .**

Human beings can always be relied upon to exert, with vigor, their God-given right to be stupid.

Dean Koontz is one of the best American novelists , known for his remarkable works in the elements of horror, fantasy, mystery, and satire. Dean Koontz was born and raised in Pennsylvania. His unique talent for writing thrillers and tales of terror with a heart and soul is evident in many of his books. His notable books are *odd Thomas, Demon Seed , Watchers , Hideaway, Intensity , Phantoms ,The face of fear and Lightning. The Times* (London newspaper) acclaimed “Dean Koontz is not just a master of our darkest dreams, but also a literary Juggler”. He received World Horror Convention Grand Master Award in 1996, Ross MacDonald Literary Award in 2003, Goodreads Choice Awards Best Horror in 2015 . *Life Expectancy* is one of his books come under suspense and horror genre. This is about the five terrible days that a man is going to have in his life and what is happening in it. This book is a terrific suspense driven tale when it concentrates on knowing a segment of one future, but unable to do anything to thwart it except perhaps avoiding those one cherish when the story line switches into Grave humour such as the dialogues between Lorrie Lynn and Jimmy, it loses some of the tingling chills.

*Life Expectancy* by Dean Koontz is a daring leap into the darker side of human nature. When Rudy Tock and Madelaine, go to the hospital to have their son, Jimmy, the events coalesce affect this family for many years to come. James Tock was born in Snow country Hospital in Colorado and at the exact moment his grandfather Josef Tock

,a pastry chef, dies of a stroke. Moments before his death, Josef recovers miraculously to impart on his son Rudy to cryptic predictions. Josef also predicted five terrible days to come in his grandson's life. The first is to occur twentieth year; the second in his twenty third year; the third in his twenty eight ;and the fourth in his twenty ninth and fifth in his thirteenth. Rudy is all too ready to discount his father's last words dying man's delusional rambling. Later he discovers that Josef also predicted the time of his grandson's birth to the minute, as well as his exact height and weight, and the fact that Jimmy would be born with syndactyly on his left foot. At the same time, Jimmy's father, Rudy Tock, meets Konrad Beezo. Beezo is an unhappy clown from a travelling circus who believes that group of aerialists are out to get him because he married one of their castes. Beezo's wife dies in childbirth at the same time as Jimmy is born, and Beezo loses touch with reality, shooting the doctor and one of the nurses involved in his wife's care before taking his new born son, Punchinello and disappearing from the hospital. Jimmy lives with his father, mother, and his grandmother until the first of his terrible days. He spent twenty years pretending that the accuracy of Josef first five predictions did not necessarily mean that the next five would be fulfilled. Jimmy Tock's childhood and teenage years were fast and even fully presenting evidence whatsoever his life was on the string of fate.

### **First Terrible Day**

Nevertheless, as the first of those five days relentlessly approached- Thursday September 15, 1994. He drives his Shelby Z into town to run errands. He goes to banks first to cash his cheque, but not before being momentarily paralyzed by fear outside. A stranger snaps him out of the bank by inquiring as to whether or not he is ok. Embarrassed, Jimmy makes excuses before continuing his errands but, for a moment he

felt disoriented as though he had briefly stepped outside the flow time and now, stepping in again could not adjust the pace of life. He glanced towards the rooftops that had concerned him, then fixed him with those remarkable green eyes. They had a little confusing conversation

Then , after depositing a pay check and taking back a little cash, he Departed without incident. Then ,he went to Cornelius Randolph Snow library. When Jimmy entered, no one sat at the reading tables. A handsome fellow and Lionel Davis, the head librarian had a conversation. Subsequently, handsome fellow shot Lionel Davis in the head . The pistol made a hard flat noise not half a loud as he would have expected. Jimmy thought, the shooter was mouiestar handsome and the gunshot didn't sound right, and no one would have any reason to kill a sweet man like Lionel Davis, which must mean that all this had been scripted. But he was wrong , Lionel was dead for real . The Killer appeared to be amused by Jimmy, to hare already forgotten Lionel, as if killing the librarian had been an act of no more consequences than stepping on an ant. When danger can be sensed but not identified, then everyone and everything becomes a source of concern; the world from horizon to horizon seems hostile.

Now, Jimmy had identified his enemy. The killer told him that he might shot Jimmy instead of Lionel; But then, he realised that Jimmy would be more interesting company than a boring old librarian. Then, killer threw a handcuff to Jimmy and told him to lock it around his right wrist and lie on the floor with both hands behind your back, so he can finish his job. When he was half way between the main desk and the Portrait of Cornelius Rutherford Snow, the door opened . A young woman, entered with a stalk of book. Lorrie Hicks is beautiful and captivating. It is clear from the start that the maniac likes her as decides that he won't shoot her. Jimmy immediately reassure her

but the maniac is done talking. He tells them that, things taking too long and he has a lot of research to do before the explosions begin. He cuffs them to a chair and begins pulling out back issues of a local paper from the archives while Lorrie discusses ways that they may be able to overcome him, if she can get access to her purse nail file she could strike the maniac in one of his eye.

Library is a source of surprise for both Jimmy and Lorrie, as they watch while the killer searches the back room where the periodicals are kept. Finally he finds what he is looking for and releases a catch that opens section of bookshelves. An iron banded Oak door is behind and he proceeds to participate in overly complicated series of knocks with someone on the other side. When complete, a motor sounds from the other side and a drill bit soon appears through the key hole. When the door opens a tunnel is revealed, and Crinkles and Honker are admitted. Honker questions the reason that Jimmy and Lorrie are there and the killer explains his need for hostages in case anything goes wrong. The maniac guided Jimmy and Lorrie to another pair of wooden chairs. The explosives which the maniac had spoken were unloaded by the two new comers. Jimmy tries hard to patch things up with her and break the frigid silence between them. But Lorrie makes the move and they had a little conversation between but the interesting part was, when they had all but forgotten about Honker, Crinkles and the maniac. After a few minutes, although atleast half the bricks of plastic explosive remained on the handcart, Honker pulled it out of the room, though the alcove door, into the tunnel by which he had arrived.

They moved to the alcove and waited behind the secret door in the bookshelf to pick Lorrie's purse. She took it boldly and they moved out. They walked into a forbidding passage way which appears to be long, dwindling into a confusion of shadows and sinuous sylphs of light before an end could be glimpsed. Lorrie and

Jimmy told him they were under the Central Square Park. They continue walking and stopped under a bank . The maniac and new comers were planning for a bank robbery. The heist was planned because of a long overdue vengeance and to get just for the maniac's mother's death. Jimmy was astonished by hearing those from them and without thinking he asked whether the maniac was Punchinello Beezo. Punchinello unpacks tools, welder's mask while Lorrie ask Jimmy how it is that he knows who Punchinello is. He glosses over the part where grandpa Josef makes the five predictions. A transformer somewhere else the town, blows up, and the lights all go out with the exception of the lantern lit moments before in preparation. While Crinkles and Honker work on the door with the torches, Punchinello takes the time to tell Lorrie and Jimmy about the day of his birth, having had the story relayed to him in many times by his father since that day. His story is skewed fantastically to make Konrad Beezo out to be the one that saved him from the doctor who was smothering him, and Rudy Tock a hero who killed the assassin masquerading as a nurse who was tasked to kill Beezo and his wife by Virgilio Vivacemente; Punchinello's grandfather.

Punchinello and Crinkles came out of the vault, where Honker waited for them. They brought sixteen boxes out of the vault, which were filled with over three million in cash. Punchinello led Lorrie and Jimmy to the loot . At the end of the passage way, they arrived at another formidable oak door with iron banding. Beyond lay the subcellar the snow mansion. They reached at the kitchen in the back of the house, on the main floor. Surprisingly, at the kitchen, Punchinello shot Honker in the chest, Crinkles in the back, then pumped two more rounds into each of them as they thrashed, screaming, on the floor. The unexpectedness and ferocity of these murders shocked silence into Lorrie and Jimmy too. But they pretend to be okay in front of Punchinello. But, Punchinello

had cuffed himself to Lorrie; as for Jimmy, to question why he cuffed himself to Lorrie would be to question the sincerity of his promise to spare them.

They moved together onto the porch. Jimmy got in front of the handcart and pulled it onto the steps, Punchinello and Lorrie descended after him. Jimmy moved the boxes from the handcart to the cargo hold of the van. After loading all sixteen boxes and three million in cash into the van, Punch reveal his intentions to make Jimmy drive and is going to throw him the keys but Jimmy stops him. If they fall down the drain, they would all be in trouble. He approaches with one hand out take the keys from him and with the other hand he drives the nail file into Punchinello's crotch, twisting it brutally. Jimmy tries to take gun, but Punchinello hangs on . With her free hand, Lorrie pummels him in the face, but Punchinello still manages to shoot Jimmy twice despite his father being the great Rudy Tock. Though he and Punchinello are both writhing on the ground in pain, Lorrie manages to convey to Jimmy that they are running out of time. Lorrie and Jimmy moved out of the building together. She called out for help because Jimmy was freezing. He was too tired and hallucinating things until he heard the sound of a doctor who said Jimmy's leg which was shot can't be saved. Suddenly Jimmy replied him saying that he needs both legs because he is a storm chaser .

Punchinello who was arrested by the police had expressed regret that hundreds hadn't died . He told police that if he could do it all over again, he would add packages of napalm to ensure a firestorm that would devastate many square blocks. Six weeks later, Lorrie came to dinner with Jimmy and his family. Lorrie was gorgeous than ever before. They had a long conversation at the end Jimmy proposed to her but she rejected by saying that she was in love with someone else.

## Second Terrible Day

Jimmy takes grandfather Josef's predictions more seriously now. The next date was January 19, 1998- over 3 years after the first date. Jimmy buys a pistol and the family has many suggestions, each different, about how the day should be handled. Complicating this issue is that their baby is due to arrive on 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>. Lorrie had accepted Jimmy's proposal after he had insisted on speaking to the man she was in love with, and she admitted it was him. On January 12<sup>th</sup>, Lorrie's contractions start. Five hours later, after she is sure this time it is the real thing. She tells Jimmy. Two hundred yards away, someone listens to their conversations via a carefully planted transmitter. As they are ready to leave, a Hummer pulls up to block their exit.

Jimmy were rushing his pregnant wife to the hospital in a blizzard with a gunman chasing them in an SUV the size of a Battleship. Finally come to a stop between two trees at the bottom after having descended four hundred yards . Jimmy switches off the engine and heads up the slope to confront the rifleman hoping to get atleast two-thirds of the way up before spotting him coming down. When he reaches that approximate point he weights, still seen nothing. A rushing sound from overhead makes him look up, the owl scares him so badly he cries out in surprise. It sails past him and past the man who was less than thirty feet to his north. He immediately begins to fire . Jimmy begins to run out, trips and tumbles. He finally find his feet again, hoping the gunman has lost track of him but immediately hears him closing in. Jimmy wants to get out of the explorer and killed him.

The Explorer starts on the second try. Though it takes a bit of rocking back and forth, Jimmy manages to get them going and starts picking his way up the hill. Lorrie chooses this time to confess how she feels about family -hers, his and their and before

Jimmy can digest the love she describes, they are on the road. The contractions are closer together and stronger by the time they get to the hospital. Jimmy does the paperwork and calls the police to let them know where Conrad Beezo is chained. He calls home and the family says they are on their way. Then he goes in to see Lorrie. Dr. Mello Meledeon and Jimmy discuss recipes while Lorrie struggles through contradictions between them. Lorrie's water breaks and the place was unnaturally quiet, hushed, even for a hospital, as though the heavy snow fall exerted a muffling influence through the walls at that time someone has arrived on the second floor a doctor came out of the alcove, carrying a clipboard chatting with a nurse who was too small and too female to be Conrad's Beezo. They headed towards the further end of the hall.

Annie was born on Monday night, January 12, 1998, exactly seven days before the second of the five terrible dates foreseen by grandfather Josef. On Wednesday morning they were driven from the hospital in a squad car. Finally the terrible day came. At 7 o'clock, Huey Foster called to inform Jimmy that his house on Hawksbill road ablaze. Fireman reported that the intensity of the flame indicated Arson. Officer Paolini, the bodyguard at that shift made a convincing case that Beezo might have set the fire with the purpose of drawing Jimmy out in the open. So Jimmy stayed with his family. By 8 o'clock their house was burned to the ground with such fury that nothing remained but hot coals. As the Fireman had been mopping up the scene and stowing their hoses, one of them noticed that the drop door on their roadside mailbox was hanging open. In the mailbox he found a mason jar, inside he found a folded slip of paper. It constitutes a promise, "If you ever have a baby boy, I'll be back for him".

### **Third Terrible Day**

Only three things survive the fire that Konrad Beezo set at Jimmy and Lorrie's house. An ornament, a cameo pendant and the circus pass with the five terrible dates written on it . Jimmy, Lorrie and Annie stay with his parents for a month and when the house next door comes up for sale,they see it an omen. They make a good offer which is accepted. Twelve months passed without real terror . Although three of the five dates on the back of the circus pass remained in the future, they could not assume that any of the ordeals ahead of him had anything to do with Konrad Beezo . Prudence required that they be more alert for threats that might come from sources having nothing to do with the Clown or his imprisoned son . They had enjoyed nearly four years of peace, of normalcy. Now, as the third of the five dates approached- Monday, December 23, 2002 , with its origins in August 9,1974.

On the evening of December 22 at 7.20 ,the telephone rang. Jimmy answered it in the kitchen , where Lorrie and Jimmy were preparing dinner. It was Huey Foster , he told he got some good news about Konrad Beezo. Jimmy's house was locked tight; the alarm system had been set in the monitor board. If any door or window open the alarm would not sound, but a digitised voice on the system chip would announce, through speakers throughout the house, the exact location of the breach . With in two minutes a Mercury Mountaineer pulled to the curb at the end of our front walk. The man who got out of it wore a dark suit, white shirt, dark tie, and open topcoat. As he climbed the steps, the porch lights revealed that he was in his mid-forties, handsome with dark hair combed straight back from his brow. When Jimmy opened the door to him that digitised the voice of the alarm system announced,"front door open". The FBI agent appeared to be smitten with Lorrie, as all men are, and treated her with Southern

courtliness. Lorrie served him with a special coffee, she poured three cups of rich Colombian blend ,then held her chair for her as she sat. They were talking about Beezo. The FBI agent told them that sometime, Beezo could be here tomorrow. In between their conversation, Lorrie tries to make the FBI agent believe that Beezo is after Andy and he probably wants to kill all of them. Looking distressed, too much a gentleman to stay seated when a woman stood , Carson rose too. He repeated that they have just got some good news about Beezo Jimmy wants to hear. But then, Jimmy realised that Huey wasn't the one who spoke on the phone. From beneath his suit jacket, he withdrew a pistol fitted with a sound suppressor.

Looking at Carson , comprehension slowly dawns. Though the eyes are different colour, contacts are available, and though the face is different,so were plastic surgeons who truly revenge and was crazy enough to plan, Jimmy remembers how easily he had mimicked his father's voice and Beezo calmly announces that he's come from his recompense. He wants them to turn over Andy so that he can make him into the greatest clown alive. Lorrie looks at him and quietly says no. She tells him to find some desperate and degenerate woman to father a child of his own .She is so firm that his resolve seems to falter . He turns to Jimmy to repeat his demand ,and when he does , Lorrie pulls a container of pepper spray out her apron and sprays him. Gasping for breath, wheezing out of the fumes of pepper spray ,streaming tears from bloodshot eyes ,waving the gun, he staggered across the kitchen nearly cold-cocked himself with the refrigerator ,slammed through the swinging door into the dining room. Lorrie had fallen into a terrible silence a perfect stillness because she was shot.

Jimmy was sickened by the prospect of an intolerable loss , terrified by anticipation of another loss unendurable , and he went after Beezo , desperate he found

the kids . Jimmy crashed through the swinging door into the dining room, staggered out of there clipping the frame of the archway with his shoulder. Jimmy was shot on his right ear. They had a venturous, even heedless fight ; Jimmy dragged him down and he fell against the balustrade. Before Jimmy could locked the hold however Beezo had gotten his chin down , wedging it against Jimmy's arm , making it impossible for Jimmy to apply filter killing pressure .In between the fight, Beezo shared his bullet-grazed ear and twisted; the pain was so intense that Jimmy almost passed out. They continued the fight and the pistol lay a few feet away on the bottom of step. Jimmy took pistol off the step, turned and fired. At such a close range ,as he reached for Jimmy, bullet tore out his throat. Around 8 shots have been fired . Konrad Beezo was dying in wheezes and spurts . The kids were coming and Jimmy was frantic to spare them the sight of Beezo torn and dead he thundered ,”get in your room ,lock the door ,there is a monster down here”. Then he ran into the kitchen were Lorrie lies . She appeared to have been shot in the abdomen .

Although she seemed to be unconscious, her respiration was rapid and shallow. Jimmy's father urged to the worried neighbours and behind him came two paramedics wheeling Lorrie out of the house on a gurney. Jimmy's mother was upstairs in the girl's room with all three kids, comforting them and making sure they didn't look out a window. As the siren rapidly receded, Grandmother pressed something into Jimmy's right hand, kissed him, and urged him into Blazer. When Jimmy opened his hand, he discovered that grandmother gave him Lorrie's jewelry box the cameo pendant that he had given her when they were dating. The pendant was one of the only three things to survive the fire that destroyed their first home. Lorrie was already in surgery. At that time, a nurse insisted on taking Jimmy to the ER . The bullet Beezo had fired at him in the living room had ripped the cartilage of his right ear. Jimmy and his father waited in

the ICU lounge. According to the nurse, although Lorrie remained in critical situation ,the surgery going well. But it would be a long night. Dr.Cornell told them that it would not be finished until sometime between midnight and one o'clock. She had taken two bullets . At the hospital, in front of the OP he turned to his father. Then jimmy did what he had not done since he was a little child: he wept in my father's arms.

Near midnight his mother arrived with a large tin of homemade cookies: lemon snaps , Madeleines , Scotch shortbread ,and Chinese sesame bars. At 12:30 , the surgical nurse returned to inform them that Dr.Cornell would need more time than originally projected. He now expected to speak with them at about 1:30 . Lorrie had already been in surgery over four hours. Cornell told them that she will be on the critical list for at least twenty four hours. After they brought her to the ICU and settled her, Jimmy was allowed to visit in her cubicle for five minutes. She remained sedated . Jimmy touched her hand and her face was pale but nevertheless radiant. Jimmy's mother and grandmother spent a couple minutes with Lorrie, then went home to reassure the kids. At the dawn ,a nurse came to the lounge to tell Jimmy that , Lorrie had awakened . The first thing she'd said to anyone was "Gimme Jimmy ". On January 11, 2003, Lorrie was discharged from the hospital. By Sunday , January 26, Lorrie had been on a regular diet long enough and with sufficient success that they deemed her ready for ready for a holiday dinner. The next of the five terrible days was ten months away , which that night bright with tinsel ,fragrant with roast turkey seemed like forever for Jimmy.

#### **Fourth Terrible Day**

On November 26<sup>th</sup>, which is the fourth of Jimmy's five fateful days, Lorrie and Jimmy go to the Rocky Mountains Federal Penitentiary where Punchinello Beezo is

housed . Since Huey Foster helped to arrange the visit, they are given the VIP treatment and the assistant warden himself escorts them. Punchinello is chained to the side of the table, the legs of which are bolted to the floor. Beezo tells them he has earned a correspondence degree in a law , although he'll never be permitted to the bar . He puts it to use by helping other prisoners with appeals and wrongful convictions . He has also learned to speak German , Swedish , and Norwegian and is working on writing a novel.

Through their conversation with Punchinello ,Jimmy compared to his mother Maddy that he is ugly and can never be perfect like his mother. Then Beezo takes photographs when Punchinello grew older and he send it to his wife's father Virgilio Vivacemete. To show that his most beautiful and talented daughter had not produced an aerialist, that the next generation of circus starts in the Vivacemete Dynasty would have to come from his other and less promising children. After that they realised that they were twins because of the five fused toes. Then they talking about their birth incidents how their original mother Natalie died and what was happened in that day at the hospital. After that Jimmy introduced a nurse named Charlene Coleman, maternity ward nurse on the night that Jimmy was born. Saying that incident happened to Punchinello's mother Natalie. She was fragile but she was frightened little thing, afraid of more than just childbirth. She trapped nurse's hand and didn't want to let go, but she was scared to hear herself say the words. Then she gave birth to healthy twins: Punchinello and Jimmy. About Maddy child was stillborn.Jimmy and Lorrie continue to talk to Punchinello. He reveals just enough about himself to convince Jimmy that he will turn them down. Lorrie tells him that he is the only one who can save their daughter's life,proving his own existence beyond a shadow of a doubt . She knows him a photograph of Annie, and explains the cancer that took both her kidneys. They she tells him about allergy to the solution that cleans the body in the dialysis machine and

reveals that without a kidney from Punchinello, Annie has mere days to live .

Punchinello is unsympathetic ,telling Jimmy that he doesn't care that he was his brother the last seven years that he spent in prison.

In order to get the kidney for their daughter, Jimmy and Lorrie made up a story saying that Punchinello and Jimmy were twins. They got a help from the nurse. They made Punchinello believe that story and he accepted it and signed the document with a genuine proposal saying that he wants to Virgilio Vivacamente his grandfather. Lorrie left one copy of the document with Punchinello and returned the others to her purse. They were to the hospital after visiting Punchinello , Lorrie behind the wheel.

Captain Fluffy ,brave guardian bear who prevented night monsters from creeping out of the closet and nibbling on children, shared the hospital bed with Annie. This was the most important cult assignment of his career. Annie had withdrawn into a gray disguise of swallow skin and brittle hair. Her eyes were mascaraed with mortality, her lips pale. She looked tiny ,bird-like ,old. Her indomitable spirit ,her courage through these exhausting months of illness, pain, and decline, had been an inspiration. Jimmy prayed to God for his daughter. He is really worried and but Lorrie was all motion, making phone calls, coordinating thing between the hospital and the penitentiary officials.During the afternoon, Punchinello Beezo arrived and get test. The transplantation is done. Then jimmy thanked him. Annie came through the surgery as smoothly as a hot air balloon sailing. Annie bloomed, she charms, shines and dazzles as ever she did before the cancer dragged her down. Only one of the five terrible days\_ April 16,2005 remained ahead of him. Life would seem strange thereafter ,with no dreaded dates on the calendar, the future unclouded by grim expectations .

## **Fifth Terrible Day**

When the fifth day arrived , the doorbell rings and the entire family automatically reacts. Andy hurries to have pee so he is ready to flee, Lucy prepared to dial 911 and Annie got the car keys off the pegboard. Lorrie goes to the doctor with Jimmy, kissing him before he opens it and tell him it's probably just the paper boy collecting, but Jimmy's hand goes to the holstered gun under his jacket anyway . At the door , a 10 year old boy that is dressed like an Elvis in impersonator is standing with a wrapped Box. After confirming who Jimmy is , he tries to hand him the box and at first Jimmy refuses , it but the boy is insistent and determinant to deliver it for face the wrath of sender waiting in the car. When the box unpacked with lots of confusions and and to see in it is twenty dollars bills. There were twenty five packets of twenty dollars bills. The box also contained an envelope by Vivacemete. They prepare for the next and the last terrible day with shoulder holster, pistols, two little cannisters of pepper spray for each of them. They decided to meet the aerialist Vivacemete at his tent , the purpose to ask about the money. Jimmy and Lorrie could have left the tent immediately, but they would never have understood the reasons behind Virgilio's desperate quest to get Andy from them. Instead, they stayed and listened, only to be stunned by the next revelation. After Jimmy assured him that Andy would never be part of his aerialist troupe, Virgilio got angry and insisted him that he must have him and that he was the purest lineage and last of his line. He then reveals that he is actually father to Jimmy and Punchinello, having incestuously impregnated his daughter, Natalie before she fled to Konrad. He told Jimmy that he had known about him before, he would have gotten him back from the Tocks many years ago and given him his rightful place. Now, all that remains is Andy from lineage.

As for Jimmy , he came out of the experience with no knotty moral issues. More important, the fifth of his five terrible days had come and gone. Every member of his family remained healthy and alive, except for his grandma Rowena ,and she died in her sleep. From what he have learned from his father , mother,his wife and children is that ; “The more you expect from life, the more your expectations will be fulfilled. By laughing, you don’t use up your laughter, but increase your store of it . The more you love ,the more you will be loved . The more you give the more you will receive”. Fourteen months after the incident in the big top ,Lorrie became pregnant. She had been told that she could never conceive again,and her doctors had been so certain of her barrenness that they took no precautions.

Considering the grievous wound that Lorrie had survived and the fact that she had one kidney , dr.Mello Melodeon counseled them to terminate. Months later, little Rowena arrived, she weighed eight pounds even. She didn’t have syndactyly. While they were still in the delivery room ,as Charlene Coleman handed the child to Lorrie for the first time,a young redheaded nurse stepped into the doorway and asked to speak to Mello . He conferred with her in the hallway for a few minutes, and when he returned ,he brought Brittany Walters with him. According to Brittany Walters ,an elderly woman named Edna Carter had been admitted to the ICU forty-eight hours earlier,after massive stroke paralyzed her and left her unable to speak. Suddenly this evening Edna had sat up in the bed \_ minutes before Lorrie delivered,as it turned out\_no longer paralyzed. She had spoken clearly,too and with urgency. Jimmy and Lorrie realised suddenly that, this is want exactly had happened to grandfather. The nurse continued:” she insisted that a baby named Rowena would be born in this hospital in minutes. That Rowena would be eighteen inches long and weigh eight pounds on the nose .

Nurse Walters held out a sheet of notepaper. Jimmy took the paper from her. He murmured strickenly, "Five terrible days". But nurse told him that "that Walters told me. That those were five glorious days, five especially joyful days to come in a blessed life.". After hearing this Jimmy took Rowena from Lorrie, gently, holding her and said "Rowena this is the world. This is your life. Prepare to be enchanted".

## Chapter Three

### *Five Dark Days of Jimmy; Psychoanalytic Reading of Dean Koontz's "Life Expectancy"*

The novel "Life Expectancy" by Dean Koontz's fine work of his collections of works. His other famous works *Demon Seed*(1973), *Night Chills* (1976), *Mr. Murder*(1993), *Intensity* (1995) etc. Most of his works are primarily a blend of psychological thriller and horror. This novel is the life of Jimmy and the whole novel goes through the five terrible days of Jimmy and narrates his life using his experience. He has experienced or face terror and violence malice and perversion. A storm rages. There is a chilling significance in the old man's words. The moment when his grandfather dies, Jimmy emerges squalling into the world, destined to struggle against an evil so dark and pervasive only the most extraordinary of human spirits can shine through.

Life Expectancy tells the journey of Jimmy's struggling to get rid of the five darkest days. He wants to fought against terrible days. He wants to search or lead his ordinary life. The theory of personality is Freud's prominent idea. It contains id, ego, superego. According to Freud's idea, people's Psychology has more than one aspect. Id ego and superego are not coming up in sequence. They significant at different life stages, which has a great impact on Jimmy's destiny. Jimmy's father Rudy initially gone through unpleasant experience. It was Rudy's father's predictions about Jimmy's crisis. Father's predictions makes complete change in Rudy's personality. Through Rudy's behaviour it also affect the infant Jimmy.

Grandma Rowena reminds him of the horror that lies in his unconscious mind as he grown older and makes him mentally strong. Jimmy had not been able to plan

defensively for any of the terrible days. All of his life, however, he had been preparing psychologically. But all that preparation afforded him no comfort. His imagination had hatched a crawling dread that crept down his spine and into every extremity.

*Fear of the unknown is the most purely distilled and potent terror”(Life Expectancy 81). I had been using my grief and my anger over Librarian’s death to suppress my terror. Fear could diminish and defeat me, but now I realised that fearlessness could get me killed (Life Expectancy 83)*

At the beginning of Jimmy’s first terrible day, there was a sign of danger. When he went to the bank, something smelled bad. What happens when he somehow gathers the courage and gets to the library is that the library head is shot by a sniper.

Overwhelmed by the thoughts, the sniper tells Jimmy. There was no certainty of what to do. Fear of the unknown is the most purely distilled and potent terror. Slowly, the pain of Librarian Lionel David’s death drilled deeper into Jimmy’s heart. The tremor in Jimmy’s voice was grief not fear. Psychologically he got tempered.

Even during these incidents, writer Dean Koontz reveals Jimmy’s love for Lorrie. In Freudian way, can classify Jimmy’s personality with Id, ego and superego. Id is a source of all psychic energy. This aspect of personality is entirely unconscious and includes instinctive and primitive behaviours. The Id is driven by the pleasure principle, which strives for immediate gratification of all desires, wants and needs. Here, Jimmy’s immediate gratification is to propose Lorrie, in that kidnapped situation. The ego develops to mediate between the unrealistic id and the external real world. It is the decision-making component of personality. Ideally, the ego works by reason, whereas the id is chaotic and unreasonable. The ego operates according to the reality principle,

working out realistic ways of satisfying the id's demands, often compromising or postponing satisfaction to avoid negative consequences of society. The ego considers social realities and norms, etiquette and rules in deciding how to behave. Like the id, the ego seeks pleasure and avoids pain, but unlike the id, the ego is concerned with devising a realistic strategy to obtain pleasure. The ego has no concept of right or wrong, something is good simply if it achieves its end of satisfying without causing harm to itself or the id. Often the ego is weak relative to the headstrong id, and the best the ego can do is stay on, pointing the id in the right direction and claiming some credit at the end as if the action were its own. If the ego fails in its attempt to use the reality principle, and anxiety is experienced, unconscious defence mechanisms are employed, to help ward off unpleasant feelings or make good things feel better for the individual. And the ego started working in him. Since he knew that he and she caught as hostages. Ego works in him and ego takes control over his Id feelings. His mentality towards Lorrie has changed and started to thinking about how to escape from sniper when sniper killed his own friends. "The unexpectedness and ferocity of these murders shocked silence into Lorrie, but I think that I screamed. I can't be sure because the screams of the victims, although brief, were ghastly and louder than whatever half-throttled screech might or might not have escaped me. Now the terrible day became curse in Jimmy's life. Then he knew that he and Lorrie imprisoned by that sniper and realised that he could not express his love to her and live a life with her. The conscious mind is passive and subconscious mind take charge of conscious mind.

On the second terrible day as predicted, Konrad Beezo burns down their house, telling them they owe him a son but instead they had a daughter. He became angry and resentful of Beezo for burning down his house. He had no idea what to do. Where there is a cake, there is a hope. And there is always a cake.

The negative emotions elicited toward the source of the feelings are instead redirected toward a more powerless substitute. This target may take the form of a person or even an object. This defense allows the individual to act out their emotions in a way that reduces the chances of negative repercussions. Displaced aggression is one of the classic examples of this defense. When people feel angry but cannot direct that anger toward the source of their frustration, they transfer those feelings to someone or something else. When people experience negative emotions or impulses, they often look for different ways to cope with these unwanted feelings. Sometimes people are aware of themselves doing this, but in many cases, it takes place without conscious awareness. Defense mechanisms are one way of reducing anxiety and restoring balance. These defenses operate unconsciously to help reduce anxiety from things that people find threatening or unacceptable. While unconscious feelings or urges might be outside of awareness, they can still influence behavior and create anxiety for the individual. Reacting to the original threat might be unacceptable or even dangerous, so the person must find a less threatening subject to act as an outlet for their frustrations.

No one's life be rooted in fear. We are born for wonder, for joy, for hope, for love, to marvel at the mystery of existence, to seek truth and meaning, to acquire wisdom, and by our treatment of others to brighten the corner where we are. Simply by existing, unseen and in some distant redoubt, Konrad Beezo made the world a darker place, but we lived in light, not in his shadow. No one can grant you happiness. Happiness is a choice we all have the power to make.

There is always cake(Life Expectancy,355)

Jimmy and Lorrie entwined with the Beezo family again, but this time they could never have predicted. They discover the Tock's son Jimmy was actually stillborn and the

child who lived his life is actually one of the Beezo twins born to Natalie Beezo and switched by a nurse after her death. Now they need Punchinello's kidney to save their daughter life. He finally agrees, providing his brother Jimmy kills his arch nemesis, Virgilio Vivacemete -the aerialist. Jimmy agrees, never intending to do so. According to Freud, the key to a healthy personality is a balance between the id, the ego, and the superego. If the ego is able to adequately moderate between the demands of reality, the id, and the superego, a healthy and well-adjusted personality emerges. Freud believed that an imbalance between these elements would lead to a maladaptive personality. For example, an individual with an overly dominant id might become impulsive, uncontrollable, or even criminal. Such an individual acts upon their most basic urges with no concern for whether their behavior is appropriate, acceptable, or legal. On the other hand, an overly dominant superego might lead to a personality that is extremely moralistic and judgmental. A person ruled by the superego might not be able to accept anything or anyone that they perceive to be "bad" or "immoral." Freud's theory provides one conceptualization of how personality is structured and how the elements of personality function. In Freud's view, a balance in the dynamic interaction of the id, ego, and superego is necessary for a healthy personality. While the ego has a tough job to do, it does not have to act alone. Anxiety also plays a role in helping the ego mediate between the demands of the basic urges, moral values, and the real world. When you experience different types of anxiety, defense mechanisms may kick in to help defend the ego and reduce the anxiety you are feeling.

## Conclusion

The life of Jimmy in the novel *Life Expectancy* by Dean Koontz is a story, the hand of fate reaches out to touch an ordinary man with greatness. So long he is ready. So long as he is, above all, afraid. This project is analysing the life of Jimmy through the different periods of id, ego, superego. It is understood that the displacement of occurred in the life of Jimmy in association with id, ego and superego. Jimmy in this novel tries to recapture his life by displacing his pains and sorrows to happiness. Jimmy goes through the hardships of pain and fear of darkest days. In this psychoanalytical reading of the novel *Life Expectancy*, the changes of Jimmy's life is a going through the psychoanalytical stages, and this project includes the findings regarding psychoanalytical readings in the life of Jimmy. He, a little like Ignatius Reilly from *Confederacy of Dunes* but he actually had a great deal more sense. At last Jimmy gets back his ordinary life with full of happiness.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**YAYATI UNDER THE PARADIGM OF NORTHROP  
FRYE'S ARCHETYPAL THEORY**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**BISMA P. B**

**Register No: DB18AEGR026**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Jesna

February 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Yayathi under the paradigm of Northrop Frye's Archetypal Theory” is a bonafide work of Bisma P. B, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Jesna

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Bisma P. B. hereby declare that the project work entitled “Yayathi under the paradigm of Northrop Frye's Archetypal theory” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Jesna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Bisma P. B

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## Table of Contents

Page no.

Introduction

Chapter One:

Myth and Symbol; An Overview

Chapter Two:

Yayati; Classical Tale of Lust

Chapter Three:

Myth in Modern World

Conclusion

Works Cited

## **INTRODUCTION**

An archetypal myth is a universal symbolic pattern. It tries to explain the nature of the world and life. Thus archetypal literary criticism is a type of analytical theory that interprets a text by focusing on recurring myths and archetypes in the narrative, symbols, images, and character types in literary works. Myths are stories that are based on tradition. It is the sacred tales that explain the world and man's experience. *Yayati: A Classic Tale of Lust* by Vishnu Sakharam Khandekar is one of the famous mythological works, which won him the Sahitya Academy Award (1960) and a Jnanpith Award (1974).

In this project, the first chapter is about the theory of myth. The second chapter is the summary of the novel *Yayathi*. The third chapter is about the application of theory on this work. This project tries to analyse symbols used in the myth and gender conflicts discussed within the work. This study focuses on purposes of life which is mainly based upon pleasure principle. This study elucidates the symbols that represent the culture and tradition in the past and recurrent images of materialism and modern world.

## CHAPTER 1

### MYTH AND SYMBOLS; AN OVERVIEW

Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) gained worldwide popularity in the third essay, 'Theory of Symbols', Northrop Frye endeavours to systemize literary symbolism. For instance, the writers in different ages have drawn symbols from different sources. Frye adopts the term 'polysemous' from Dante which means multiple meanings. Northrop Frye provides a very broad definition of a symbol. For him, a symbol is any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention. Frye talks about the sequence of contexts which constitute 'phases' and forms the general idea of the "Theory of Symbols". 'Phases are meant to analyse the symbolic meaning within which literature can be interpreted'. In the present work, an attempt has been made to analyse V.S. Kulkarni's novel *Yayati* under the paradigm of Northrop Frye's Mythical phase where a symbol performs the function of archetype. A symbol, according to Frye, performs four types of functions:

- Literal/Descriptive (motifs and sign)
- Formal

- Mythical(Archetype)
- Anagogic(Monad)

While discussing the concepts of myth, dream and rituals, Frye shows their relationship with one another. According to Frye, myth is the union of ritual and dream in a form of verbal communication. Narrative literature constitutes two basic patterns cyclical and dialectical. Ritual basically involves in the cyclical process of nature like the usage of seasons, the recurring cycles of human life etc. The dialectical on the other hand, reinforces from dream wherein the constant conflict between desire and reality can be seen like love and hate, liberty and capture etc. This pattern can be found in poetry when it is expressed hypothetically.

Myth primarily means certain type of story in which some of the chief characters are gods or other beings larger in power than humanity. Very often it is located in history: its action take place in a world above or prior to ordinary time. Like the folk tale, it is an abstract story pattern. The characters can do what they want, which means what the storyteller likes. There is no need to be credible or logical in motivation. The things that happen only in stories; they are in a self-contained literary world.

‘Myth’ and ‘Mythical’ have long been commonly used in contexts opposing them to ‘truth’ and ‘reality’ a situation that is now considerably altered, in literary criticism at least, for one of two reasons: either because of the truth content of the insight of myth is valued, or because the status of words like ‘truth’ and ‘reality’ is considered problematic. Both tendencies ultimately derive from ‘romanticism’, and its revaluation of primitive and non-Christian religions.

Myths are stories of unascertainable origin and authorship accompanying or helping to explain religious beliefs. Often (though not necessarily) their subjects is exploits of a god or hero, which may have instituted a change in the working of the universe or in the conditions of social life. Critics value myth positively because of its spontaneity and collectivity, expressing some lastingly and generally satisfying accounts of the experience of man .Equally attractive is the apparent universality and timelessness of myth. The primary mythic theme is a Rousseauistic version of fall. The project of myth is therefore impossibility .Mythic thought is about insoluble paradoxes of experiences.

Myth has always had a significant position in human psychology and society from its beginnings as primitive religious narrative to its recent adaptation as an aid in the exploration of the unconscious mind. The word myth has often suffered from a wrong connotation. In general discourse, it stands for something false , fictitious and far removed from reality and history. However, the psychoanalytical approaches to criticism have made it possible to evaluate the concept of myth afresh. Originally the word myth simply meant speech, then, in a narrow sense , a tale or tradition , particularly one handed down from prehistoric times giving in the form of a story about a god or hero, some ancient belief regarding the process of nature , customs ,or problems of cosmogony.

Today myth is not a blatant tale of some fictitious character belonging to fictitious past. In classical Greek “mythos” signified any story or plot, whether true or false .In its central modern significance , a myth is a story in mythology-a system of hereditary stories once believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which served to explain (in terms of the intentions and actions of supernatural beings) why the world is as it is and things happen as they do which had an etiological purpose and to establish the rationale for social customs and observances and the sanctions for the rules by which men conduct

their lives .So myth, in a broader senses , is not a story told as history, but history told as a story. It is essentially a story of a real experience in the past.

Most myths involve rituals-prescribed forms of sacred ceremonials, but anthropologists disagree as to whether rituals generated myths or myths generated rituals .distinguishing between myth, legend and folk tale M.H Abrams puts that if the protagonist is a man rather than a supernatural being, the story is usually not called myth but legend: if the story concerns supernatural beings, but is not part of a systematic mythology ,it is usually classified as a folk tale . Myth, being a traditional story of unknown origin handed down from earliest times, has close resemblance to legend. “Although the words frequently are used interchangeably, a myth properly deals with gods and a legend with men .Myths and legends are types of folklore”.

Myth is a story involving human limitation and superhuman strivings and accomplishments which suggest through action- usually of a ritual, ceremonial, or compulsive nature- man’s attempt to express and thus control his own anxiety about those features of his physiological make –up and his external environment which has cannot comprehend, accept or master. The characters of myth may be gods men or monstrous creatures with the qualities of both,but –narrative material , the portrayal of conflict and sorrow , and the resolution or revelation are all reflections of human concerns. Myth express man’s fear of and awe at the mysterious cycle of the death and rebirth or the fear and his involvement in the mystery of his own birth, nature, and death. There is always an inextricable connection between the plots and themes of myth .The action of myth is sometimes, regarded as its plot. This always reflects man’s persistent desire for extraordinary power, vision and control. With all his worldly strength, power and courage man has never been able to behave like the hero of a myth. However, everyone pretends

to act like him, and this he braves dangers and accomplishes heroic exploits and adventures.

We identify with the hero of myth not only because he acts out our unconscious wishes and fears but also because in doing so he performs a continual rite of services for the rest of mankind: he also asks our essential questions and he answers them. The mythical hero's whole career is devoted to action which raises questions about life and indicates possible answers to those issues we usually avoid: death, our relation to time, destiny, and freedom of will. For these answers he pays a price most men do not have the strength or courage to pay. The mythical figure's conflicts and actions are usually related to some social problem or issue, yet, a result of behaviour that offends his society, or because of some deep suffering, he often becomes an outcast. His endurance of pain, his violation of pain, his violation of the most sacred ties to parents, wife, or children, are the metaphorical expression of man's efforts to understand and come to terms with his Own nature and the conditions of human life .

Religion and rituals seem to be the vital parts of true myth. It is primarily taken for a form of religious and social expression. Forever, it cannot be considered as idealized history or allegorized philosophy, ethics or theology. Nor is it an idle story told for intellectual amusement or for popular entertainment according to prescribed custom: or a day dream to be explained in the light of symbols of psychoanalytical exegesis. In all these the elements of myth can be found, but the myth itself is distinct from the fantasy, poetry, philosophy and psychology with which it has association in its ramifications, developments and degenerations, and their interpretations .Myth can, therefore, be considered under two categories: "true myth" which is known as sacred narrative and defined by its function only, and " literary myth "which includes the stories of the ancient Greek and Roman gods and heroes.

Myths are largely answers to questions posed by uncivilized man. Some of these questions are: Who made the world? Who was the first man? What is the origin of night and day, and the sun and the stars? Who invented fire? What is the origin of this or that custom? How did a certain place get its name? When came the mountains and valleys the answers to these questions are in way scientific queries, and therefore, the mythology of primitive man can be taken for his science. Myths embodied the primitive beliefs of peoples, and provided a romantic explanation of the wonders of nature when scientific explanations were lacking. Natural forces were personified and deified. Myth is both true and false at the same time. Therefore, to get at the truth contained in it one must always be prepared to accept the fact that myth, in certain respects, is a deception. It is used in all the arts, but itself is not art. It promised more. Its methods and functions are different. It is virtually a form of expression which reveals a process of thought and feeling-man's awareness of and response to the universe, his fellowmen, and his separate being. It is a dramatic projection of fears and desires undiscoverable and inexpressible in any other way.

Broadly speaking there are four types of myths: Culture Myths, Ritual Myths, Nature Myths and Creation Myths: "Culture Myths" deal with the account of culture hero who brings to man the arts, foods, devices, inventions, and usages beneficial to him; Ritual Myths were ceremonies, closely associated with primitive forms of religion, in which man sought to Win the favour or appease the anger of a god. It was believed that some rites were effective in making crops grow, bringing rains and good fortune in hunting; "Nature Myths" try to explain the origin of natural phenomena. How the seasons change and how day and night, rain and snow, thunder and lighting, storm and flood occur is explained through these myths; "Creation Myths" deal with the creation of the world, the origin of men and animals, and the birth of gods. Besides these myths there are others

myths like Philosophical Myths, Political Myths and Social Myths. Myths dealing with the birth, death and rebirth are put into the category of Philosophical Myths. "Political Myths" try to interpret the rights, duties and responsibilities of the king and subjects. "Social Myths" highlight the merits and demerits of social customs, tradition and restrictions.

#### Four Theories of Myth

There are four basic theories of myth. These theories are: The rational myth theory, the functional myth theory, the structural myth theory, and the psychological myth theory.

1. The rational myth theory states that myths were made to better understand natural events and forces that Occurred in the everyday lives of people. This theory also explains that the gods and goddesses controlled all of these happenings of nature. Examples of this type of myth are creation myths from different cultures. Creation myths explain how man was created and explain what the gods and goddesses used and what actions they took to create humans. These myths also tell what substances were used (if any) in order for man to evolve. The existence of man is a natural event but creation myths give other explanations.

2. The functional myth theory consists of lessons on morality and social behaviour. In these we are told about what should and shouldn't be done, and the consequences for wrong doings. The theory also states that myths were created for social control and served the function of insuring stability in a society. A story about a tribe which rebelled against the great serpent, Degei, is a good example of a functional myth. This story is about a tribe which learned many skills from their great serpent god, Degei, and then became Degei's workers and servants. Two chiefs of this tribe were sick of working for him and

tried to defeat him; they were too weak for Degei. Instead of winning their freedom, they were killed in a great flood caused by Degei. The message of this myth is that one should not be lazy because if one is unwilling to work, the result will be bad.

3. The structural myths are said to be myths based on human emotion. These myths show the two sides of the human mind; the good side and the bad side. They show the divided self and the duality of human nature. Myths about Hercules show how the human mind can be both good and bad. Hercules did both good and bad things. One of the bad things he did was ("Jason and the Argonauts") that he stole a brooch pin from the treasure chamber of the god Talos. This sin caused his friend to be killed. Hercules knew that his friend was killed because of his sin, so to make up for it; he vowed to stay on the island until his friend was found.

4. The psychological myth theory states how myths are based on human emotion and that they come from the human subconscious mind, Cultures all around the world had similar fears, questions, and wishes which, to them, were unexplainable. That is the reason that psychological myths were made; and that is why there are archetypes shared between cultures. Archetypes are general forms and characters used by all cultures. Some archetypes found between cultures are having a sky god (Zeus and Oleron), Varun, a sea god (Poseidon and Olokun), and an agricultural god (Orisha-Okò and Demeter). These archetypes are examples of how people think alike when it comes to things that are to them mysteries and fears.

To conclude, it appears that man created myths for quite a few reasons. These reasons include explaining the unknown, natural events and forces, to show the duality and pureness of human nature and the human mind, and to help societies maintain order and remain stable. Gods and Gandharvas like Shiva, Ganesha, Rama, Bharat, Indra,

Krishna, and others: heroes like Bhishma, Bhima, Karna, Ekalavya, Balarama, and other warriors; and personalities like Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Meera and Udayan are not only individuals, they have been archetypes, symbols of certain virtues. This belief of their worshippers, fans and followers makes them all myths. Through this way all great gods and human beings have been mythicized. Their mythic personalities have always been found to be more powerful than the historical or biological ones. History relates to the conscious while myth to unconscious. Great individuals like the Christ, Buddha and Gandhi include both the types in themselves. Therefore, they have twin personalities, one historical, the other mythic. The mythical Christ and Gandhi prove to be more powerful and important to human beings than the historical Christ and Gandhi. Numerous Indian plays written in English dramatize the life and character of these mythicized gods, heroes and human beings.

Literature derives from myth, and literary history recapitulates the process, as it moves through a seasonal cycle in which appropriate modes and genres are dominant—comedy belongs to Summer tragedy to autumn, and so on. All imaginative literature cannot be mythical, nor can all myths be literature. The appearance of myth in literature or art should not be regarded as unauthentic or of secondary value. It is by virtue of myths that the literature created throughout the world for centuries has gained its permanent value and significance. The work of the great poets and playwrights like Homer, Virgil, Milton, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, T.P. Kailasam, Girish Karnad and others are of immense importance to a great extent by virtue of their mythical themes and characters.

Myth has been a very important phenomenon in world literature. It is a historical fact that drama in its early stages of development depended upon myths; the myths

provided the fables-a complex of action and character-which assumed the shape of drama. Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Girish Karnad, and Badal Sircar are among the Indian English dramatists who have made a frequent use of Indian as well as foreign myths in their writing, particularly in plays. The Ramayana and The Mahabharata are the chief sources of myths upon which these playwrights draw time and again.

To sum up, myth is a kind of story whose characters are gods or other beings larger in power and potential than human beings. Myths are in fact the stories of uncertain origin or authorship. A myth is basically meant to communicate thought, especially about subtle paradoxes of experience. It is obviously a traditional or legendary story handed down from older times, especially concepts about the early history of a race or explanations of natural events. Myths portray a culture, its abiding values, mores and philosophy and act as means of their transmission across generations. Myths are not blatant tales of an imaginative character belonging to the past; however they can be the memory of the past, told in a fictitious way. It is history told as story, which is actually a narrative of the real experience in the past. What we call myth today is not an imaginary tale, but the real life experience of the primordial society. The central theme of myth is man's fear of awe as the mysterious cycle of the death and rebirth. The action of the myth is sometimes regarded as its plot. Though it is used in almost all arts, in itself it is not art. It promises more. Its methods and functions are different. It is a dramatic projection of fear and latent desire which are inexpressible in any other way. It embodies the primitive beliefs of people and provides a romantic explanation of the wonders of nature when scientific explanation fails to express. The four basic theories of myth are created for explaining the unknown, natural events and forces and also to show the duality and pureness of human nature and the human mind so as to support societies in maintaining order and stability. Thus we can say that myths are a permanent and integral part of

human life and psyche. This project helps us to understand the importance of myth in modern world and symbols used in mythical stories.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **YAYATI; CLASSICAL TALE OF LUST**

Tales from Mahabharata have this quality that we can read them over and over again. Every time we read them you get more drawn to them. They are simple stories of characters whose lives are intertwined, leading to a whole set of dilemmas at every point in time. Characters have to make choices all the time, between what they want and what duty calls, between good and bad, between bad and worse, between good and better, between ego and devotion. Between family and society, between themselves and their partners, and between now or later. Between eras and everything that comes in between. The stories are always multi-layered and no character is completely white or black. Every character has certain things that should have been done or could have been done better. Just like they have stories that glorify them. There are all the rasas or emotions that we can feel. We can feel what is going inside each of the characters as they make their choices. We feel for them, identify with a lot of their dilemmas and wish you had the wisdom to take decisions like them. And sometimes we wish that we never have to face the situations like them where you have to take such tough decisions. What particularly like about these stories is that they are well rounded and have no morals, they do not preach anything. They are like case studies without the analysis, just read them and have your own interpretation

*Yayati* is a 1959 Marathi-language mythological novel by Indian writer V. S. Khandekar. One of Khandekar's best-known works, it retells the story of the mythical Hindu king, *Yayati*, from the Hindu epic the Mahabharata. The novel has multiple narrators, and poses several questions on the nature of morality. Scholars have analysed its hero, Yayati, as a representation of modern man. Accepted as classic of Marathi literature, *Yayati* has won several awards, including the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1960 and the Jnanapith Award in 1974.

In his preface to *Yayati*, Khandekar states that he was drawn to the original story from the Mahabharata at multiple levels, and for many reasons. The resulting novel is a modern retelling of the story of the mythological Hindu king, who enjoyed all the pleasures of the flesh for a millennium only to realise how empty of meaning was his pursuit of desire. Khandekar saw modernity, with its materialistic values, as an elephant on the rampage through the delicate garden of traditional virtues and feelings, blurring the distinction between good and evil, between selfishness and compassion, and blinding people to the evils of the world. In response, Khandekar looked to the past and chose the story of *Yayati*, making use of a kind of tale often dismissed as the fairy stories of old women to describe the viciousness and futility of contemporary society's endless obsession with avarice and lust. Where Khandekar's previous writing had focused predominantly on style and imagination, in *Yayati* these concerns are integrated into a form of social realism the author had little explored until this point.

The story is taken from the *Yayatopakhyān* (lit. The Story of *Yayati*), a sub-narrative in *Adi Parva* (The Book of the Beginning) of the Mahabharata. Khandekar builds the original material into a full-length novel, adding several new episodes and developing the narrative as a love story with a theme of morality. In so doing, Khandekar brings new relevance and meaning to the story in the context of modern life.

For Khandekar, this novel represents the common man, who in spite of varied happiness is always discontented and restless, and is blindly running after new pleasures.

The novel's main characters are: Yayati – King of Hastinapur; married Devayani, daughter of Shukracharya, and her maid Sharmishtha, Nahusha – King of Hastinapur; father of Yati and Yayati, Yati – Elder brother of Yayati, who became an ascetic, Devayani – Daughter of Shukracharya, wife of Yayati, and mother of Yadu, Sharmishtha – Daughter of Asura king Vrishaparva, and mother of Puru; childhood friend of Devayani, Puru – Illegitimate child of Yayati and Sharmishtha, Kacha – Friend of Yayati; Devayani's love; like a brother to Sharmishtha, chitralkha- wife of pooru, Angiras – A sage, by whose blessings Yati and Yayati were born, Shukracharya – Preceptor of the Asuras, and father of Devayani, Vrishaparva – King of the Asuras, and father of Sharmishtha. While most of the novel's characters appear in the Mahabharata, Khandekar created several new characters. These include Mukulika and Mandar.

The novel has three narrators: Yayati, Devayani, and Sharmishtha. Each section of the story is narrated in the first person, from the point of view of its respective narrator. The novel's characters generally use language that is romantic, ornamental, and poetic. Yayati centres on the life of its eponymous hero, Yayati, the king of Hastinapur. Disillusionment characterises Yayati's early life. His faith in motherly love is shattered when he learns that his mother weaned him for fear of losing her beauty. Later, he experiences cruelty and passion that challenge his manhood. He then has a fleeting experience of carnal love.

When Yayati has to leave the security of the palace for Ashvamedha Yajna (a horse sacrifice ritual in Hindu tradition), he meets his elder brother, Yati, who has

become an ascetic and abandoned all material pleasures. After this he meets Kacha, in whom he sees the model of a happy, peaceful life. But Yayati is traumatised when his father, Nahusha, dies, and for the first time he realises the destructive power of death. He is gripped by fear and helplessness. In this state of mind, he encounters Mukulika, a maidservant in the palace. Yayati's attempts to bury his grief in carnal pleasure constitute a critical period in his life. He later meets Alaka and experiences sisterly love. But Alaka ultimately falls prey to the Queen Mother's cruelty. Precisely at this time, Yayati learns of a curse that foretold that his father, and his father's children, would never be happy.

The second part of the narrative recounts Yayati's married life. This section reveals Devayani's love for Kacha, and Kacha's quiet but firm refusal. Devayani seeks revenge on Kacha by making advances to Yayati, whom she ultimately succeeds in marrying. Sharmishtha, originally a princess, is now living with Devayani as her maidservant. At this time, Sharmishtha comes into contact with Yayati. Where Devayani is unable to establish any rapport with Yayati, Sharmishtha finds union with him both in body and in mind. A son is born to them, and for a time Yayati is happy. But, one stormy night, Sharmishtha runs away from Hastinapur. Yayati now suffers both estrangement from Devayani and the loss of Sharmishtha. The resulting vacuum in his life hastens him along a path of moral degradation. Over an 18-year period, Yayati neglects his royal duties and leads a life of pleasure, with women like Madhavi and Taraka. Even when Hastinapur is attacked by its enemies, Yayati continues to neglect his duties out of anger with Devayani and pursuit of a hedonistic lifestyle. His son Yadu is imprisoned. Puru, Yayati's younger son, secures Yadu's release. Then Devayani's father, Shukracharya, seeing his daughter's unhappy marriage and Yayati's degradation, lays a curse of old age on Yayati.

When Yayati finds himself suddenly grown old, his unfulfilled desires trouble him. He asks his sons to lend him their youth. His son Puru comes to his aid and meets his request. But Puru and Sharmishtha's undemanding love for him help Yayati to realise his mistakes. Within a few minutes of accepting Puru's youth, he resolves to return it. Devayani also undergoes a change of heart. At the end of the novel, Yayati hands over responsibility for government to Puru with his blessing, and seeks to retire to a life in the forest with Devayani and Sharmishtha. This completes Yayati's journey from attachment to detachment.

It is a topsy-turvy tale of King Yayati that dwells on his obsession with lust and sex and how he is cursed to premature old age for his Infidelity. The women characters in the play Are notable for their determination and Courage, sometimes aggressive.

Devayani and Sharmishta are two friends. One day, they are frolicking nude into a forest. Their garments are laid apart. God Indra Wishes to make a fun of them. He takes the form of wind and mixes up their garments. When Sharmishta attempts to wear Devayani's Dress by mistake, Devayani is enraged as she considers Sharmishta somewhat inferior to her as Sharmishta is the daughter of Asura King to whom Shukracharya, Devayani's father, Is a preceptor. This mirrors her inner psyche although they have enjoyed a continued friendship. An inconclusive fight is instigated between them and they insult each other in a verbal attack. As Devayani takes an upper hand in the Combat, unable to tolerate her insults, Sharmishta right away pushes Devayani off into a nearby well.

King Yayati comes to the well to quench up his thirsty horse. On seeing Devayani inside the Well seeking help, he pulls her out and rescues Her. Furious, Devayani takes the issue to her Father Shukracharya. This Results in a confusion in the

relationship between Shukracharya and Vrishaparva. Vrishaparva has to go on with Shukracharya, since his Abandonment would mean a conclusive defeat For Asuras. Afraid that they would loss Shukracharya's Continued Support, Vrishaparva agrees for the pact. The pact Reads that Sharmishta become a slave for Devayani and should go along with her Whenever she demands without question. This long-running rivalry between these two Women reaches a climax when Sharmishta Takes poison to consume and die unable to Bear torments from both Devayani and Yayati. But he comes to her help, rescues he, again Holding her right hand. This becomes Inevitable that he has to marry her. Unfailingly He makes her the second queen. Enraged, Devayani again brings the case to her Father, Shukracharya. Shukracharya curses the King to old age when he is still young. Once the curse is given, he can't take it back. However, he gives power to transfer his curse to any of his willing recipient. Yayati still is obsessed with sensual pleasure. So, he seeks to transfer his curse onto any of His sons. He requests every of his five sons, But no one consents to this. The eldest son Yadu denies telling that he wants to enjoy his Own life and he can't give it up. Dryhu, the Second rejects his request telling the more he Becomes old the more he becomes foolish. Turvasa and Anu, third and fourth sons Respectively, also deny his proposal. On a fine day, Yayati meets up with Devayani in The same forest. Devayani reminds him how he Touched her when he rescued her from the Well. In those days, according to Hinduism, if a Man holds a woman by her right hand, he is Subject to marry the same women. Yayati pulled off Devayani by her right hand when he rescued her. So he is confined to hold Her hand in marriage. Shocked by this Advancement as he is not willing to marry a Girl from other caste and unwilling to begeta Child of mixed caste, he denies at first. Obviously the boundary of caste system Existed a long ago. However, Yayati accepts to marry her as it Becomes inevitable to a punctual king. Only in This

respect at least he follows code of Conduct when he justifies in his own way many Of his immoral activities. Yayati holds her hand in marriage. Devayani Brings Sharmishta with her as a wedding gift. She uses every opportunity to torment Sharmishta and Sharmishta waits for a proper Time to exact revenge.

Puru, the youngest son of the King, arrives With his bride, Chitrlekha. Disinterested with The state of affairs and he says it is the duty of A son towards his father who gave him life, he Willingly comes forward to take his father's old Age in his place. He also explains that he takes upon his father's curse because his father has Not reached the heights of his ancestors and He has a long way to go as a king. Puru Becomes old, Yayati becomes young again. Chitrlekha, distraught by his husband's Activities and his shortcomings as an old age, She ends up her life. Realising his mistake, Yayati takes back his curse from his son and Restores Puru to youth. Eventually, he Withdraws to a forest with Sharmishta along With him. Novel ends here.

He had a weakness for wine and women. And it is in wine and women that he sought the answer to his problems or disappointments. He went so ahead in his addiction that he lost account of women who gave up lives because of him. And the nadir of his lust is when he asks his sons to exchange their youth with his old age so that he can go back and enjoy bodily pleasures. On the face of it, Yayati is a character you would want to hate. But the story has been told from so many dimensions that you can not do so.

The author claims that since there are not many references available for Yayati and his life, he has woven the story from his own imagination, and hence is a piece of fiction. But of course, whatever has been found through the references is depicted as such in the story. The story is told in the first person, by the three main characters

Yayati, Devayani, and Sharmishtha. Each of them gives their own view of things as they happened in their lives. Driven as they were to various acts and how they felt through the life. There are not too many characters in the story. So the story keeps revolving primarily around these three characters.

*Yayati: A Classic Tale of Lust* is an excellently written book by the noted author who for sure has a well deserved Sahitya Akademi and Jnanpith awards, and has been awarded Padma Bhushan way back in 1968. The original work is in Marathi and the English translation is done by Y P Kulkarni.

This book *Yayati: A Classic Tale of Lust*, tells the story of Yayati, an ancestor of Kauravas and Pandavas. Yayati had everything that one can dream of, born a prince in the most mighty empire of the time. Brave, went around the world with his winning horse establishing himself as the greatest warrior of his times. Married the daughter of the most influential sage and had another princess as his wife. Had sons that any father can dream of. But could never lead a happy life owing to a curse that was given to his father. At times destiny chose him and at times he chose his destiny. He was played around by his first wife Devayani, who married him but never loved him. But he also got a devoted wife in Sharmishtha.

The story of Yayati is perhaps one of the most intriguing and fascinating episodes of Mahabharata. Yayati was a great scholar and one of the noblest rulers of olden times. He followed the shastras and was devoted to the welfare of his subjects. Even the King of Gods, Indra, held him in high esteem. Married to seductively beautiful Devyani, in love with her maid Sharmishtha, and father of five sons from two women, yet Yayati unabashedly declares, My lust for pleasure is unsatisfied. His quest

for the carnal continued, sparing not even his youngest son, and exchanging his old age for his son's youth

Every culture has its own mythology – a set of stories that involve heroic characters, mythical beasts, gods, advanced technology, and fantastic locations. While their validity is questionable, their existence shows the incredible fascination that we, as humans, have for these stories. Indian mythology contains a vast and ancient array of tales, which are stimulating, entertaining, and have a moral lesson behind them. Some examples of Myth Stories in literature are:

#### (1) Egyptian Mythology: Ra

Ra was the sun god, often regarded as the most important of all Egyptian gods. Ra emerged from the chaos at the beginning of time and created the world. As well as being a god, Ra also ruled as Pharaoh. Many Egyptian rulers claimed they were descended from Ra, to give credence to their seat on the throne.

According to the myth, Ra eventually began to grow weary of his duties. This made his people question whether he should be their ruler. When Ra learned this, he sent his daughter, the 'Eye of Ra,' to kill those who doubted him. She went on a rampage and Ra took pity on the humans. He tricked her into getting so drunk she couldn't continue killing. After this, Ra left the earth for the sky.

#### (2) Greek Mythology: Poseidon

Poseidon was the god of the sea, son of Kronos and Rhea. He became ruler of the sea when the universe was divided after the fall of the Titans. Poseidon was bad-tempered and when he became angry, he would cause earthquakes. He managed to

upset even Hades, the ruler of the underworld. Poseidon was most often depicted with his trident, and sometimes riding a horse (he is sometimes claimed to be the creator of horses). Natural disasters still leave us flummoxed, even today. So, how could earthquakes be explained in ancient times? An angry god who shook the earth is one way.

### (3) Japanese Mythology: Izanagi and Izanami

Izanagi and Izanami are Shinto creator gods. Izanagi and Izanami created the Japanese islands and the deities of the sea, wind, mountain, river, trees, and rice. When Izanami gave birth to a fire god, it fatally burned her. Izanagi resolved to have his wife returned to him and sought her out in the underworld. Izanami could not return because she'd eaten 'the dark food,' but said she would beg the gods to let her go. After waiting a long time Izanagi lit a torch to go find her and when he saw her rotting body he fled and sealed the door to the underworld. Izanami then vowed to kill 1,000 people each day and Izanagi promised to create 1,500 to replace them. This myth would once have been used to explain how everything came into being and the cycle of life and death.

### (4) Roman Mythology: Cupid

This is one we all know, illustrating the magnitude of mythology. Cupid was the god of love and desire. He was the son of Venus and usually depicted as a winged child carrying a bow and arrows. His arrows could either draw people together or pull them apart. This myth tries to explain why one person can be so intensely drawn to another and even why relationships don't always work out the way you hoped. It also shows that myths didn't only cover natural events but day-to-day life too.

Some of the Indian mythological novels were

(1) *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* by Anand Neelakantan—More famous as the man behind the prequel to the blockbuster *Baahubali* movies, Write India author Anand Neelakantan is also the author of best-selling books on the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. His “*Asura: Tale of the Vanquished*” has been re-told from the perspective of Ravana, though the storyline remains the same as the original *Ramayana*. The book forces one to look afresh at the age-old epic by giving the reader an idea of what can be called the other side of the story

(2) *The Pandava* series by Roshani Chokshi—This series has a 12-year-old protagonist called Aru Shah and is a great read for young readers. She lives in America with her family who run the Museum of Ancient Indian Art and Culture. One day, she lights a cursed lamp in the museum after being pressurised by some friends and releases a sleeping demon. She has to begin a long adventure to put things right by finding the reincarnations of the Pandavas and journeying through the kingdom of death. This yet incomplete series is filled with humour and adventure, and is a clever way of connecting ancient tales with the modern world.

(3) *Sitayana* by Amit Majmudar—This retelling of the *Ramayana* has Sita’s perspective. But the book is not only about Sita’s role but we also experience the *Mahabharata* through other characters, like Lakshman, Hanuman and Mandodari. With lyrical writing, new twists on epic scenes and clever characterization, this book is worth a read.

(4) *The Shiva Trilogy* by Amish—

Ever since the first installment of the trilogy, “*The Immortals of Meluha*”, hit the stands in 2010, author Amish has been an instant favourite with readers. It tells the story of Shiva as a tribal warrior who migrates to India to realize his destiny. It is set in

a time long before Gods and we follow some extraordinary people as they journey into Godhood. This fascinating story has since spawned two equally popular sequels: “The Secret of the Nagas” and “The Oath of the Vayuputras”. The success of trilogy has also set the rumor mill agog with reports of a movie series being planned on it.

(5) My Gita by Devdutt Patnaik

Arguably India’s most well-known mythologist, Devdutt Patnaik has successfully married myth to management studies. “My Gita” is his take on the book considered sacred in Hinduism. He attempts to demystify the text and tells us how he understands it while explaining the concepts along the way. His idea is to urge the reader into discovering their own interpretation of “The Gita”. The book is brought alive by the illustrations which are done by the author himself.. Through the mythic character of King Yayati, rituals like Pratimola and also the exchange of Ages between father and son, Girish Karnad takes the Readers to the rich heritage of India. Myths are used As archetypes in this novel. Through the epitome of King Yayati he shows the temperament of a modern Man, his craze towards materialism. The motif of Using myth in the novel is to depict the condition of Man and to link present with the eternal and the Contemporary with the archetypal. Khandekar’s usage of Past histories and myths to reflect the present Scenario is unremarkable. Khandekar technically turned The old myths and stories into novel providing a new Dimension to it. Social Archetype of moral guidance Has been used in the novel Through the usage of myth he tries to bring harmony to the society and the concept of existentialism can be seen throughout the novel.

## CHAPTER 3

### MYTH AND MODERN WORLD

In Yayati the interaction is among king Yayati, his queens Devayani, Sharmshtha, and Chitrlekha, the wife of Pooru. They represent the aristocratic interaction among them.

In Khandeker's novel Yayati, the king Yayati meets Beautiful Devayani, the only daughter of Shukracharya. He has Seen her for the first time and that too in a dry well. She had Been pushed into it by her friend Sharmishtha, the princess of Asura' kingdom and the daughter of Vrishaparva. Yayati, who Has been hunting in the forest, comes to the spot in search of Water to slake his thirst. When he glances into the well, he sees Something bright. On closer examination he is surprised to find A beautiful maiden trapped in the well crying for her rescue. He Then asks her ancestry and how she fell into the well. To this, She replied that she was the daughter of Shukracharya, a Mendicant Brahmin, who knew the art of reviving dead bodies. Holding her right hand, Yayati helped her out of the well. She Was drawn to Yayati and immediately asks him to marry her, With a plea that he has lifted a maiden by her right hand, Because she has gauged that Yayati, the emperor, will be a Worthy husband for her. Despite the caste infringements and Social taboos, the marriage between Yayati and Devayani has Been solemnized. Sharmishtha had to accompany Devayani After marriage as a punishment for her indecent deed against Devayani, because Sharmishtha has pushed Devayani into the Well .

According to Indian religious beliefs, marriage is a must for Every young adolescent girl, and being a patriarchal society she Is obliged to leave her parental home and be with her husband's family. Thus Devayani, like a commodity and currency has Passed from one family to another. Because Devayani's father, Shukracharya, who loved his daughter could not reject her Proposal also due to the social arrangement a woman cannot Stay for long in her father's family when she comes of age . Before marriage she is nursed and fostered by her father and Mother and later after marriage she no longer remains a Property of her parents. She has to adjust according to the Norms of her husband's family. Hence, due to this social Construct, Devayani's lite after marriage is controlled by Yayati.

Interpreting this myth in the light of gender theory, Luce Irigaray notices, "this exchange upon which patriarchal societies Are based takes place exclusively among men". On closer scrutiny of the myth as well as the play, it is revealed that the marriage of Yayati with Devayani is a loveless marriage. Yayati craved to become immortal by getting the potion for Immortality from Devayani's father, Shukracharya. Khandekar deviates from the myth to some extent. In the Play Sharmishtha is depicted as Devayani's maid in the palace Of King Yayati. She also develops a secret relationship with Yayati. When this relationship is revealed, Yayati is cursed by Shukracharya with premature old-age. Sharmishtha is always Of the view that Yayati had married Devayani because she Was the daughter of Shukracharya who could bless him with Immortality. She constantly reminds Devayani that Yayati accepted her as a wife only with the hope that he would receive Nectar to be immortal. She taunts Devyani for not having real Love for Yayati. She mocks Devayani as:

.... And what would you see in His Majesty's eyes? Have You tried to find out? Have you ever dared examine those Eyes and acknowledge the lust burning there? Except

that He is not lusting for you, you poor darling, he lusts for Immortality. Your father's art of 'sanjeevani'(Ibid.,p.11). She further remarks: ...when Yayati saw you first. You were in well-covered In mud and filth. Scratched. Bleeding. Your clothes in tatters. You think he fell in love with that spectacle fool he would have gone away without a second thought -except that he learnt that you were Devayani. Devayani Daughter of Shukracharya! And Yayati's manhood raised Its head. And all he had to do to keep his banner flying Over the world was to plant his flag pole into you(Ibid.,p.12.)

Khandekar's Sharmishtha possesses deeper insight into the Ways or human psyche. This aspect of her character is revealed Through the dialogue between Swarnalata and Devayani at the Beginning of the play when Swarnalata, Devayani's maid, gets Annoyed with Sharmishtha. She remarks: She is satanic. She can barge into the poisonous fumes And watch me choke while she remains untouched. She Can creep into the hidden corners of my mind, claw those Shadows Out and set them dancing. I am terrified of her(Ibid.,p.08.). Like an enlightened woman she apprehends the fact that a Male always wishes to empower woman. This is true when Yayati marries Devayani not because he loves her but because Of the blessings of immortality he would seek from Shukracharya. This plan of Yayati is very tactfully unfolded by Sharmishtha When she sarcastically comments on Devayani's past:

... I was discussing that story with one of the palace Concubines the other day. And you know what she said? The King was no doubt in a hurry to have some quick fun And go, she said. Even with prostitutes picked off the Street, the first thing a man does is ask her name. And You say with you, the King dispensed with even that Formality? (Ibid.,p.13.).

Yayati marries Devayani because Shukracharya possessed The power of ‘Sanjeevani ‘ that is, nectar. Had he not possessed this Power king Yayati perhaps would not have married Devayani. So, Yayati’s aspiration to rule over the kingdom forever makes Him strike this bargain. Devayani passes from one male (her Father) to another (her husband). And Devayani here is traded, In the words of Irigaray as a commodity, whereas Yayati and Shukracharya can be treated as agents to trade this commodity . Sharmishtha, who is forced to live with Devayani as her Maid, develops clandestine relationship with Yayati. Whenever Yayati looks or comes closer to her in the palace in the Presence of Devayani, Devayani dislikes her. It annoys Devayani. But Yayati tells Devayani that he has accepted Sharmishtha as His queen. She will be my queen. Yayati knows that all The problems in their conjugal life are due to Sharmishtha’s Presence in the palace but he does not have the heart to tell Sharmishtha to go away. Had he allowed Sharmishtha to leave The palace they might have lived in peace. It is Sharmishtha Only who has brought turmoil in their life.

Thus, the crisis in the life of Yayati is precipitated by his Refusal to part with Sharmishtha. Devayani does not want Sharmishtha in the palace and bluntly asks her to leave it, but Yayati does not agree to this. He affirms in a decisive voice Thus:

Because I feel bewitched by her. Even now, at this Moment, I want her. I have never felt so entranced by a Woman. What is it? Is it some spell she has cast? Some Secret sorcery? I can feel youth bursting out within me Again. Her beauty, her intelligence, her wit, her abandon In love. Not to marry her is to lose her, don’t you see? Must have her. I have to keep her with me. Please try to Understand(Ibid.,p.30).

Victory always amounts to the same thing: it is Hierarchized. The hierarchization subjects the entire conceptual Organization to man was said by Helene Cixous, and this

is true if we Weigh Yayati's personality with that of Sharmishtha, the two Opposite sexes in which one (female sex) is always compelled to Adopt a passive role. Here Yayati feels humiliated by her Words. He feels inferior and strives to gain over Sharmishtha. He considers Sharmishtha's witty remarks as a blot on the Honour of his ancestry, but he fails to appreciate how intelligently And logically she crosses and Wins over him. He feels insulted And restless and determines to gain control over her in every Way. The character of Yayati is thus based on a social construct Which reflects his aggressive behaviour that is linked with Inherited traits. Yayati is ruled, as all men are, by socially conditioned belief system of patriarchal power. He does not Wish to part with any avenue of power vested in the male. Therefore, when sharmishtha wins him over by her words and Logic the deeply rooted patriarchal values do not allow him to Accept her superior. There is a kind of revolt, a struggle which Is always at work when he hears any domitable words of Other Sex. Sharmishtha thus acts as the "Medusa", hearing Whose words Yayati loses all his patriarchal power and rights, And feels dumb founded. Since Sharmishtha has cultivated an Understanding owing to her royal birth she pleads with king Yayati With equal intelligence. She is a symbol of modern Independent woman because of her noble education which Enables her to exercise her understanding and these traits Of her, equip her with virtue as well as independence. The Inferiority complex in king Yayati is surfaced because o Sharmishtha's presence in the palace. As Luce Irigaray remarks In this context that, One sex does not exist at the expense of the Other.

When the crisis in the life of Yayati comes, Devayani Instead of owning her responsibility leaves the palace. She Retuses to yield and the result is the curse of premature old age On Yayati. As soon as Yayati comes to know that Shukracharya Has cursed him with old age he does not accept the responsibility Of what he has done. He blames Sharmishtha tor this-" Old age! Decrepitude! By nightfall! And then? Then

What? Sharmishtha. You she-devil! You are the cause of All this. You are responsible. You trapped me with your Wiles.”(Ibid.,p.42).

Old age is a symbol of weakness and vulnerability. Yayati soon learns that this old-age when it comes will weaken his Grasp on his own kingdom. For this act he accuses Sharmishtha For she is the one who brings old-age to him prematurely. Again, we see the dominant nature of male over woman Because of her intrepid nature. She refuses to feel guilty for Yayati’s old age, and therefore later asks him to accept What has come his way. Sharmishtha like a great and noble Androgynous mind endeavours to tackle the situation by advising Yayati thus:Have patience... No one can escape old age. You have Just hastened its arrival. Let us accept t. Let us go away From the city. come with you. I’ll share the wilderness with you(Ibid.,p.42).

Yayati gets violent and refuses to accept old age. He Remains adamant: “If I have to know myself, Sharmishtha. I have to be young. I must have my youth”(Ibid.,p.43). Thus, Sharmishtha Puts her views boldly before Yayati. She has retined thoughts And irrepressible personality. She does not accept Yayati’s Blame at the same time consoles him like a friend on equal Tooting. She even sets herself free from the bondage of Devayani And puts her arguments convincingly and does not accept a Weak status like a traditional Indian woman. She clears boldly All the hurdles that come in her way very intelligently. She does Not refrain from telling Devayani that Yayati married her not Because ot her beauty or deeds but because of her father’s Magical power of ‘Sanjeevant’ the power of immortality. The Prominent feature of her character is that she never shrinks or Submits herself before the king or queen as a slave or even a Subordinate. Khandekar through Sharmishtha has endeavoured to Prove that women with education and understanding do not Succumb to patriarchal rule. They are conscious of the Surroundings and hence are no longer the property of male Dominated society.

Thus, Sharmishtha in this regard is a free Woman who is little affected by the oppressive dictates of Patriarchy. She possesses strength of mind and thus cannot Bear any insult or dishonour from the male sex which tries to Relegate by relegating her to a position of a gentle domestic Creature. She does not endeavour to stimulate or excite Tenderness and gratify the arrogant pride of man.

Before she came to Devayani and Yayati, she had enjoyed A beautiful and comfortable environment in the lap of her Parents in the Asura' kingdom. Her values and personality Developed in the royal atmosphere and made her accustomed to Wielding authority. As Simone de Beauvoir puts: One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, Intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine. Khandekar's Sharmishtha, Chitrlekha and even Swarnalata, Devayani's maid, display a critical faculty with an investigative And analytical mind and spirit. Their social and family Background has engendered this. Therefore, they reveal Independence and individuality in their interpersonal Relationships. They refuse to accept subjugation because of their female gender and do not conform to the words of Kate Millett because of our social circumstances, male and female Are really two cultures and their life experiences are utterly Different and this is crucial.

Chitrlekha, the wife of Yayati's son, Pooru, arrives at the Palace for the first time immediately after fifteen days of their Marriage. She comes along with her husband Pooru. Swarnalata, The maid of the palace, breaks the news to her that Pooru Has traded his youth with his father because Shukracharya, Devayani's father has cursed Yayati. No sooner did Shukracharya learn that king Yayati had established illicit Relationship with Sharmishtha who was sent to serve Devayani As her maidservant, then he curses Yayati

to become old before The nightfall. Yayati does not want to accept this premature Old age. He gives the reason that he has to achieve some Important goals which cannot be possible without his youth. So It becomes indispensable for him to retain youth for a few more Years. If he accepts old-age, as a curse, than he would not be Able to accomplish his work tor the welfare of his kingdom. Sitting on his bed he feels dumb-founded and like a madMan he muses thus:

“I am trying to recapture my youth. Moments when handed out pain, moments when I slaughtered enemies, razed hostile cities to the ground, made my queens writhe in pain and demanded that they laugh and make love to me in gratitude. Why do I think of those moments now, Sharmishtha? Why do moments of tears and torture and Blood seem priceless?”(Ibid.,p.43)

Yayati is convinced that it his youth loses its grip on him he Can no longer have fun with the queens that he enjoyed day and Night with them. He used to irritate them because he found Greater pleasure in their tears than in their laughter. These Activities of his reflect his carnal desire which is deeply embedded in him. It also shows that he would handle these Queens like puppets because he toyed with their emotions and Derived great joy out of them. Thus he does not wish that any Change which would emasculate him should take place. Yayati goes to the extent of saying that his son, Pooru, Must be celebrating the occasion for it gives him an opportunity to assume the mantle of king immediately.” He must be Exulting at the turn of events, indulging in his fantasies of theFuture.”(Ibid.,p.44)

Pooru returns to the palace and breaks the news that Shukracharya along with his daughter, Devayani has left Before he could reach the gate of the palace. He tells Yayati that one of his disciples who has been waiting for Him, has told that his curse can be

redeemed only if some Young person accepted his old age. Yayati feels jubilant, But fails to gauge the seriousness of his actions and Accuses both Sharmishtha and Pooru of not being happy In his happiness:

“Why do you look so gloomy ? Aren’t you happy that I have escaped a fate worse than death ? Don’t you feel Any happiness, any joy at my escape from the blight? Why are you silent? Am I doing something wrong?”(Ibid.,p.46)

Pooru makes great effort to redeem Yayati of his curse. He requests the public, soldiers and ministers and tells them that if Anyone of them would agree to exchange Yayati’s old-age he Would shower wealth on him, but no one agrees. This makes Yayati desperate. Sharmishtha at this juncture brings him to Realize the stark truth. “Why should they take upon themselves the scourge you Have brought upon yourself? Please, sir. Let us not look Around for the fool or the yogi who is seeking holyMartyrdom. Let us go....”(Ibid.,p.46).

In the end only Pooru comes forward to accept the king’s Curse although he tells Sharmishtha that Yayati is not worthy Of any such favur or love. Chitralkha, on hearing that her Husband, Pooru, has exchanged his youth with his father, feels Hysterical and exclaims thus: Cry? Why should I cry? I should laugh. I should Cheer...except that I have been so unfair to him. So Cruelly unjust I thought he was ordinary man. What a fool i have been! How utterly blind! I am the chosen one and i.. Which other woman has been so blessed? Why Should I shed tears?(Ibid.,p.56).

Chitralkha wishes that she should welcome such a Courageous husband, she brings several earthen pots lit with Bright flames tor his welcome. But as soon as she sees his face In the bright flames she exclaims and cries as: “Please don’t Come near me, go Out. Please, please, don’t touch me.”(Ibid.,p.58). She almost becomes mad and calls

herself a sinner for Ordering away her husband to leave her, however she feels that It is not her mistake, because she did not foresee its consequences. Later Yayati, along with Sharmishtha meets Chitrlekha, who Is almost senseless at this stage. They try to console her. Yayati Tells her that he can understand her sufferings and pacifies Chitrlekha thus:

This is no time for recriminations. My heart goes out to You. But you are an educated woman, versed in the arts, Trained in warfare. You could have displayed more self- Control. Now act in a manner worthy of an Anga princess And Bharata queen. Act so that generations to come may Sing you glory and Pooru's. My blood froze when I heard your scream. I was panic- Stricken lest you bring the names of both our families into Disrepute. But nothing is beyond repair.”(Ibid.,p.61)

When Yayati insists that Chitrlekha should let Pooru enter Her chamber (Antahpur), she gets adamant and prohibits his Entry saying that she would not do so till he regains his youth. Yayati is extremely vexed and orders Chitrlekha, to permit Pooru in her chamber. At this she replies to Yayati sarcastically “Let him come, I shall leave the kingdom.”(Ibid.,p.62). Yayati then remarks and asks whether she had forgotten Her vows that she had taken before Fire-God as witness. He Further tells her that she should follow them whether it is a Home or forest. At this Chitrlekha adds sardonically that Pyre also. The closer examination of the above dialogues between Yayati and Chitrlekha reveals that Chitrlekha revolts against The basic system of power that always suits the male in reigning Over female in a male-oriented society. In the original myth There is no mention of Chitrlekha. Khandekar , by introducing the Character of Chitrlekha and deviating from the original myth Endeavours to expose the ‘root-cause of women’s oppression, Which is based strongly on patriarchal power politics. For his Selfish

reasons, Yayati had robbed Pooru of his youth and Consequently robbed Chitrlekha of the conjugal bliss which Was her natural right. On top of that he intimidates her as a King and demands obedience from her in the name of religion Reminding her of the marriage vows.

His actions support The Radical Feminist views who believe that gender is a social construct. Law, religion, politics and art, etc. are all the products of male and therefore have a patriarchal character. Karnad seeks to challenge the arrangement by rejecting standard Gender-roles and male tyranny over female. He also advocates The view of liberal feminists who want to free women from Oppressive gender-roles. When Yayati accuses Chitrlekha for wishing death for her Husband, Chitrlekha shields herself thus “:I did not push him to the edge of the pyre, sir. You did. You hold forth on my wifely duties. What about your Duty to your son? Did you think twice before foisting Your troubles on a pliant son?”(Ibid.,p.61). Here, Khandekar has endeavoured to paint the character of Chitrlekha not as a timid or meek person who accept Masculine authority but like an enlightened woman who has the ability to revolt against masculine authority.

She does Not passively submit to the male hegemonic behaviour of her Father-in-law, who tried to mould her according to his own Will. She is indeed a woman who displays critical and analytical faculty. She does not readily accept the old view expressed by The twentieth century feminist critic Simone de Beauvoir who Holds that the masculine world seems to her a transcendent Reality and absolute. Yayati who has deep patriarchal Conditioning believes in the social construct that woman is Created to perpetuate male hegemony. Khandekar’s Chitrlekha is an exception; she recognizes her rights and thus wishes to share The pleasure of the world equally with male. The novel Has created her character as a modern woman who does Not remain silent and

accept male hegemony, because she has Proper education which enables her to fight against it. Her Mind is reinforced by her sound education which she has Received in her childhood. She is fostered and nurtured in a Healthy society where no discrimination is made between male And female. She wants to be weighed on the plane of equality. Because she has also learnt marshal arts like a man. Chitrlekha, In the words of Wollstonecraft, has sharpened her senses, Formed the temper [Character] regulated her passion and Set her understanding to work before the body arrives at Maturity. Thus these traits of Chitrlekha make her an Independent woman who loves to have free expression of Thought and Khandekar has very tactfully and successfully rejected The old traditional belief of women's subordination and Proclaims that if women be imparted proper education they Can develop in them a better judgment and can stand on their Own feet as men do. Khandekar , through the voice of Chitrlekha Projects the message that properly educated women should Never be treated as weak, timid, meek and submissive creatures. The chauvinist attitude of Yayati towards Chitrlekha, Devayani, Sharmishtha and Pooru has surfaced only due to his male Hegemonic element which is deeply rooted in him. He should Have taken the responsibility for the sin he has committed Before he was cursed by Shukracharya and should have Complied with Sharmishtha s advice to spend the last phase of His life in the forest peacefully.

But Khandekar has viewed this Myth of Yayati from a different angle. He seems to have a Message to convey that a woman need not be a passive Recipient of misery and torture but like a self-aware individual She has as much right to live and enjoy life as a man. Chitrlekha does not accept his social construct of gender And therefore does not withstand the suppression and supremacy Of king Yayati, when he endeavours to exercise his authority After bringing her in his palace. Here Chitrlekha reminds him that after getting married to Pooru she too has an equal right Over Antahpur, the palace of the

queens. She flatly refuses Yayati by telling him that he has no right to imprison her in her Own sex. She instills good sense in Yayati when she says:

“ Yes, I was keen to become your daughter-in-law. But so Were you to accept me as one. Even apart from my family, Because of my accomplishments, because ot what I am. And now you want me to meekly yield to your demands?”Ibid.,p.62).

Chitrlekha holds Yayati to be a person responsible tor Bringing her as Pooru’s wife. She makes him conscious that she Did not wish to become his daughter-in-law but he made her. While selecting a daughter-in-law Yayati had wished that his Daughter-in-law should be dexterous in domestic work and she Should be a learned scholar too. But Chitrlekha adds that she Is equally skilful and adept in the marshal arts which she had Learnt from her brothers. But to bring such a woman and to Chain her to the traditional passive destiny of women is Barbarous behaviour. She refuses to be subjected to the wild Behaviour of Yayati by accepting her lot passively. Here Chitrlekha is defending her own case very tactfully In a very polished manner. Metaphorically she points out Yayati’s bondage to flesh which seeks carnal pleasure without Any consideration of higher values of life, like loyalty, Responsibility and concern tor his own offspring. She taunts Yayati that had she been an uneducated person she would have Been passively obedient to all kinds of fortunes. But since Yayati himself wanted an educated daughter-in-law he did not Realize that with education comes the sense of self-realization. Chitrlekha knows what she wants from life and this she Demands without robbing others ot their rights. When Yayati promises Chitrlekha that he will return her Husband’s youth as soon as his goal is achieved, at this she retorts thus:

“Four or five (years)! Do you think it would make a Diference it it were only one or two? This morning I was The mistress of all that I had yearned for. But within half a

day –no within half an hour actually-half a century Has driven across my bed and crushed the dreams on my Pillows. And you would like me to wait...”(Ibid.,p.65).

Chitrlekha denounces the false respect for fate and destiny. She avers that she is a living being he cannot justify his deed by Promising return of Pooru’s youth after a couple of years. He Asks Chitrlekha to accept the ‘old’ Pooru happily for which Sacrifice the Bharata family will always feel obliged to her. When Chitrlekha refuses, he exercises his authority as her Father-in-law and as a king, and orders her to obey him. When Chitrlekha offers to leave the kingdom, he scolds her thus:” Do you remember the vow you took not so long ago With the gods as your witnesses, in the presence of the Holy fire? That you would walk in the path marked by his Footprints: whether home or into the wilderness....”(Ibid.,p.62).

When Yayati fails to bend Chitrlekha to passive acceptance Of her lot as her father-in-law. He starts ordering her as a king. He then reminds Chitrlekha the vows she has taken before Fire-god. He somehow wishes to turn Chitrlekha according to His own will. This attitude of the king Yayati reflects that he is The very epitomy of patriarchal tyrant who misuses his Power vested in him. But Chitrlekha is well aware of the true Meaning of the marriage vows and holds Yayati responsible for Pushing her closer to death. When Yayati tries to idealize her Sacrifice this is not merely a question of an individual. We Are talking of the future of our entire people. -and implores her to rise above petty considerations and be a great woman, She does not yield to his arguments and brings Yayati to his Sense thus: “All right, Your Majesty, I shall try. But when I do so please don’ t try to dodge behind your own logic”(Ibid.,p.66). To Escape from this maze chitrlekha proposes that Yayati should take the place of Pooru in her life so that she can bear a child for the family:

“I did not know Prince Pooru when I married him. Married him for his youth. For his potential to plant the Seed of the Bharatas in my womb. He has lost that Potency now. He doesn't possess any of the qualities for Which I married him. But you do.”(Ibid.,p.64-65)

When Chitrlekha offers herself to Yayati, the latter Shocked and accuses her for harbouring such low and indecent Thoughts. Chitrlekha is fully aware of her limits and the Responsibility that she has to take. She therefore does not yield To Yayati's words and puts her arguments strongly-“ Oh, come, sir. These are trite considerations. We have to Rise above such trivialities. We have to be superhuman. Nothing like this has ever happened before. Nothing like this is likely to.... It's the price I have paid for my Education”.(Ibid.,p.66).

But Chitrlekha knows that she is surrounded by strong Patriarchal values and at the same time she has to defend the honour of the royal family. The only honourable solution to Revolt against the repulsive idea of the premature old-age of her Husband is to sacrifice her life. This she does when she does not See any hope for her future. She tells Yayati that neither will You return Pooru's youth nor will you accept me! She thus Gives a powerful blow to the vanity of Yayati. If Yayati does Not follow the life of decency i.e., of keeping the welfare of Progeny foremost because of his carnal desire, then she can also Claim her right to satisfy her carnal needs. Finding herself in Such a sad plight Chitrlekha muses thus:” What else is There for me to do? You have your youth. Prince Pooru has his Old age. Where do I fit in?”(Ibid.,p.66). She can only think of one solution In such a crisis suicide. She takes poison and commits suicide. However, after taking poison, she is not willing to die. She Behaves in an irresponsible manner, “Don't let me die. I don't Want to die. Swaru, Swaru, help.”(Ibid.,p.67). Chitrlekha's death points to the fact that a woman because of patriarchal social constructs Always

becomes the scape-goat. She may be educated, Accomplished, and rational but till such time the society does Not accept her right to live with dignity she will have to suffer. She will have to die, despite her keen desire to live.

Gender relations keep changing as society progress and Chitralkha's character in Khandekar's novel Yayati reflects that She is not a woman of the past who is a puppet in the hands of Male authority. She takes her own decisions. When she comes To know that her husband Pooru had traded his youth with his father, she instantly decides to part with him. She does not Wait for any authoritative male decision for her own family. Moreover, she speaks boldly to her father-in-law that she has Married the youth of Pooru and since after exchange of his Youth, this quality is no longer present in him, why should she Then accept him as her husband and continue to live with him (Pooru). She goes to the extent of saying that all those qualities Of youth he (Yayati) has squeezed from him then he, Yayati himself should accept her as and be her man. Although this Proposal does not materialize, it points to the revolutionary Ideas of Chitralkha. Chitralkha reminds us about the realistic aspect of marriage. Idealization of marriage has led women to remain meek and Passive sufferers. If a woman is expected to follow certain ideals even man has some ideals to follow. Hindu wedding is all About rituals and customs, which teach us the actual essence of A married life. It tells us the values, which should be followed After marriage to lead a happy married life. On the final day of the wedding vows are taken by the bride and the groom before A fire god as witness that represents holiness of their marriage. The husband accepts his wife as a token of good fortune and Good omen to start their life together. The groom vows always To take care, consult and protect his bride. While the groom Takes the bride's hand and moves around the fire together, the Priest chants the mantras. These mantras include accepting the Responsibilities of loyalty, love, mutual respect, understanding And procreation for

as long as they live. As the priest chants the Bride and groom take seven steps together around the fire, this ritual is known as 'saptapadi' or the seven steps. The ritual of Saptapad symbolizes the journey of life, which they both should travel together hand-in-hand. They should be with each other in thick and thin. According to Hindu beliefs if two people walk seven steps together then they will remain together for life. The seven promises or vows, which are made while they take the seven steps together are as follows:

(1) The first step is taken to earn and provide a living for their household or family, and avoiding those things that might harm them.

(2) The second step is taken to build their physical, mental and spiritual powers and to lead a healthy lifestyle.

(3) The third step is taken to earn and increase their wealth by righteous and proper means.

(4) The fourth step is taken to acquire knowledge, happiness and harmony by mutual love, respect, understanding and faith.

(5) The fifth step is taken to have children for whom they will be responsible and they be blessed with healthy, righteous and brave children.

(6) The sixth step is taken for self-control and longevity.

(7) The seventh step is taken to be true to each other, loyal and remain life-long companions by this wedlock.

Yayati and Pooru ignore Chitrlekha's needs. They have profited from patriarchal system of oppression and exercise male power. But her wisdom and education

in almost all the Prominent fields such as politics and marshal arts, etc. Make her an invincible creature. It is through these arts that she is Able to free herself from oppressive gender roles. She overcomes All the barriers which society has constructed for the benefit of The masculine gender. Both Sharmishtha and Chitrlekha hail From aristocratic lineage and have an ability to judge and Perceive what is wrong and right for them. In this regard Chitrlekha, especially, is a female figure strongly created by : Khandekar. She is not mentioned in the original myth. Khandekar bestows her with complete education and keen awareness that Follows complete education with an all-round developed Personality.

Chitrlekha feels that she has committed a sin by asking her husband Pooru to go away when she lookS at him as old Pooru in the bright light of the flames. This idea of sin is Again a social construct which the married women sustain. Due to this mental conditioning women stop thinking in their Own interest and welfare and entertain a feeling of guilt when Unable to fulfil the just or unjust demands of their men. Chitrlekha overcomes this feeling of guilt soon because of her Self-realization and power of independent thought. Thus, Chitrlekha's voice is the voice of a liberated woman who Fights for her rights and is ready to break the chains of male Sovereignty which still continues in the patriarchal society. Incidentally, all three female characters in the play get even With Yayati. He marries Devayani not out of love but because Of his greed for immortality through her father. When Devayani Discovers Yayati's disloyalty towards her she uses her father to Punish him. Sharmishtha could not get the honourable position of a wedded wife but after Yayati's rejection by Devayani it is She who volunteers to follow him to the forest and thus gets the Honour of being a true companion loyal and steadfast willing to share the misery of Yayati. Chitrlekha, who openly proves that a woman's life is not to be toyed with, tops both of them. A woman's needs and decisions

have to be considered with the Same gravity as that of a man. Thus, the novel Yayati becomes a very revealing and Significant study in gender relations.

Generally, a myth is a tale or a narrative with a symbolic meaning. Drawing his source from the mythological character of Yayati in Mahabharata, Khandekar depicts the contemporary dilemma of everyman caught between the contradictory pulls of pleasure and responsibility, materialism and renunciation. The characters are no doubt interesting and realistic. Yayati is the king and symbolizes a person who is interested in sex and lust. For his carnal desires he is ready to sacrifice the happiness of his own son, Pooru. Devayani symbolizes the superego in mind of women who come from upper class community whereas Sharmishtha is representative of lower class community. Khandekar's Yayati comes across as merely a pleasure-monger while in the original; his character is symbolic of a higher ideal that of striving for truth and eternal happiness. Yayati's long span of sensual indulgence is a symbol that indicates the futility of chasing happiness in things that have a definite end. Indulgence only begets more indulgence, it sate it. Every climax of happiness ends with a feeling of dejection that it is over so soon, followed by a craving to renew, to repeat the pleasure. Therefore, Yayati's disillusionment becomes complete when he reaches a point of saturation. He has had his fill yet still remains unfulfilled.

This is what plods him to seek non-cyclical happiness Khandekar keeps at centre the psychological thesis of the modern man at the centre while writing the novel. His protagonists always suffer and the root cause of their suffering is the complexity of human relationships. His characters suffer from alienation and they are alienated from themselves and the people around them. Khandekar takes a deep insight into Yayati's

character and shows Yayati's passion for the enjoyment of life, which ultimately turns into detachment and aloofness. Yayati is a true ambassador of modern common man, who in spite of having much pleasures of life, still feels impatient and dissatisfied. Yayati takes the youth of Pooru, his youngest son, but soon realizes the impropriety of his shallow action and feels like an alienated common man. Yayati feels cataclysmic disillusionment and loss of faith in life. His torment and burden for Pooru's youth is revealed in the following words: "Please help me, Pooru. Take back your youth. Let me turn my decrepitude into a beginning" (Ibis.,p.72) . Thus, Yayati's disillusionment is complete only with saturation. He has had his fill but remains unfulfilled. Chitrlekha in Yayati, rebels against the unjust and gender-based norms and strictures of the Indian patriarchal society. Though she finally ends up committing suicide, she becomes a vehicle to demand the rights of a woman, which are so easily crushed in the patriarchal order. Chitrlekha does not give in to Yayati's persuasion to accept her husband's old age nonchalantly, and stands unmoved and unconvinced. Then Yayati exercises his authority as a king and as a father-in-law and orders her to accept her decrepit husband. To this, Chitrlekha who has by that time taken her stand as a rebel—a rebel against the patriarchal set up and the rituals which treat women not as subjects but as objects, replies with ferocity.

Pooru proves himself as a great symbol of sacrifice. He accepts the imposed old age of his father and becomes a ripe old man. Pooru becomes the victim of his father's desires of sensuality. Pooru seeks Chitrlekha's help, his wife to lead rest of his life in solace : and calm with him. He says- "This is no ordinary old age, devi. This is decrepitude. The sum total of father's transgressions. The burden of the whole dynasty, perhaps. I couldn't take it on without your help" Earlier Chitrlekha admired her husband's decision and felt herself honored and lucky for being his wife. She is a symbol

of admiration. Yet when she looks at the old and ragged face of her husband, she realizes that a treachery has fallen over her. She cries to look at his face and utters to Pooru, “Please, don’t come near to me. Go out. Please, please don’t touch me” ). Thus, the play depicts Yayati as the champion of patriarchy and his attitude to women. He feels that a woman should not violate the norms determined by patriarchy with his masculinity and authority, he treats women as those who are made for fulfilling his carnal whims, but he is unable to rule totally over woman. Khandekar does not appreciate the suppressed and subordinated position of woman, on the contrary, he creates her as a complementary to man.

Symbols used in this novel such as kshatriya palace ,caste, holding right hand, a vial of lethal, pendant etc gains importance throughout the play. Kshatriya palace is the symbol of power and wealth. Cast is the system of dividing people into such classes. In Yayathi, it is symbolised in all characters Devayani (Brahmin), Sharmistha (Rakshasi ,Asure, Demony), Yayathi (Kshatriya)etc .A vial of lethal poison can be interpreted as a symbol of honour .Pendent(mangal sutra) is one of the symbol of marriage for Hindu women. As we have observed that king Yayathi has all the factors of the condition of today’s men. The story makes an important point that it is essential for one to have a proper balance in life. The gender conflicted raised through this novel is also important in present scenario .

## CONCLUSION

Yayati by V.S.Khandekar inspires us to rethink about the myths, mythologies and symbols he has profoundly used in his works, with reflection of contemporary society and infused in them. Khandekar uses this mythical tale from Mahabharata and puts it in modern contexts because the 20<sup>th</sup> century generation does not easily relate to Mahabharat stories. But he with his innovative changes turns this tale into one which is highly relevant today.

The way Khandekar used his female characters for modern contest just opposed the ancient time female characters who has been always oppressed by the male in a male dominance world .He showed his female characters intelligent and very practical which becomes his novel a strong feminist work too.

Many modern writers have employed myths and legends to convey their sense and view life. We can see the myth from Mahabharata in this novel, Yayati and it has symbolic characters .Thus Khandekar brings out new meaning to the ancient Indian story ,which is relevant to the present day scenario about man and his universe .Khandekar has used this myth apperception to exposing the life with all its conflicts and passions. Yayatis’s words are expressive of the its porposes and message “we should wash our sins by doing penance in the forest. I have spent my youth in this city but will spend my old age in the forest”(khandekar 70)

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**TRAUMA THEORY: MAN VERSUS MIND: A JOURNEY  
THROUGH *COLD COMFORT FARM***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**DONA JOHNSON**

**Register No: DB18AEGR027**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mrs. JESNA KURIAKOSE

June 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “**Trauma Theory: Man Versus Mind: A Journey Through *Cold Comfort Farm***” is a bonafide work of Dona Johnson, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Mrs. JesnaKuriakose

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Dona Johnson, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**Trauma Theory: Man Versus Mind: A Journey Through *Cold Comfort Farm***” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Jesna Kuriakose of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

DONA JOHNSON

DB18AEGR027

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**DONA JOHNSON**

## Table of Contents

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Chapter One</b>	
Introduction of the Concept of Trauma	3
<b>3. Chapter Two</b>	
Critical Review	10
<b>4. Chapter Three</b>	
Internal Conflict of Mind	16
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Works Cited</b>	<b>22</b>

## Introduction

Research is creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge. It involves the collection, organization and analysis of information to increase understanding of a topic or issue. Research attempt to bring out something new within a literary work. It is based on a theory and a book and presented with the necessary evidence and information. The book I have selected is Stella Gibbons' *Cold Comfort Farm*. In this book I am trying to bring out the childhood trauma of the character Ada Doom by applying trauma theory.

Exploring trauma in *Cold Comfort Farm*, I can understand that there is a very depressed and painful character in this novel. The Starkadders farm is a graceless, pointless, aimless and feckless one. Each of them are uncivilised and behaves strangely. The farm always looks gloomy like its characters. It could be that they have lost their hops or may be someone's over caring because of excessive fear.

The first chapter, is all about the theory of trauma. This chapter brings an idea about how a person can be affected with trauma from personal life experience. The chapter moves around through Sigmund Freud theory of psychoanalytic and trauma and it also include some Victorian works of trauma theory.

The second chapter, is the detailed summary of the novel. The story continues with a focus on Ada Doom. Her dominance hurts other family members. This leads them to a freedom less situation. The root cause of all this was the sight she saw in the woodshed that day.

The third chapter reveals the suffering of Ada Doom and her family due to trauma and how she survived it. She is a mystic and curious character. The ugly sight she had seen still haunts her. Trauma should be detected and eliminated at a young age.

She did not receive that kind of proper counselling and treatment that's why she changed into this kind of painful life. I'm trying to figure out all these things based on the trauma theory developed by Cathy Caruth, Sigmund Freud, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub and Dominick Lacapra.

## **Chapter one**

### **Introduction of the Concept of Trauma**

Trauma is the response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope, causes feelings of helplessness, diminishes their sense of self and their ability to feel a full range of emotions and experiences. The theory of trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being. Although many individuals report a single specific traumatic event, others, especially those seeking mental health or substance abuse services, have been exposed to multiple or chronic traumatic events.

Psychological trauma, its representation in language, and the role of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities are the central concerns that define the field of trauma studies. Psychiatric theories on trauma paired with additional theoretical frameworks such as post structural, sociocultural, and postcolonial theory from the basis of criticism that interprets representations of an extreme experience and its effects upon identity and memory. The concept of trauma, itself a source of critique, is generally understood as a severely disruptive experience that profoundly impacts the self's emotional organization and perception of the external world. Trauma studies explores the impact of trauma in literature and society by analysing its psychological, rhetorical and cultural significance. Scholarship analyses the complex psychological and social factors that influence the self's comprehension of a traumatic experience and how such an experience shapes and is shaped by language. The formal innovations of text, both print and media, that display insights into the ways that identity, the

unconscious, and remembering are influenced by extreme events thus remain a significant focus of the field.

It is a critical theory. Trauma study now includes many fields, focusing on psychological, philosophical, ethical, and aesthetic questions about the nature and representation of traumatic events. Freudian psychoanalysis provided a model of traumatic subjectivity and various accounts about the effect of trauma on memory. An interdisciplinary theoretical body that draws from psychoanalytic, feminist and post structuralist discourses and focuses on the study of both personal trauma and collective experience of trauma. The theory offers a framework for understanding experiences that - by definition - overwhelm the coping mechanisms of individuals, and involves enquiry into the relationship between memory and truth and the ways that testimony can aid the recovery process. Key theorists in the field include Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub and Dominick LaCapra.

Trauma as an official diagnosis first entered the DSM in 1980 and literary theorists began employing the term to discuss literature not too long after. Since the 1990s, theorists have largely focused on twentieth century trauma literature with Holocaust and Modernist texts garnering much of the critical interest. Yet, Victorian life was also marked by trauma-causing events. From railway catastrophe, to industrial accidents, to premature deaths, and infectious diseases, Victorians reckoned with wounds to the mind through their lived experience. Trauma scholars who work with nineteenth-century texts, with few exceptions, consider trauma in terms of its modern theories. While the work of Cathy Caruth, Shoshanna Felman, and some other authors has stimulated important discussions about trauma literature, their development of the concept of trauma rarely reaches further back than Freud. Victorian configurations of the mind and its response to psychological wounding have much to offer to the current

discussion of literary trauma. This dissertation presents a study of Victorian literary texts through current theories of trauma juxtaposed with nineteenth – century formulations of the concept. The analysis offers three main points: one, to identify instances of trauma in nineteenth century texts that would otherwise go unnoticed; two, to situate texts within the cultural and historic milieu of their publication and to consider how literary conventions and forms indicative of the nineteenth – century serve to represent the effects and symptoms of trauma, and three, as a result of seeing trauma in the texts, to challenge common readings of Victorian literary.

*David Copperfield*, a novel by Charles Dickens, a Victorian writer, is an example of childhood trauma. It is the first and only autobiographical novel of Dickens. Mid- Victorian foundling, orphans, and child labourers were all indications to the Middle- class of societal failure, and thus these children were causes of both widespread cultural fear and individual trauma. Charles Dickens used his orphan characters as both fictional creations and socially relevant representations. *Great Expectations* is a perpetually repetitive sequence of abjection, mastery, and failure that contrasts with Victorian wish- fulfilment cinder fantasies. First, Pip’s encounter with Magwitch on the marsh creates a long- lasting psychological wound in young Pip. Later, Pip experiences his second trauma when meeting Miss Havisham at Satis House. *Beloved*, is a trauma novel of Toni Morrison. Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* is with unnerving or unsettling sensations, what is fascinating is how these sensations and images work in conjunction to articulate trauma. Particularly trauma as it is experienced by a child. Other Victorian trauma novels are, Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, and Sarah Waters *Fingersmith*.

Trauma studies was first appeared in the 1990s and relied on Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the

limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether. This model of trauma indicates that suffering is unrepresentable. Quickly following the traditional model was a more pluralistic model of trauma that suggests the assumed unspeakability of trauma is one among many responses to an extreme event rather than its defining feature. The idea that a traumatic experience challenges the limits of language, fragments the psyche, and even ruptures meaning altogether set the initial parameters of the field and continues to impact the critical conversation even while alternative approaches displace this notion.

Freud's theories on traumatic experience and memory define the psychological concepts that guide the field. Psychoanalytical theories regarding the origins and effects of trauma arose in the nineteenth century study of shock and hysteria by researchers who, in addition to Freud, include Joseph Breuer, Pierre Janet, Jean Martin Charcot, Hermann Oppenheim, Abram Kardiner and Morton Prince. Freud's early theories in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) written with Joseph Breuer, and especially his adapted theories later in his career in *Beyond the pleasure principle* (1920), dominate trauma's conceptual employment by literary trauma critics today.

In Freud's early work he argues that traumatic hysteria develops from a repressed, earlier experience of sexual assault. Freud and Breuer emphasize in *Studies in Hysteria* (1895) that the original event was not traumatic in itself but only in its remembrance. Because the original event continues to inflict harm, the talking cure or abreaction is required to understand the effects of the past and gain freedom from its symptom causing grasp. Importantly, the traumatic event is understood only after a latency period of deferred action that delays the effects and meaning of the past. It is only after a contemporary event calls fourth the previously repressed event that the past even can become known in the process of remembering.

Freud's later work on war neurosis and the problem of traumatic repetition in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) extends and adapts his earlier theories on the defence mechanism of the ego as well as the origin and effects of trauma upon the psyche. Traumatic events create conflicts in the ego which split off from the unity of the ego and are repressed but return later often in dreams. The conflicts caused by trauma create traumatic neurosis, which is a consequence of an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli. The mind as an organism, according to Freud, contains outer and inner layers, with the outer layer having a protective shield against harmful external stimuli. However, when fright occurs, that is the state a person gets into when he has run into danger without being prepared for it, the lack of anxiety coupled with the external stimuli cause neurosis. Anxiety acts as a protection mechanism against traumatic neurosis but unexpected fright carries no defense. The external stimuli rupture the barrier and enter the inner psyche without the adequate internal defense. He says that any excitations from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield with a breach in an otherwise efficacious barrier against stimuli. Trauma is imagined as both an external agent that shocks the unprepared system and an internal action of defence against overstimulation.

Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* and Kali Tal's *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma* sparked a great attention to literature lovers. Her suggestion on Trauma theory enlightens a new era in poststructural approach of analyzing literary texts. Slowly but gradually, several models were introduced which inherent neurobiological features of trauma that refuse representations and cause dissociation were significant to arguments that sought to emphasize the extent of profound suffering from an external source, whether that source is an individual perpetrator or collective social practice. It was quickly

accompanied by alternative models and methodologies that revised this foundational claim to suggest determinate value exists in traumatic experience. However, the researcher would like to explore and reintroduce Trauma Theory in more contemporary approach so that it will be acceptable and practical in all genres of literature. Similarly, this study is in line with the critics such as Leys and Cvetkovich who established a psychological framework apart from the classic model thus produce different conclusions regarding trauma's influence upon language, perception, and society. The researcher believes that Trauma Theory should be viewed in a larger conceptual framework rather than the social psychology theories in addition to neurobiological theories, that is in the view of critical thinking. This stance might therefore consider dubious the assertion of trauma's intrinsic dissociation. The discussion focuses more on the roles of critical thinking in supporting Trauma Theory in several selected poems.

Traumatic event is an incident that causes physical, emotional, spiritual, or psychological harm. The person experiencing the distressing event may feel threatened, anxious, or frightened as a result. Trauma can be caused by an overwhelmingly negative event that causes a lasting impact on the victims mental and emotional stability. While many sources of trauma are physically violent in nature, others are psychological. Some common sources of trauma include: rape, domestic violence, natural disasters, the death of a loved one and witnessing an act of violence. Trauma is often but not always associated with being present at the site of a trauma- inducing event. It is also possible to sustain trauma after witnessing something from a distance. Young children are especially vulnerable to trauma and should be psychologically examined after a traumatic event has occurred to ensure their emotional well- being. While the causes and symptoms of trauma are various. People who have endured traumatic events will often appear shaken and disoriented. They may not respond to

conversation as they normally would and will often appear withdrawn or not present even when speaking. Another sign of a trauma victim is anxiety. Anxiety, due to trauma can manifest in problems such as night terrors, edginess, irritability, poor concentration and mood swings. While these symptoms of trauma are common, they are not exhaustive individuals respond to trauma in different ways. Sometimes trauma is virtually unnoticeable even to the victims closest friends and family. These cases illustrates the importance of talking to someone after a traumatic event has occurred, even if they show no initial signs of disturbance. Trauma can manifest days, months or even years after the actual event.

## Chapter two

### Critical review

Stella Gibbons, in full Stella Dorothea Gibbons (1902-1989), was an English author, journalist and poet. Gibbons first novel, *Cold Comfort Farm*, a burlesque of the rural novel, won for her in 1933 the famine Vie Heureuse prize and immediate fame. Stella Gibbons, daughter of a Landon doctor who worked in the poor section of London, she experienced many unhappy years as a child. Depressed by her environment and family life. Gibbons, the eldest of three children, created marvellous fairy tales that she told to her two brothers to help them forget their unhappy situation. Educated at home until she reached her teens, she then attended the North London Collegiate School for Girls and University college, London, where she studied journalism. After graduation she worked for a time for the British United Press as a cable decoder and held various other jobs over a period of 10 years (1923-33), including those of drama and literature critic, reporter and fashion writer.

*Cold Comfort Farm* was a popular and critical success but was never equalled by her later work. Her later fiction, although well written, was said by critics to dwindle into magazine entertainment. Gibbons wrote several other novels, including *Westwood* or *The Gentle Powers* (1946), and *Here Be Dragons* (1956), She also published poetry and four collections of short stories.

Set primarily in Sussex, England in the 1930s, *Cold Comfort Farm* is a parody of late eighteenth/early nineteenth century agricultural literature, such as novels by D.H. Lawrence and Thomas Hardy. The main character, Flora Poste goes to live with family members she has never met who live on *Cold Comfort Farm*. The place and the people are a mess so Flora uses her wits to tidy the farm and everyone on it.

The action begins with the death of Flora's parents from the annual epidemic of the influenza or Spanish plague when she is 19 years old. With nowhere to go, Flora first moves in with her wealthy friend Mary, in London. Mary offers her a place to stay until she finds a job and a place of her own. But Flora has other ideas. She feels she is ill-suited to making her own living and that it would be best to rely on the hospitality of distant relatives. After writing to a number of relatives, Flora makes arrangements to live with a set of cousins, the Starkadders, at Cold Comfort Farm in the fictional village of Howling, Sussex. The family takes her in out of a sense of obligation, making a strange reference to a great wrong they once did to Flora's father.

There is a complex, interwoven cast of characters at the farm and in the village. As is common with the romantic genre Gibbons is satirizing, each member of the Starkadder family harbours some deep secret or repressed feeling. They are driven by superstition and believe that the farm is cursed. The matriarch, Ada Doom, rules the roost from her bed. She has been housebound for years and appears to have gone mad ever since she saw something nasty in the woodshed when she was a child. The nature of this traumatizing event, like many gothic elements of the story, is left unexplained. Aunt Ada refuses to go out into the world of nasty things and demands that the Starkadders must always stay at the farm. All the Starkadders fear that Aunt Ada will lose what's left of her sanity if any of them leave. It is hinted that Ada is only pretending to be insane in order to manipulate her family.

Religious fanatic uncle Amos owns the farm, but he is ill-suited to running it. He preaches fiery, overdramatic sermons for a local sect called the church of the Quivering Brethren. His son and heir, Reuben, longs to care for the failing farm himself. The younger son, Seth, dreams of a career in the movies, but his mother is overprotective and seems to take an unhealthy interest in his good looks. Daughter

Elfine is in love with the local squire, Richard Hawk- Monitor, but her ethereal, capital R romantic nature turns the conventional Hawk- Monitors against her.

When Flora takes in these thorny problems, she decides to do the sensible thing and apply her common sense and urban sensibilities to Cold Comfort Farm. She resolves to bring the farm and its inhabitants into the twentieth century. Flora decides to help Elfine in her romantic pursuits. She gives the girl advice on styling her hair and clothing and takes her on a trip to London. Elfine has her unkempt hair cut fashionably short and begins to wear more modern outfits. At the same time, Flora uses her London connections to arrange invitations to a ball the Hawk- Monitors are throwing. As for uncle Amos, Flora takes advantage of his religious bent. His real passion lies in preaching hellfire, and she suggests that he spread his message to a wider audience than the church of the Quivering Brethren, going on tour to preach all across the country. Flora lets Reuben in on the plan, pointing out that he would be the one to run the farm in his father's absence. Together, they convince Amos to set off on tour, And he leaves the farm.

The night of the ball arrives, and by the end of the night, Richard announces his engagement to Elfine. Flora advises them to get married quickly, before Richard's mother or the rest of the Hawk- Monitors have time to object. Flora also uses her connections to help Seth with his ambitions. She just happens to have a friend who is a Hollywood producer, and arranges a meeting between them. Soon, Seth is whisked away to start his new life as an actor.

Aunt Ada, meanwhile, throws fit after fit about the something nasty she once saw in the woodshed. She complains that the wrong once done to Flora's father has come back to haunt her. Judith is similarly miserable, mourning Seth as if he had died.

Flora takes Judith to see a psychiatrist in London who promises to transfer her fixation with her son into something harmless. Judith goes off to a six month stay in a nursing home for treatment. Finally, Flora tackles the problem of Aunt Ada. She spends the day with the old woman and convinces her there is more to life than staying abed. She talks Aunt Ada into seeing the world, and on the day of Elfine and Richard's wedding, Ada flies to Paris.

After successfully overhauling Cold Comfort Farm, there is nothing left for Flora to do. Abruptly, her cousin and suitor Charles shows up in his private plane and flies her back to London as they declare their love for each other.

Responding to the cultural shift, Gibbons reveals in *Cold Comfort Farm* how social and literary narratives reinforce conventional modes of thought about family, sexuality, gender roles, morality and power. In the novel, she advocates social change that disrupts the traditional plots that limited women's roles and cultural aspirations. *Cold Comfort Farm* confronts and contests literary and social hypocrisies in two ways: through protagonist Flora Poste's interactions with her Starkadder relations and through Gibbons parody. Both elements are crucial to the book's feminism: Gibbons parody subverts traditional literary and cultural authority, and Flora, in several ways, represents a model for social and familial reorganization that aligns itself with modern feminism. Significantly, however, Gibbons refuses to grant the new ideas represented by Flora absolute authority, and this continued instability.

The rural novels Gibbons particularly targets are the loam and love child novels. One of the conflicts played out in the text concerns the contested values of shiny modernity and gloomy tradition, which on the surface are respectively embodied by Flora and the matriarch of Cold Comfort Farm, Aunt Ada Doom. Yet the characters are

not simply opposing forces. Instead, the striking parallels between Flora and Aunt Ada reveal that meaning is always in flux and that the boundaries between modern and rural, between civilization and nature, and between civilization and madness are difficult to maintain. Through this binary construction and subsequent blurring of boundaries, Gibbons simultaneously sets up and challenges definitions of civilization, nature, and madness. These concepts are particularly important to consider, because in the type of source texts to which Gibbons alludes - 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century rural novels – the terms have moral values attached to them. In *Cold Comfort Farm*, therefore, the challenge to definitions and conventions is also a challenge to the manners and morals implicit in these texts as well as the false idealizations of the regional novel.

Gibbons also destabilizes the concept of nature and its moral implications in *Cold Comfort Farm*. Nature and what is natural and good are often conflated in the nineteenth century rural novel. Flora's contrasting position, which privileges civilization over nature and does not reflect the belief that nature is inherently good, complicates the meaning of nature and shows that it is predicated on one's place in the world. The conflict over the moral value of nature and the influence of modern technology and education can be seen in comic terms in an exchange between Meriam and Flora about pregnancy. Meriam, who lives at Cold Comfort Farm and becomes pregnant every year when the sukebind blooms and the summer evenings are long (69), represents the position that nature is good and right. In contrast, Flora's knowledge about birth control makes her unwilling to concede that nature is natural and good in terms of women's reproduction. Her advice to Meriam about birth control becomes one of Flora's civilizing projects that aligns itself with modernism and feminism in its challenge to biological destiny and social and literary authority. Meriam is initially

unconvinced about Flora's reproductive advice, which she describes as "wickedness 'T'es flying in the face of nature" (69). Significantly, Meriam puts her objection to Flora's recommendation about how to prevent pregnancy in moral terms, which exemplifies the conflation of nature and morality. Flora informed about how to avoid becoming pregnant every year, Meriam can now make a reproductive choice rather than give into reproductive fate. Accordingly, Gibbon's novel offers her female characters the possibility of less tragic lives.

## Chapter Three

### Internal Conflict of Mind

Stella Gibbons' *Cold Comfort Farm* has been an incredibly popular novel. Ada Doom, is an important character in this. She is not the leading character of this but she is the one who causes the story to move forward. The story focuses on a farm. Ada Doom, rules the roost from her bed. And she visits everyone twice a year.

Ada Doom, she is the victim of the childhood trauma in this novel. She claims to have seen something nasty when she was no bigger than a tatty wren. There was a word she continuously said " I saw something nasty in the woodshed " (Gibbons,221). She constantly repeats these words in the novel. This is the word that Ada Doom repeats most often in this story. The author would never reveal what the something nasty was, but it represents childhood trauma, whether real or imagined, and the way its victims use it to excuse their behaviour.

This childhood trauma, which happened to Ada Doom as a child, still haunts her. This should have been identified and eliminated at a young age, continuous until her old age. This type of trauma will hurt not only the victim but their entire family. The victim is Ada Doom, which is the main problem with this farm, not only that, she is also the oldest and powerful person on the farm. The whole Starkadder family works and lives according to her words. Although this trauma happened in her childhood, but now she is married, she has children and grandchildren. This shock happened at her home place but after the marriage she moved to another place of her husband. She suffers all the consequences of a trauma. It can include stress and fear.

There is an important character Flora Poste, she is the main protagonist of the novel. She has a magical influence in this novel. Her arrival brings a sudden change in

the entire Starkadder family, especially in the life of Ada Doom. She helps to fulfil everyone's desire. Flora is responsible for the healing of Ada Doom. She eliminates Ada Doom's childhood trauma. At the same time she acts as the fulfiller of desires and the giver of healing.

“ The curtains were magnificent. They were of soiled but regal red brocade, and kept much of the light and air out of the room. Flora looped them back, and decided that to-day they must be washed. Then she went down to breakfast. She followed a broad corridor, lit by dirty windows hung with soiled lace curtains ” (61).

We can see here, how each room in the cold comfort farm is depicted. The house is like Ada Doom's broken heart. Everything is as chaotic as her mind. The dirty curtains and windows shows her own character. Realizing this, Flora tries to clean it up.

“Nay. She'm alive right enough. Her hand lies on us like iron, Robert poste's child, but she never leaves her room, and she never sees no one but miss Judith. She's never left the farm this last twenty years” (64-65). From these words of Adam(one of the farm hand)we can understand what is the character of Aunt Ada. This trauma of her childhood created various superstitions in her mind. After such a horrible trauma, she lives alone in her room without talking to anyone. But there is one person who visits Aunt Ada every day. It is her daughter Judith Starkadder, because Aunt Ada is always fed by Judith Starkadder.

We already said Aunt Ada has some superstitious belief's and fear's in her mind. But this fear is mainly not about her but about her whole family. That's why Aunt Ada did not leave the farm and did not leave the other Starkadder family. She seems farm is as a safe place and the rest as bad. So, she refuses to go out into the

world of nasty things and demands that the Starkadders must always stay at the farm. That is why Adam tells Flora this. “ Nay. There have always been Starkadders at cold comfort. ‘Tis impossible for any on us to dream o’ leavin’ here. There’s reasons why we can’t. Mrs. Starkadder, she’s sot on us stayin’ here. ‘Tis her life, ‘tes the life in her veins” (64).

There are so many characters in this novel. Those are Judith Starkadder, Amos Starkadder (husband of Judith), Seth (son of Judith), Reuben (son of Amos), and Elfine (daughter of Amos and Judith). Each of them has their own desires, and repressed feelings. Reuben, whose only passion is the farm itself. Reuben wants the farm to run well under his supervision. But the only obstacle to that is his father Amos. Amos is a religious fanatic person, he owns the farm, but he is ill-suited to running it. He preaches fiery, overdramatic sermons for a local sect called the church of the Quivering Brethren. If Reuben wants to take the farm well, Amos has to go from there. Seth, dreams of a career in the movies and Elfine is in love with the local squire, Richard Hawk-Monitor. Aunt Ada is one of the obstacle to all these desires. She is against all their wishes. The Starkadders can never break the word of Aunt Ada. Because they are afraid of Aunt Ada. They fear that something will happen to her when they are gone.

Ada visits everyone twice a year. One such day, Ada realizes that one by one her family’s loved ones are leaving. That day Aunt Ada understand that Amos is going on a preaching tour and Elfine is going to marry someone. Ada is very sad to know this. She tried her best not to let them out of his guard zone. She said:“Ay.... So you go and leave me in the woodshed. There have always been Starkadder at cold comfort.....but that means nothing to you. I shall go mad.....I shall die here, in the woodshed, with nasty things ” (226).

Aunt Ada is afraid that she will be alone in that house. Staying on that farm scares her but her family keeps her going. Victims of such trauma think that everyone in their life will eventually isolate them in one way or another. Their problem lies in their inability to cope with problem. They feel unsafe. Such people may find it difficult to form a good attachment, have trust issues, and they can't control their emotions. The character Aunt Ada Doom has it all in her life. Similarly, she also cries like this when Seth goes to another place to act in film. " My baby.....my darling you mustn't leave me. I shall go mad. I can't bear it" (244).

As we said before, Flora is the character who eliminates Aunt Ada's childhood trauma. She changed Ada with her high common sense. After solving everyone's problems, Flora talks to Ada Doom before the wedding of Elfine. Flora brings her a vogue magazine that opens Aunt Ada's eyes to a more urban life, that there is another world outside her traditional rural setting of the farm. Ada realizes that there is truth in her words and prepares for a change. Flora was able to bring a smile to Ada's face instead of fear.

The influence that Flora poste has on cold comfort farm ends up changing the mood of the society. Her relatives end up pursuing their dreams and in return find true happiness. Originally these people, were trapped under the influence of Aunt Ada doom, who saw something nasty in the woodshed, whatever it was she had seen ruined the mood of everyone in cold comfort farm, due to her isolation.

The author Stella gibbons, is the daughter of a London doctor who worked in the poor section of London, she did not have a happy childhood and experienced many unhappy years as a child. She depressed by her environment and family life, grinding poverty she saw around her, combined with the sterility of her family life, depressed the

young girl. Stella is the eldest of three, got the full annoyance of a tempestuous household of violent egomaniacs. She had grown up among weird relations. When she was just eleven she had to talk her father out of committing suicide, and was astonished to realize that he was actually relishing their melodramatic conversation. Later she described her father as a bad man but a good doctor. Elsewhere, she claimed that she had not so much been badly brought up as not brought up at all. Her family seemed partial to creating scenes, but with a clear thread of pretence running through their performances.

In reactions to her dysfunctional childhood, Gibbons spent her adulthood craving for order and making fiction of the chaos she knew best. Such compulsive craving for normality makes for dull biography. One of Gibbons close friend Ida Graves says that Gibbons could be quite silent and boring, not funny at all. Very prim, orderly and well behaved. Despite the scathing wit she sometimes displays in her fiction, Gibbons had her dark and brooding side, as if the something nasty in the woodshed. Repeatedly referred to by Aunt Ada Doom in cold comfort farm was an intimate part of her being. At times, the life of Stella Gibbons reads rather like the life of Aunt Ada Doom

## **Conclusion**

Trauma is a very scary or a disturbing experience. It is very difficult to get out of this for a person who has had this happen. It might be something that a child experiences or something that a child witnesses. The character in this novel has also gone through such a situation. She had to live in that loneliness for so long because no one could heal her wound. The changes in a child's mood or behaviour are really easy to connect to the problem. Traumatic person may not be able to adapt to the circumstances around them. They may have various problems like difficulty forming attachments, lack impulse control, trust issues, cannot control their emotions. Trauma has taught to defend ourself by going around the problem instead of confronting it.

Although Ada Doom has been traumatized and leads a lonely life, she still has control over the farm and the people there. Each member obeys and respects her words. Even so, the family is not happy with Ada Doom's rule. Ada does not allow them to fulfil their own desires. The reason Ada behaves like this is because of her childhood trauma. Fear overwhelms her that everything that happened to her will happen to them. So Ada will not send anyone out of the farm. But this decision does not make the family happy. They want to get out of there.

By applying trauma theory in Ada Doom, I were able to understand her mental difficulties. It talks about Ada's childhood trauma. This trauma continues from her youth to the middle of her old age and it also analyses how this trauma affects the child's future environment and family.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**A STUDY OF QUEER DISCOURSE IN *ORANGES ARE  
NOT THE ONLY FRUIT***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**KOCHUTHRESIA**

**Register No: DB18AEGR028**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project Supervisor: Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA**

**March 2021**

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “**A Study of Queer Discourse in *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit***” is a bonafide work of **Kochuthresia**, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

Project Supervisor

## **Declaration**

I, **Kochuthresia**, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**A Study of Queer Discourse in *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit***” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Aswathi Krishna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

**Angadikadavu**

**KOCHUTHRESIA**

**DB18AEGR028**

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**KOCHUTHRESIA**

## Table of Contents

Sl. No.	Page No.
1. Introduction	1
<b>2. Chapter One</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Epistemology of the Closet: Sedgwick's Queer Discourse</i>	
<b>3. Chapter Two</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>Oranges are not the Only Fruit: A Manifestation of Winterson's Self</i>	
<b>4. Chapter Three</b>	<b>18</b>
<i>Oranges are not the Only Fruit: A Depiction of Sedgwick's Queer Discourse</i>	
5. Conclusion	24
Works Cited	25

## Introduction

The origin of Queer theory is hard to clearly define, since it came from multiple critical and culture contexts including feminism, post structuralist theory, radical movements of people, the gay and lesbian movements, AIDS activism, many sexual subculture practices such as sadomasochism, and post colonialism. Although queer theory had its beginnings in the educational sphere, the culture events surrounding its origin also had a huge impact. Activist groups pushed back in the 1980's against the lack of government intervention after the outbreak of the AIDS epidemic. Gay activist groups like ACT-UP and Queer Nation took the lead to force attention to both the AIDS epidemic and the gay and lesbian community as a whole. These groups helped define the field with the work they did by highlighting a non-normative option to the more traditional identity politics and marginal group creations.

However, the term "queer" itself came from Teresa de Lauretis' 1991 work in the feminist culture studies journal *differences* titled "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities". De Lauretis explains her term to signify that there are at least three interrelated projects at play within this theory: refusing heterosexuality as the benchmark for sexual formations, a challenge to the belief that lesbian and gay studies is one single entity, and a strong focus on the multiple ways that race shapes sexual bias. De Lauretis proposes that queer theory could represent all of these critiques together and make it possible to rethink everything about sexuality.

The main objective of this thesis is to apply the concept of Queer theory as presented in the book *Epistemology of the Closet* in the novel *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit* by Jeanette Winterson. This thesis is an attempt to study the notion of

Homosexuality as the important theme or aspects in the novel *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, an artistic work of Jeanette Winterson. Jeanette Winterson, being a very famous writer, has written so many other novels that have gained massive attention, such as *Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal*, *Written on the Body*, *Sexing The Cherry*, *Frankenstein* and so on. *Oranges are Not the Only fruit* is one of her best works. It is a semi- autobiographical novel by Jeanette Winterson, first published in 1985. It draws on Winterson's own experience growing up in the Elim Pentecostal church in Accrington, Lancashire. The protagonist and narrator of the book share Winterson's first name, religious denomination and desire to be a missionary. Apart from religious matters, the two are also similar due to their sexual orientation. Winterson came out as a lesbian when she was 16 and her experience of sexuality has a clear influence on the narrator's own.

There have been so many other studies carried out on this novel. For example, Al-Shara, zaydun's "Deconstructing Religion in Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*: A Metacritical study". The paper tries to present Winterson as a creative Metacritique of deconstruction in her controversial novel *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. The researcher presents Winterson's treatment of religious texts, both biblical and Quranic, in a manner that stimulates deconstructive critics when they interpret literary text. Another study that has been carried out is "Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*: Rewriting of Master Narrative of Christian Religious Discourse" by Vijay Ganesh K. In this paper, the inclusion of norms and values of Christian religious discourse is expressed as an act of exercising repressive power over a particular society. In other words, the paper researches that the shift in the traditional notion of sex after the advent of Christianity has led to suppression of deviant identities like transgender, lesbian and gay.

This thesis is different from the other studies in a way that this thesis tries to apply the concept of queer theory as presented in the essay. The thesis tries to analyse the characters of the novel by keeping in mind the idea of queerness in the essay. This thesis consists of five chapters including the introduction and the conclusion chapters. The introduction discusses the main aim of the thesis. The first chapter introduces the queer theory and its idea as projected in the book *Epistemology of the Closet*. The second chapter is the analysis chapter, in which the novel is studied on various grounds. It also discusses the motifs and perspectives of the author. The third chapter is the application chapter. In this chapter, various ideas of queerness from the essay *Epistemology of the Closet* is applied into the novel *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. The novel is studied based on various concepts of queer theory as projected in the essay. The last chapter is the conclusion chapter in which a conclusion is derived based on the study carried out in the application chapter.

## Chapter One

### *Epistemology of the Closet: Sedgwick's Queer Discourse*

Since the 1990s, Queer theory has been emerging as an influential mode and presently in the ongoing debate about empowerment issues. Queer theory is concerned with the non-essentializing nature of sexual identities and is premised on the notion of resistance to forms of domination, such as heterosexism and homophobia. The historical roots of queer theory are traced from the homosexual rights movement through the gay liberation movement. This history of homosexual resistance focuses on the grass roots efforts of the homosexual community to gain control from scientific experts in representing their own experience. This contextualist history provides a perspective for considering the contemporary relevance of queer theory for psychological theorizing and practice.

The term "Queer" itself came from Teresa De Lauretis' 1991 work in the feminist cultural studies journal *Differences* titled "Queer Theory: lesbian and gay sexualities." She explains the term to signify that there are at least three interrelated projects at play within this theory: refusing heterosexuality as the benchmark for sexual formations, a challenge to the belief that lesbians and gay studies in one single entity, and a strong focus on the multiple ways that race shapes sexual bias. De Lauretis proposes that Queer theory could represent all of these critiques together and make it possible to rethink everything about sexuality.

Meanwhile, when Queer theory is seen as an academic tool, one can find that it came about in part from gender and sexuality studies that, in turn, had their origins in lesbians and gay studies and feminist theory. It is a much newer theory in that it was established in the 1990s and contests many of the set ideas of the more

established fields it comes from by challenging the notion of defined and finite identity categories, as well as the norms that create a binary of good versus bad sexualities.

Some of the core theorists in the development of queer theory include Michael Foucault, Gayle Rubin, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Judith Butler. Michael Foucault's work on sexuality proposed that it was a discursive production rather than an essential part of a human, which came from his larger idea of power not being repressive and negative as productive and generative. In other words, power acts to make sexuality seem like a hidden truth that must be dug out and be made specific. Foucault refuses to accept that sexuality can be clearly defined, and instead focuses on the expansive production of sexuality within governments of power and knowledge.

On the other hand, Rubin's laying of the groundwork to start discussion on making a distinction between gender and sexuality led the way for Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's pioneering book *Epistemology of the closet* (1990). *Epistemology of the closet* is a book published in 1990 by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, who is considered as one of the founders of queer studies. In *Epistemology of the Closet*, Sedgwick argues that standard binary oppositions limit freedom and understanding, especially in the context of sexuality. Sedgwick argues that limiting sexuality to homosexuality or heterosexuality, in a structured binary opposition, is just too simplistic. In this book, she argues that the homo-hetero difference in the modern sexual definition is vitally disjointed for two reasons: that homosexuality is thought to be part of a minority group, and how homosexuality is gendered to be either masculine or feminine. She points out that the definitions of sexuality depend a lot on the gender of the romantic partner, one who is attracted to make up the most important element of sexuality. Sedgwick's examples of sexual variations that cannot be put into the discrete

locations created by the binary set between heterosexuality give room to further analyze the way sex-gender identities are shaped and thought about.

In the 1980s, homophobic attacks from many fronts became almost commonplace. In that same decade, the gay and lesbian rights movement redoubled its efforts and academic explorations of “minority” sexualities burgeoned. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s *Epistemology of the Closet* appears in the early 1990s like a “missing link” in the evolution of gay and lesbian studies and politics. Sedgwick’s contribution hovers in the filmy intellectual plane of theory, but it is the kind of theory that transforms, providing shape to the past and possibilities for the future.

The transformative power behind Sedgwick’s theory manifests itself in four important ways: it calls attention to a crisis at the foundation of current lesbian and gay political strategies; it directs the discourse of gay studies through and beyond the essentialist- social constructionist debate which has dominated the field in recent years; it establishes that the homosexual- heterosexual definitional divide is a central controlling factor in all modern Western identities and organizations; and it opens a space for those non-gays who have sufficient knowledge and awareness of their own privilege and homophobia to investigate gay and lesbian issues or to put it in Sedgwick’s terms, to engage in “antihomophobic” projects.

Sedgwick had broken new ground in these areas before with *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desires*. In this earlier work, she demonstrated that the central concern of English literature has been the maintenance of male homosocial bonds through the control of women. Specifically, in triangular erotic rivalries, the bond linking the two rivals is as intense as the bond linking either rival to the object of desire. For two men, the presence of a woman ‘between’ them

provides a socially acceptable veneer to the intensity of their bond. Thus, the men must maintain a 'traffic in woman', keeping women isolated from each other and powerless. When these male homosocial bonds become overtly erotic, and a man accepts the woman's 'position', the implied fluidity of gender roles threatens the very male-female distinction on which patriarchy is based. Sedgwick concluded that literature functions to perpetuate the male-female triangle and to eliminate the disruptive potential of male homosexuality.

In her introduction to the text, Sedgwick treats the topic of "homosexual panic" as a way of introducing the main themes of the book. Alongside this phenomenon, Sedgwick also provides the methodology that informs her study-deconstruction. Sedgwick's deconstructivist approach shows us that any social binary that defines subjects in society (especially the binary of heterosexual/homosexual) is not a relation of symmetry between two terms. On the contrary, societal binaries are two terms constituted by a relation of asymmetry such that one term presides and subordinates the other. In more practical terms, this means that the act of identifying homosexuality and homosexual life as "other" has navigating a world that has been organized to favor heterosexual individuals.

Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet*, nominally a work of literary theory but a cross-disciplinary intellectual tour-de-force, continues this project and broadens its critical scope. The historical period which Sedgwick covers in this new work begins before the turn of the century with the emergence of homosexuality as a codified identity. Never before had fixed sexual identities been assigned to individuals in a way comparable to assigning gender identities at birth. Sedgwick is especially incisive when discussing the apparently arbitrary construction of modern sexual categories: it is rather amazing fact that, of the very many dimensions along which the

genital activity of one person can be differentiated from that of another (dimensions that include preference for certain acts, certain zones or sensations, certain physical types, a certain frequency, certain symbolic investments, certain relations of age or power, a certain species, a certain number of participants, etc.), precisely one, the gender of object choice, emerged and has remained as the dimension denoted by the now ubiquitous category of “sexual orientation”.

Sedgwick takes up the notion of the “closet”, its relationship to what is known and unknown regarding the sexual identity of oneself and another, and its relationship to the private and public lives of gay people. Sedgwick opens this chapter by recounting the legal case of an eighth grade science teacher named Acanfora who was removed from his teaching position once the school board found out that he had been part of a pro-homosexual student group during his college years. The significance of this legal trail, says Sedgwick, is that it reveals that the secrecy and disclosure of one’s homosexual orientation constituted a situation whereby remaining “in the closet” allowed for Acanfora’s employment and ability to earn a living while his “coming out” gave the board of education the legal means of barring Acanfora’s access to continue teaching in the classroom- for no other reason than his homosexuality becoming a piece of public knowledge. This legal case reveals the double-bind structure of homosexual life: if one remained in the closet there was a danger of being found out, but coming out of the closet resulted in exposure to oppression.

As Sedgwick makes clear, it is only through the creation of the category “homosexual” that the “heterosexual” appeared. Through a century long process of

medical, legal and psychiatric discourses, these categories came to have diametrically opposed meanings. Sedgwick's agenda is to expose the dependence of a privileged heterosexual position upon the existence of a subordinated homosexual. Implicit in the analysis is a radical challenge to the foundation of much of contemporary lesbian and gay politics. The common strategy has been to adopt a "minority" position which assumes that same-sex sexual activity is unique to a small number of individuals who share common goals or interests, rather than seeing same-sex contact as one behavior in a range of erotic choices available to all human beings and not innately fixed to other aspects of personality or psychology by anything but social construction. While acknowledging that most of the civil rights gains made for lesbians and gays in the past twenty years have been achieved through maintaining a minority position, Sedgwick suggests that this strategy creates a double-bind. She insists that any useful antihomophobic project must continually question the definiteness of sexual categories. She writes: "[T]he book aims to resist in every way it can the deadening pretended knowingness by which the chisel of modern homo/hetero definitional crisis tends, in public discourses, to be hammered most fatally home." Sedgwick does not suggest discarding sexual categories and all minority political strategies for lesbians and gays. But she demands that we " [r]epeatedly.... Ask how certain categorizations work, what enactments they are performing and what relations they are creating, rather than what they essentially mean."

Sedgwick provides a striking example of how categories manifest themselves with devastating results in modern legal practice. "Homosexual panic" is a popular defense strategy for men accused of gay-bashing. The implication in this strategy is that the defendant's responsibility for the violence is "diminished by a pathological and psychological condition, perhaps brought on by an unwanted sexual advance from

the man whom he attacked. Not only does this argument rest on the assumptions that all gay men make random advances warrant violence sometimes to the point of homicide, but it also assumes that “hatred of homosexuals... is so atypical ... as to be classifiable as an accountability- reducing illness.” The “homosexual panic” defense, Sedgwick suggests, is viable only because of the double bind of a “minority” gay identity. Sexual orientation is popularly perceived as constituting a fixed identity, when, in fact, such an identity cannot ever be solidly determined in the way minority identities centered on race, ethnicity, or gender can be.

Though this analysis, Sedgwick addresses the theoretical debate which has occupied so much time and energy in gay academic circles: the relative value of “essentialist” versus “social constructionist” studies of homosexuality. The essentialist position maintains that identities based in part on same-sex object choice have existed in all periods and communities throughout history and is analogous to the “minority” positions discussed above. Social constructionists argues that it is impossible or futile to compare individuals living when that category achieves solidity. Sedgwick’s acknowledged sympathies are with social constructionists, but she credits essentialist studies for providing the groundwork for her study. She directs scholars’ energies away from the limits of this debate by focusing on how, not whether, categories have meaning, thus creating a space for legitimate antihomophobic endeavors from a variety of perspectives. The imperative, Sedgwick reminds us, is “antihomophobic inquiry” which necessitates “the production, by other antihomophobic readers who may be differently situated, of the widest possible range of other and even contradictory availabilities.

Sedgwick, taking it as evident that sexual identities are inherently intertwined and unstable, draws several crucial parallels to this paradigm which she outlines in her

introduction. She asserts a connection between the homo-hetero definition and other universal modern definitions: private and public, secrecy and disclosure, knowledge and ignorance, masculine and feminine, to name only a few of the over twenty binary definitions she discusses. For example, she elaborates on the conflation of knowledge and ignorance and suggests that ignorance sets the terms for knowledge, just as homosexuality sets the terms of its opposite. With characteristic dry humor, she writes: “if M. Mitterand knows English but Mr. Reagan lacks- as he did-French, it is the urbane M. Mitterand who must negotiate in an acquired tongue, the ignorant Mr. Reagan who may dilate in his native one.”

In the later chapters of her book, Sedgwick supports her theory with abundant and richly suggestive examples. Following the influential cultural critiques of Michel Foucault, Sedgwick argues, through the analysis of canonical literary texts ranging from Melville to James to Proust, that, since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, “ ‘knowledge’ and ‘sex’ became conceptually from one another-so that knowledge means in the first place sexual knowledge; ignorance, sexual ignorance.” The construction of the homosexual serves to solidify this discursive process.

As a heterosexual, Sedgwick demonstrates conclusively that the perspective of lesbians and gay men is not the only lens through which it is legitimate and useful to attack homophobia and study sexualities. Her work also establishes the standards for thoroughness and commitment which non-gay persons who undertake antihomophobic projects will be expected to match. The historical inadequacy of sexual categories, which Sedgwick establishes so persuasively, could easily be used as an excuse for dismissing or deferring discussions of sexual difference, discrimination, and the unexamined biases of well-intended non-gays. Instead, Sedgwick demonstrates a profound sensitivity toward and intelligence about the

realities of living in the subordinated homosexual half of the homo-hetero divide, no matter how “constructed” that divide may be. She respects the right and necessity of those who find solace and power in naming themselves as lesbians or gays and aligning themselves with a movement for the rights of sexual “minorities”. Her sensitivity is most evident in her discussions of the gay closet in chapter one. For example, she writes:

“The deadly elasticity of heterosexist presumption means that, like Wendy in *peter pan*, people find new walls springing up around them even as they drowse: every encounter with a new classful of students, to say nothing of a new boss, social worker, loan officer, landlords, doctor, erects new closets whose fraught and characteristics laws of optics and physics exact from at least gay people new surveys, new calculations, new draughts and requisitions of secrecy or disclosure.”

## Chapter Two

### ***Oranges are Not the Only Fruit: A Manifestation of Winterson's Self***

The English writer Jeanette Winterson was born on August 27, 1959, in Manchester. Winterson was adopted by Constance and John William Winterson on 21 January 1960 and grew up in Accrington, Lancashire, and was raised in the Elim Pentecostal Church. She was raised to become a Pentecostal Christian missionary, and she began evangelizing and writing sermons at the age of six. Winterson came out as a lesbian at the age of 16 and left home. Soon after that, she attended Accrington and Rossendale College, and supported herself at a variety of odd jobs while reading English at Oxford University. Her 1987 novel *The Passion* was inspired by her affair with Pat Kavanagh, her literary agent. From 1990 to 2002, Winterson was involved with BBC radio broadcaster and academic Peggy Reynolds. After their relationship ended, Winterson became involved with theatre director Deborah Warner. In 2015, she married psychotherapist Susie Orbach, author of *Fat is a Feminist Issue*.

Winterson became famous with her very first book *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*, a semi-autobiographical novel about a sensitive teenage girl rebelling against conventional values. Her novels have always explored gender polarities and sexual identity, with her later novels also exploring the relationship between humans and technology. Winterson has won a Whitbread prize for her first novel, a BAFTA award for best drama, the John Llewellyn Rhys prize, the E.M. Forster Award, the St. Louis Literary Award, and is a two-time winner of the Lambda Literary Award. She has been made an officer of the order of the British Empire (OBE), a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), and was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

Her major works included *Sexing the Cherry* (1989); *Written on the Body* (1992); *Art and Lies* (1994); about dehumanization and the absence of love in society; *Gut Symmetries* (1997); and *The PowerBook* (2000). She later published *Lighthousekeeping* (2004), an exploration of the nature of storytelling told through the tale of an orphaned girl sent to live in a Scottish lighthouse; *The Stone Gods* (2007), a foray into science fiction; and *The Daylight Gate* (2012), set amid witch trails in 17<sup>th</sup> century Lancashire. *The Gap of Time* (2015) is a modernized retelling of William Shakespeare's *The winter's Tale*. It was part of a project initiated by Hogarth, an imprint of the crown publishing group, in which various authors reworked a play by Shakespeare to honour the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dramatist's death. Winterson's later novels included *Frankenstein: A Love Story* (2019), which was inspired by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein* and was long-listed for the Booker Prize.

*Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit* is a novel by Jeanette Winterson published in 1985 by Pandora Press. It is a coming-of-age story about a lesbian girl who grows up in an English Pentecostal community. Key themes of the book include transition from youth to adulthood, complex family relationships, same-sex relationships, organized religion and the concept of faith. Jeanette, the single named narrator of the novel has lived for a long time with her mother and her father. Her mother is a forceful woman who often seeks out conflict and who never sees the world with mixed feelings. For Jeanette's mother, the world contains enemies (the devil, "next door", slugs, and sex) and friends (God, Auntie Madge, the novels of Charlotte Brontë, and slug pellets). Jeanette adds that she also fits into the category of friends, at first. Jeanette's mother shuns sex but wanted a child, so she sought a foundling by adopting Jeanette.

Jeanette's mother is a fundamentalist Christian and dominates Jeanette's life. Jeanette's father is almost never present. At the age of seven her mother sends Jeanette to school, from where she loses hearing ability. As Jeanette grows older she starts to think about romance. She worries about whether or not men are beasts and she listens intently to other women's complaints and opinion about their husbands. But later she begins lesbian relationship with a member in the church. When this is revealed, the church then decides that Jeanette has been given too much responsibility so that she now almost thinks that she is a man. They insist that she give up teaching and preaching. Instead, Jeanette quits the church. Jeanette's mother forces her to leave their home since her evilness will bring illness to them all. With no home, friends, or money, Jeanette takes up various jobs. She works in a funeral parlor, as an ice cream truck driver, and eventually at a mental hospital. After an unspecified time, Jeanette does return home one winter to see her mother. Her mother still faithfully believes, but her society for the lost has been shaken by corruption Jeanette's mother does not discuss Jeanette's lifestyle with her, but her behavior indicates that she has softened in her beliefs. Jeanette's mother still listens to the missionary reports on the radio system with her usual fervor. Jeanette stays with her parents through Christmas. More bad news arrives about the Morecambe guest house, and Jeanette realizes that her mother is struggling every day to keep her religious community together as it falls apart at the seams Jeanette watches as her mother, having just come home from church, immediately sits down at her broadcast radio, frantically trying to connect with other Christians elsewhere in England.

In an article titled "Deconstructing Religious in Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are not the Only Fruit*: A Metacritical study", Al-Shara Zaydun studies the novel *Oranges are not the Only Fruit*. This article proposes that the last few decades have

witnessed an interesting new dimension in creative writing as a number of novelists have addressed literary theory in their literary texts, thus acting as creative metacritiques. One intriguing writer who addresses theory in her fiction is the British novelist Jeanette Winterson. The paper intends to present Winterson as a creative Metacritic of deconstruction in her controversial novel *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit* (1985). Her arguments are presented in two parts—firstly, the paper presents Winterson’s treatment of religious texts, both Biblical and Quranic in a manner that stimulates deconstructive critics when they interpret literary texts. The writer shows how Winterson uses her narrative to deconstruct religious beliefs and stories in order to open new possibilities of interpretations to replace these religious references. Next, it focuses on Winterson’s narrative and her intriguing use of embedded texts that function as interpretative riffs of the deconstructed religious texts. After rejecting the authority of religion and history as reliable sources of truth, she proposes other possibilities of interpretation that seems more realistic and more personal.

Although Jeanette’s development and moral growth is most certainly the focus of this novel, a lot of the content is focused on her stranger relationship with her mother, and even more so, on the mother’s blind and ritualistic devotion to her church. The mother desperately tries to shield Jeanette from evils, especially those associated with gender and sexuality. For instance, when Jeanette develops a friendship with an ostensibly lesbian couple that runs a paper shop, the mother soon forbids Jeanette from going to that store because there appears a rumour that “they dealt in unnatural passions” (7). Seeing as the mother doesn’t speak to her daughter about matters of gender, sexuality, and the body, Jeanette naively believes that “unnatural passions” are referring to the fact that the couple puts chemicals in their sweets.

The novel also mirrors the inculcation of norms and values of Christian religious discourse that is an act of exercising repressive power over a particular society. In other words, the church controls and monitors the behaviour and private thoughts of each and every individual. In, particular, it has played a dominate role in bringing about a drastic change in the western notion of sex. This shift in the traditional notion of sex after the advent of Christianity has led to suppression of deviant identities like transgender, lesbian and gay. Usually, these deviant identities have been viewed as a sign of deeper, darker character deformities that should be treated by a psychiatrist. The bible is the primary text that serves as the first and foremost metanarrative in order to substantiate and validate the heterosexist norms established by Christianity.

The novel grabs the attention to the representation of the evangelical society in the novel which is full of values, mores and preconceptions associated with evangelicalism. It is intended to compare this representation with the existing norms of evangelicalism in real life. Furthermore, it reveals the connection between the author's own life experiences with the fictional society she created in the novel. The contradictions between the beliefs of evangelical people and their behaviours criticized in the novel were underscored and questioned with regard to writer's objectivity in her fictional representation of a real community. The contrast between appearance and reality, the basis of the novel, is also revealed and also the contrast between the fictional world of the novel and the non-fictional world of members of a sect of Christianity.

## Chapter Three

### *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit: A Depiction of Sedgwick's Queer Discourse*

*Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* is a semi-autobiographical novel by Jeanette Winterson, first published in 1985. It draws on Winterson's own experience growing up in the Elim Pentecostal Church in Accrington, Lancashire. The protagonist and narrator of the book shares Winterson's first name, religious denomination, and desire to be a missionary. Apart from religious matters, the two are also similar due to their sexual orientation. Winterson came out as a lesbian when she was 16, and her experience with sexuality has a clear influence on the narrator's own.

This chapter seeks to apply the ideas in *Epistemology of the Closet* into the novel *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and study the notion of 'homosexuality'. The book *Epistemology of the Closet*, proposes that many of the major nodes of thought and knowledge in twentieth-century Western culture as a whole are structured by a chronic, now endemic crisis of homo/heterosexual definition, indicatively male, dating from the end of the nineteenth century. The book argues that an understanding of virtually any aspect of modern western culture must be, not merely incomplete, but damaged in its central substance to the degree that it does not incorporate a critical analysis of modern homo/heterosexual definition.

Eve Sedgwick's wide ranging contributions to queer theory include her exploration of the "the closet" as a concept that both hides and protects sexual desire. The idea of hiding is applicable to homosexuality, as it masks same-sex desire not just from society but from the individual who cannot or will not face their own sexual identity. In the introduction of essay, Sedgwick points to same-sex desire as an "open

secret” that (as of the book’s 1990 publication) was broadly known but simply wasn’t publicly discussed. Sedgwick strongly advocates for moving away from the secrecy and moving toward taking risks. Her first axiom, therefore, is an acknowledgement that “people are different”.

The desire to protect Jeanette from evil, in addition to the mother’s penchant for explaining phenomena using religious rhetoric, makes it increasingly difficult for Jeanette to adjust to the outer world. For instance, Jeanette goes deaf for three months in the novel. Rather than taking Jeanette to the hospital, the mother begins to inform everyone that Jeanette is “in a state of rapture” (23), and she prevents people from speaking to her. It is miss Jewsbury, a closeted lesbian, who brings Jeanette to the hospital to be treated for her condition is due to biological processes rather than spiritual rapture, and it is in this moment that she begins to question the perfection and infallibility of her church: “Since I was born I had assumed that the world ran on very simple lines, Like a larger version of our church. Now I was finding that even the Church was sometimes confused. This was a problem. But not one I chose to deal with for many years more” (27)

Sedgwick provides the reader with the general subject matter, aim, and aspirations of the text as a whole. For Sedgwick, any serious understanding of the various social categories and cultural binaries that define contemporary Western society must include the history of how the sexual binary (heterosexual/homosexual) came into existence and codified in everyday language. As shown throughout the text, various idiomatic expressions such as “coming out” point to the foundational role played by questions concerning the relationship between knowledge and ignorance, publicity and secrecy, public and private, and so on questions whose origins in the eighteenth century continue to inform how the frameworks we rely upon to know the

world inherently involve social and political biases privilege one term within a given binary (heterosexual) over and against the other (homosexual).

“The ability of anyone in the culture to support and honour gay kids may depend on an ability to name them as such, notwithstanding that many gay adults may never have been gay kids and some gay kids may not turn into gay adults.” (83): Here in these sentences, Eve Sedgwick says about the children, the gay-kids and homosexuality. One knows that the society does not agree homosexuality, instead agree only heterosexuality. Like that the Christian community does not accept homosexuality and they get the members out from the religion.

The very same notion could be seen in the novel *Oranges are not the Only Fruit*. Here, the ‘oranges’ show Pentecostal evangelists who could, because of their fanatical belief, also be described as sectarians. Most women belong to this church and they are not very sophisticated and so they believe in miracles and demons. The pastor is an authority and is admired by most of the women. He defines what is good and what is bad, what is natural or unnatural and consequently a sin. The community members are very fixed in their religious belief. They regard everything and everyone either as the work of god or as the work of the devil.

“There is no unthreatened, unthreatening conceptual home for the concept for gay origins. We have all the more reason, then, to keep our understanding of gay origin, of gay cultural and material reproduction, plural, multi-capillared, argues-eyed, respectful, and endlessly cherished.” (73): In these sentences, Sedgwick explains homosexuality and queerness. Despite the fact that a dimorphic gender system might bear within itself both same and opposite sexual couplings, the underlying assumption is that heterosexuality is the innate and natural one:

“homosexuality is allowed as the binary opposite of heterosexuality only to serve as a foil of ‘otherness’ as a way to support the naturalness of heterosexual pairing.” The world is believed to have been engineered “as a bipolar jigsaw puzzle with sexually matching parts which butler referred as ‘the heterosexualization of desire’”. Queer theory challenges the dominant western epistemology, and it intends to decentre the supposed Cartesian subject. It refuses all kinds of identities, categorizations and hierarchies including the ones related to sexuality and gender, and it rejects the heteronormative understanding of sex, gender and sexuality.

The very same notion of the essentiality of heterosexuality is well evident in the novel and it is revealed through the presence of three fruit ‘oranges’. It is during Jeanette’s time at the hospital that the motif of oranges become heavily introduced into the narrative, for her mother constantly sends her oranges along with some “get better soon” letters when she doesn’t have the time to visit Jeanette. Throughout the novel, the only fruit that Jeanette’s mother gives her is the orange, for it is “The only fruit” (29). Little is said as to why oranges are deemed to be the only fruit worthy of consumption. However, the meaning behind the oranges is not necessarily based on the fruit itself, but rather, on how the fruit is used. First and foremost, oranges become a way of further characterizing Jeanette’s mother, showing how she perceives the world categorically, and showing how she desires to limit the options that Jeanette can have. Furthermore, since oranges are the only fruit that are validated from the mother’s perspective, all of other fruit go on to lack legitimacy. Much later on in the novel, when Jeanette gets slightly ill, her mother brings her a bowl of oranges, and the following scenario takes place: I took out the largest and tried to peel it. The skin hung stubborn, and soon I lay panting, angry and defeated. What about grapes or

bananas? I did finally pull away the other shell, and, cupping both hands round, tore open the fruit. (113).

In this context, it becomes a little more clear that oranges are representing either gender or heterosexuality. By questioning why she can't have other fruit, Jeanette puts into question the limitations that are imposed on her in terms of her choices and preferences. It can be noticed that she has trouble accessing the orange's pulp, which can symbolize the difficulty that Jeanette has towards complying with a simplistic, limited, heteronormative view of the world. It would be much easier for her to eat grapes or bananas, however, one can observe that Jeanette's mother is still coercing her to struggle with oranges.

The entire spectrum of fruit, in this interpretive view, would go on to represent the entire spectrum of gender the mother's efforts to impose oranges as the only good fruit go on to represent efforts to approach a single gender or sexual orientation has valid and legitimate. As can be expected, the mother's views towards fruit also apply towards her views towards her views on gender and sexuality: "I remembered the famous incident of the man who'd come to our church with his boyfriend. At least, they were holding hands. 'should have been a woman that one,' my mother had remarked" (127). This leads Jeanette to one of her many philosophical world without resorting to the use of binaristic thinking. Instead of accepting the fact that these two men are, in due course, simply men, she resorts to approaching one of the men as a woman. But, as Jeanette remarks: "This was clearly not true. At that point I had no notion of sexual politics, but I knew that a homosexual is future from a woman than a rhinoceros. Now that I do have a number of notions about sexual politics, this early observation holds good. There are shades of meaning, but a man is a man, wherever you find it." (128)

Thus, one can analyse how Sedgwick analyses sexual orientation that becomes an important definer of personal identity as gender for centuries. In her preface, Sedgwick examines the book both personally and historically and its influence on the text. Through this and various other examples, Sedgwick reveals that several sexual contradictions result in modern misunderstanding. The book also largely focuses on language's impact on sexuality, and how labelled speech acts are ultimately the proof of the nature of one's sexuality. Analysing all these ideas, one can analyse that Jeanette's novel *Oranges are not the Only Fruit* represents the very same ideas, particularly the dilemma of homosexuals and how they have been treated in the society. One can also comment that Winterson, in her novel, attempts to destabilize and to transcend the binary frame which precludes the multiplicity and fluidity of sexuality and gender. In her works, the conventional understanding of gender and sex and the perception of the derogative binaries male/female, man/woman and masculinity/femininity are dissolved. To lay bare the constructedness of these categories, Winterson establishes her own language "which defies the conventional, pre-existing discourse, transcending language as a manifestation of social convention, thus allowing for an exploration of individual description and experience of the different perspectives which can be put on reality". (68)

## Conclusion

In the novel “*Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*” by Jeanette Winterson, undoubtedly, one can see the concept of queer elements and perspectives that are depicted in the book *Epistemology of the Closet*. Based on the study carried out in the third chapter, it is understood that the notion of homosexuality becomes unaccepted in the society. The thesis confirms that Sedgwick’s idea that ‘heterosexuality’ is natural and ‘homosexuality’ is unnatural through the study of the novel *Oranges are not the Only Fruit*.

As explained, Sedgwick analyses a late nineteenth century historical moment in which sexual orientation becomes an important definer of personal identity as gender for centuries. Through this and various other examples, Sedgwick reveals that several sexual contradictions result in modern misunderstanding. One can also analyse that the ideas put forward by Sedgwick can also largely focus on language’s impact on sexuality, and how labelled speech acts are ultimately the proof of the nature of one’s sexuality. Similarly, Winterson establishes her own language which defies the conventional, pre-existing discourse, transcending language as a manifestation of social convention, thus allowing for an exploration of individual description and experience of the different perspectives which can be put on reality. The study also reveals that Sedgwick’s ideas are well confirmed by the ideas laid in the novel and while analysing the main theme in the novel, the thesis further finds out that Winterson, in her novel, opposes the notion of the essentiality of compulsory ‘heterosexuality’.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**INDIRA GANDHI AND CLEOPATRA IN FEMINIST  
PERSPECTIVE: AN ANALOGY**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**LIDIYA JACOB**

**Register No: DB18AEGR029**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Mr. SARATH KRISHNAN

February 2021

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra in feminist perspective: An analogy” is a bonafide work of Lidiya Jacob, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Lidiya Jacob, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra in feminist perspective: An analogy” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Sarath Krishnan of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikkadavu

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Lidiya Jacob

DB18AEGR029

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Lidiya Jacob

## Table of Contents

	Page no.
Introduction	1
Chapter One	3
Theory of Feminism	
Chapter Two	16
Analysis of books: <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> by William Shakespeare and <i>Indira Gandhi</i> by Pupul Jayakar	
Chapter Three	27
Resemblance between Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra: A Feminist Approach	
Conclusion	37
Works Consulted	38

## Introduction

In this patriarchal world, leadership is basically equated with masculinity, vigor and strength. Under such impression, a leader is always a male figure, women are aberrations. It leads to the logical conclusion that women are not eligible to the criteria of leadership in the political arena. Though women leaders do not lack confidence in their leadership abilities nor the competence to function effectively as leaders, but they experience a sense of vulnerability and opposition. But we have experience of several popular women leaders in our country or in the world who are equally, and sometimes even more successful in comparison to their male counter parts. Such kinds of leaders are Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra. They are equally competent, successful and effective in the political arena.

Feminists argue that women have the ability to rule the country effectively as men does, sometimes even more than men. The history proves that fact. Women are not incapable or talentless. This research seeks to explore the authenticity of the feminist arguments by means of exploring the similarities between Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra and their life as leaders. The book *Indira Gandhi* by Pupul Jayakar unfolding the personal and political life of Indira Gandhi, the only women prime minister in India. The book *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakespere also depicts the life of Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt, who ruled the country alone very effectively.

The first chapter explains the theory of feminism and the different perspectives in feminism. The second chapter is the analysis of the two books *Indira Gandhi* by Pupil Jayakar and *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakepeare and the summary of these two books. The third chapter exploring the similarities between Cleopatra and Indira Gandhi and it is analyzing through a feminist perspective.

## Chapter One

### Theory of Feminism

Feminist theory is a type of conflict theory that focuses on inequalities in gender related issues. It uses the conflict approach to examine the maintenance of gender roles and uneven power relations. It is an interdisciplinary approach to issues of equality and equity based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, sex and sexuality as understood through social theories and political activism. It examines women`s and men`s social roles, experiences, interests , chores, and feminist politics in a variety of fields ,such as anthropology and sociology, communication, media studies, psychoanalysis, home economics, literature, education, and philosophy. Feminism is a struggle to end sexist oppression. It does not privilege women over men. It has the power to transform in a meaningful way all our lives.

Feminism is a complex notion that has vast differences in meaning and connotation for people spanning generations, ethnic identities, sexual orientations, social classes, nationality, and myriad identities. It is not a static notion; rather it involves with us throughout our lives and is shaped by various lenses we use to view the world at large and most importantly, ourselves. It denies or downplays differences between men and women; feminism opposes homemaking, child-rearing, and homeschooling by women;

and feminism promotes participation by women in predominantly male activities. As an oppressed group, women have been unable to achieve their potential, receive rewards, or gain full participation in the society. Feminists are working towards the social transformation and argues that women have something valuable to contribute to every aspect of the world.

The word feminism was originated from the French word feminism. "Femin" comes from the Latin root word "femina", meaning woman. "-ism" is a suffix derived from the Greek implying a belief, practice, or worldview. The first recorded use of the word in English was 1851, but at that time it just meant "the state of being feminine". Then, in 1837, French philosopher and utopian socialist Charles Fourier coined the word "feminisme" to mean advocacy of women's rights. Historically "feminism" the idea and "feminism" the word rose in popularity together during the U.S women's suffrage movement of the late 1800's and 1900's, which was focused on getting women the right to vote. Since this was a problem only hurting women, the name made sense. As time has gone on, the goals have evolved but the name has struck.

Both men and women can be feminists. Feminism is in favor of equality between genders, not dominance of women over men. Feminism is inclusive of people who are trans and who are binary. There is some debate to whether the term feminism can be feminism can be applied to the thought and activities of earlier women [and men] who explored and challenged the traditional roles of women in society. The word feminism can be scary and confusing word to some. Many people believing that feminism means hating men. Feminism simply means to be treated with more respect than the other. Everyone should be equal on all levels, simple as that.

Feminism allows equal opportunities for both sexes. Gender roles [a set of conforming rules that say how a person should behave based on their gender.] can be harmful to both men and women. The popular belief is that women and girls are meant to take care of the home while boys and men are meant to go out and provide for the family. Feminism is about allowing both boys and girls the freedom to do what they want and making sure that people are not held back by gender roles and expectations whether it be at home , at school, in the work place or in parliament. The basic assumption shared by all feminism is that women suffer certain injustices on account of their sex. Feminists stress importance of gender divisions in society and it portrays these divisions as working to the overall advantage of men. Although feminists are united with their common desire for sexual justice and their concerns for women's welfare, there is a range spectrum of feminist views.

Feminism is the belief in the social, economic, and political equality of the sexes. Although largely originating in the west, feminism is manifested worldwide and is represented by various institutions committed to activity on behalf of women's rights and interests. Throughout most of western history, women were confined to the domestic sphere, while public life was reserved for men. In medieval Europe, women were denied the right to own property, to study, or to participate in public life. At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century in France, they were still compelled to cover their heads in public, and in parts of Germany, a husband still had the right to sell his wife. Even as late as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, women could neither vote nor hold elective office in Europe and in most of the United States , where several territories and states granted women suffrage long before the federal government did so. Women were prevented from conducting business without

a male representative, be it father, brother, husband, legal agent, or even son. Married women could not exercise control over their own children without the permission of their husbands. Moreover, women had little or no access to education and were barred from most professions. In some parts of the world, such restrictions on women continue today.

Feminism was originally an expression used by suffragettes - who were predominantly middle-class women - to obtain the right for women to vote in the early 1900s in the United States and the United Kingdom. By the 1970s, however, at the height of what was termed Second wave feminism, liberals had changed the meaning to represent people who favored abortion and identical roles or quotas for women in the military and in the society as a whole. Today in the midst of what is called Third-wave feminism, some feminists are enforcers of liberal censorship and political correctness. Third wave feminism was derived from communist doctrine and both have a great deal in common, including the shared goal of the destruction of the family and the promotion of the homosexuality and promiscuity.

Two of the famous proponents of feminism are Ann Oakley, a British Sociologist and sociologist and writer, born 1944. Her works include *women confined; Towards a sociology of childbirth* and *Who is afraid of feminism*. Another person is Claire Wallace, a British sociologist and writer. Wallace was a professor at Aberdeen University. Wallace was the president of European sociology association 2007-09. Her most famous work is *An introduction to sociology: Feminist perspective*.

From ancient Greece to the fight for women's suffrage to women's marches and the feminist movement, the history of feminism is as long as it is fascinating. In his classic *republic*, Plato advocated that women possess "natural capacities" equal to men for governing and defending ancient Greece. Not everyone agreed with Plato; when the

women of ancient Rome staged massive protests over the Oppia law, which restricted women's access to gold and other goods. In *The book of the city of ladies*, 15<sup>th</sup> century writer Christine de Pizan protested misogyny and the role of women in the middle ages. Years later during the enlightenment, writers and philosophers like Margaret Cavendish, the duchess of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Mary Wollstonecraft, author of *A vindication of the rights of women*, argued vigorously for greater equality for women. Abigail Adams, first lady to President John Adams, specifically saw access to education, property and the ballot as critical to women's equality. The women joined with voices demanding the end of slavery. Indeed, many women leaders of the abolitionist movement found an unsettling irony in advocating for African Americans rights that they themselves could not enjoy.

First wave feminism is women's suffrage and the Seneca Falls convention- At the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, abolitionists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott boldly proclaimed in their now famous declaration of sentiments that "we hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal". Many attendees thought voting rights for women were beyond the pale, but were swayed when Frederick Douglass argued that he could not accept the right to vote as a Black man if women could not also claim that right. When the resolution passed, the women's suffrage movement began in earnest, and dominated much of feminism for several decades.

Slowly suffragettes began to claim some successes: In 1893, New Zealand became the first sovereign state giving women the right to vote, followed by Australia in 1902 and Finland in 1906. In a limited victory, the United Kingdom granted suffrage to women over 30 in 1918. In the United States, women's participation in world war 1<sup>st</sup> proved for

many that they were deserving of equal representation. In 1920, thanks largely to the work of suffragists like Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment passed. American women finally earned the right to vote. With these rights secured, feminists embarked on what some scholars refer to as the “second wave feminism”.

Second wave feminism is women’s liberation- women began to enter the workplace in greater numbers following the Great Depression, when many male breadwinners lost their jobs, forcing women to find “women’s work” in lower paying but more stable careers like housework, teaching and secretarial roles.

During World War 2, many women actively participated in the military or found work in industries previously reserved for men, making Rosie the Riveter a feminist icon. Following the civil rights movement, women sought greater participation in the workplace, with equal pay at the forefront of their efforts. The equal pay act of 1963 was among the first efforts to confront this still-relevant issue. But cultural obstacles remained, and with the 1963 publication of the *Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan who later co-founded the National Organization for women –argued that women were still relegated to unfulfilling roles in homemaking and child care. By this time many people had started referring to feminism as “women’s liberation”. In 1971, feminist Gloria Steinem joined Betty Friedan and Bella Abzug in founding National Women’s political Caucus. Steinem’s *Ms. Magazine* became the first magazine to feature feminism as a subject on its cover in 1976.

The Equal Rights Amendment, which sought legal equality for women and banned discrimination on the basis of sex, was passed by congress in 1972. One year later,

feminists celebrated the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, the land mark ruling that guaranteed a woman's right to choose an abortion.

Third wave feminism is critics have argued that the benefits of the feminist movement, especially the second wave, are largely limited to white, college educated women, and that feminism has failed to address the concerns of women of color, lesbians, immigrants and religious minorities. Even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Sojourner Truth lamented racial distinctions in women's status.

By the 2010s, feminists pointed to prominent cases of sexual assault and "rape culture" as emblematic of the work still to be done in combating misogyny and ensuring women have equal rights. The #Me Too movement gained new prominence in October 2017, when the New York Times published a damning investigation into allegations of sexual harassment made against influential film producer Harvey Weinstein. Many more women came forward with allegations against other powerful men- including President Donald Trump. On January 21, 2017, the first full day of Trump's presidency, hundreds of thousands of people joined the Women's March on Washington: over 3 million people in cities around the world held simultaneous demonstrations, providing feminists with high- profile platforms for advocating on behalf of full rights for all women worldwide.

Feminist theory includes attempts to describe and explain how gender systems work, as well as a consideration of normative or ethical issues, such as whether a society's gender arrangements are fair. In essence, feminist theory is a set of ideas originating with the belief that women are not subordinate to men or only valuable in relationship to men [servant, mother, or prostitute], and that the disciplines, systems, and structures in place in our world today may be changed for the better if infused with a feminist point of view.

But it is more than this. Feminist theory sets agenda for action, the aim of which is justice and equality for women everywhere and, of course, also for the men and children to whom they are inextricably linked.

Feminist theories view rape as a manifestation of core male patriarchal values and paternalism. Brown Miller asserted that rape is “a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear.” In other terms, rape and the fear it incites is one of many ways some men exert control over women. Feminist theorists are interested in the societal attitudes and values that support rape and they derive their evidence from macro-level observations of legal and social systems. However, a problem with feminist theories is that they do not account for the fact that they do not account for the fact that some offenders are oblivious to the harm they have caused their victim and may not actually consciously use rape to intimidate females.

Feminist theory has been at the forefront of new directions in political, social, and cultural theory. These developments are inherently indebted to the internal critique within feminism made by ‘women of color’ who have been pivotal in raising questions of ‘difference’ around such social axes as class, ethnicity, sexuality, and the problematic of global inequities. The critique consists of debates that emerged through political contestation both within and outside the women’s movements, drawing attention to the centrality of slavery, colonialism, imperialism, and postcoloniality in understanding contemporary gender relations and global predicaments.

Feminist theory in education generally has aligned itself with frameworks, trends, and categories in larger academy. The principal difference, of course, is a focus on education. Feminists have focused on public and professional activism, others on

empirical gender studies, and still others on higher and adult education or pre-collegiate schooling. Writings in feminist theory span the frameworks discussed above, from histories of women's education to specific philosophical connections. Writings on education have been found across time while modern feminist theorizing was initiated by educators beginning in the 1970s. It remains today the only collection of feminist theory in professional education. In the text, categories include self and identity, education and schooling, knowledge, teaching and pedagogy, and diversity and multiculturalism. Differentiation not only follows the waves but also as part of sub disciplines in education, feminist pedagogy, social sciences theorizing, and research methodology.

Mainstream feminist theory traditionally has not been much occupied with technology, and that topic almost exclusively has been a concern for feminist technology studies. Moreover, feminist technology studies have not been very influential with feminist theory, unlike feminist studies of science that had more resonance with feminist theory building. Donna Haraway's cyborg feminism [1985] has perhaps been the most successful concept for drawing attention to technology as an integral part of feminism, and her work has been used to include a concern for technology in feminist theory. Material feminism is an emerging area of interest within feminism, which argues for taking matter and materiality more into account when studying gender.

Radical feminist theory is premised on the understanding of social relationships in terms of gender oppression. Radical feminist do not deny the importance of liberal reforms in improving the status of women, particularly efforts directed to protecting the rights of victims such as rape shield laws or, in the international context, the re-understanding of rape as torture. Rather, they argue that the reformist program is far too

limited. Liberal reforms are premised on the protection of liberty and rights, of both victim and accused. To the extent that such even-handed protection of rights presumes a background of equality, radical critics argue, it both reflects and perpetuates gender domination in society. Far more sweeping reforms are needed instead. Because women must live and survive in conditions of oppression, moreover, silence or passivity cannot be taken as consent. Instead, the law must insist upon the women's active consent and on her having the space within which to give such consent.

Liberalism is a family of doctrines that emphasize the value of freedom and hold that the just state ensures freedom for individuals. Liberal feminists embrace this value of freedom for individuals. Liberal feminists embrace this value and this role for the state and insist on freedom for women. Some liberals understand freedom as freedom from coercive interference. Other liberals understand freedom as personal autonomy being co-author of the conditions under which one lives. Liberal feminists believe that "female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world", and strive for equality via political and legal reform

Cultural feminism developed from radical feminism, although they hold many opposing views. It is an ideology of a female nature or female essence that attempts to revalidate what cultural feminists consider undervalued female attributes. It is also a theory that commends the difference of women from men. Cultural feminism believes that the society needs a female essence or female nature. These feminists believe that the female essence should be celebrated, and infused with the male dominated world to provide the right balance to the working of society.

Socialist and Marxist feminism are important in feminism. This type of feminism believes that the oppressed status of women can be attributed to the unequal treatment at both the work place, and in the house. Financial and personal exploitation, the institution of marriage, child birth and child care, prostitution and domestic work, according to socialist feminists; are tool for degrading women, and the work that causes reforms in the society as a whole, and on an individual or community level. The phrase socialist feminism was increasingly used during the 1970s to describe a mixed theoretical and practical approach to achieving women's equality. Socialist feminist theory analyzed the connection between the oppression of women and other oppressions in the society such as racism and economic injustice.

The first feature of feminism is Intersectionality. Feminism refers to oppression of socially diverse women in other words: intersectionality is based on the idea to recognize the struggle and oppression of women from different social, political, economic and cultural background and circumstances. The second feature is recognizing patriarchy. The first step is to recognize that we do live in a society which discriminates against women. While we do live in a society which is dominated by men, this system which we call patriarchy all affects men. When we talk about recognizing the gender roles, the violence women face in the hands of men-verbal, mental, sexual, emotional and physical. Patriarchy is a social system that puts men at powerful positions where they have social, legal, political, religious and economic authority. The third feature is violence against women. Violence against women is practiced in different ways in different culture with patriarchal connotations to them. They are present in the form of domestic violence, rape, sex, slavery, child marriage, sati, honor killing, female genital mutilation, mob violence,

female infanticide, parental sex selection etc. Feminists come together to fight all kinds of violence against women. The fourth feature of feminism is challenging status quo. It challenges present social structure and values of the society which assert gender roles, and social, political, cultural, sexual and economic discrimination against women with gender being the primary motive behind it. Status quo can be challenged in different ways in different culture depending on the basis of sexism practiced in that respective culture. Every culture has a base on which male dominance and discrimination against women is based. The idea to challenge the status quo depends on that. In other words challenging status quo is challenging the patriarchal norms and fighting a war against the male dominance. The fifth feature of feminism is recognizing men's rights. While there is an overall consensus that women are primary the victims of patriarchy and sexism in the society, there is a new kind of emerging which has recognized that men are also affected by patriarchal norms which leads to them facing emotional and mental traumas. Feminism believes men like women should be free from social prejudice wear what they want to wear, and be completely fine if they vulnerable, soft and well-mannered. Feminism wants men and women free from patriarchal norms which disturb both their mental and emotional peace.

The sixth feature of feminism is religion. Feminism talks about what role religion place in imposing misogyny and misogynistic practice against women, and what role it has played in maintaining status quo. Feminism sees religion very negatively when it comes to gender equality. Religious practices such as dowry, sati, female genital mutilation, forced marriages, polygamy, anti-abortion etc have helped keep male

dominance alive. These religious practices have to be criticized and you should be able to away with these misogynist religious practices in order to be a feminist.

Women empowerment refers to making women powerful to make them capable of deciding for themselves. Women have suffered a lot through the years at hands of men. In earlier centuries, they were treated as almost non-existent. As if all the rights belonged to men even something as basic as voting. As the times evolved, women realized their power. There on began the revolution for women empowerment. Women are gradually making their leadership presence felt in entrepreneurship, administration, education, engineering, health etc at regional, national and global levels. Women are now resolved to break the traditional glass ceiling that barred them from entering leadership positions even if they possessed requisite skills and talent occupy them. Women are constantly evolving and reaching new milestones across a wide spectrum of human activities.

Women have found power in variety of ways throughout history in their struggle towards justice and equality. The prevalence of the power in women has increasingly developed through the prehistoric and ancient times in human art history. By gaining more valuable and prominent meaning through the eras, women as a societal gender have increasingly advanced from being seen first as solely objects of maternity, to later seen as functioning and flourishing members of the society. More and more women rising to the leadership challenge, even in some of the most male dominated fields.

## Chapter Two

Analysis of books: Antony and Cleopatra by William Shakespeare and

Indira Gandhi by Pupul Jayakar

William Shakespeare was a renowned English poet, playwright, and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon".

Shakespeare was a prolific writer during the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages of British theatre [sometimes called the English Renaissance or the early modern period].

Shakespeare's plays are perhaps his most enduring legacy, but they are not all he wrote.

Shakespeare's poems also remain popular to this day. Shakespeare occupies a position unique in world literature. Other poets such as Homer and Dante, and novelists, such as Leo Tolstoy and Charles Dickens, have national barriers, but no writer's living reputation can compare to that of Shakespeare whose plays, written in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries for a small repertory theatre, are now performed and read more often and in more countries than ever before. The prophecy of his great contemporary, the poet and dramatist Ben Jonson, that Shakespeare "was not of an age, but for all time", has been fulfilled.

It may be audacious even to attempt a definition of his greatness, but it is not so difficult to describe the gifts that enabled him to create imaginative visions of pathos and mirth that, whether read or witnessed in the theatre, fill the mind and linger there. He is a writer of great intellectual rapidity, perceptiveness, and poetic power. Other writers have had these qualities, but with Shakespeare the keenness of mind was applied not to

abstruse or remote subjects but to human beings and their complete range of emotions and conflicts. Other writers have applied their keenness of mind in this way, but Shakespeare is astonishingly clever with words and images, so that his mental energy, when applied to intelligible human situations, finds full and memorable expression, convincing and imaginatively stimulating. As if this were not enough, the art form into which his creative energies went was not remote and bookish but involved the vivid stage impersonation of human beings, commanding sympathy and inviting vicarious participation. Thus, Shakespeare's merits can survive translation into other languages and into cultures remote, from that of Elizabethan England. Although the amount of factual knowledge available about Shakespeare is surprisingly large for one of his station in life, many find it a little disappointing, for it is mostly gleaned from documents of an official character. Dates of baptisms, marriages, deaths, and burials; wills, conveyances, legal process, and payments by the court- these are dusty details. There are, however, many contemporary allusions to him as writer, and these add a reasonable amount of flesh and blood to the biographical skeleton.

William Shakespeare has had more theatrical works performed than any other playwright. To this day, countless theatre festivals around the world honor his work, students memorize his eloquent poems and scholars reinterpret the million words of text he composed. They also hunt for clues about the life of the man who inspires such "bardolatry"[as George Bernard Shaw derisively called it], much of which remains shrouded in mystery. Born into a family of modest means in Elizabethan England, the "Bard of Avon" wrote at least 37 plays and a collection of sonnets, established the legendary globe theatre and helped transform the English language.

While Shakespeare's reputation is based primarily on his plays, he became famous first as a poet. With partial exception of the sonnets, quarried since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century for autobiographical secrets allegedly encoded in them, the non dramatic writings have traditionally been pushed to the margins of the Shakespeare industry. Yet the study of his non dramatic poetry can illuminate Shakespeare's activities as a poet emphatically of his own age, especially in the period of extraordinary literary ferment in the last ten or twelve years of the reign of queen Elizabeth.

Altogether Shakespeare's works include 38 plays, 2 narrative poems, 154 sonnets, and a variety of other poems. No original manuscripts of Shakespeare's plays are known to exist today. It is actually thanks to a group of actors from Shakespeare's company that we have about half of the plays at all. They collected them for publication after Shakespeare died, preserving the plays. These writings were brought together in what is known as the First folio. It contained 36 of his plays, but none of his poetry. Shakespeare's legacy is as rich and diverse as his work; his plays have spawned countless adaptations across multiple genres and cultures. His plays have had an enduring presence on stage and film. His writings have compiled in various iterations of the complete works William Shakespeare, which include all of his plays, sonnets, and other poems. William Shakespeare continues to be one of the most important literary figures of the English language.

Shakespeare produced most of his work between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies and histories and these works remain regarded as some of the best work in these genres. He then wrote mainly tragedies until about 1608, including *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*, considered some of the finest works in English

language. In his last phase, he wrote tragicomedies, also known as romances, and collaborated with other playwrights. Many of his plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy during his lifetime.

Shakespeare's early plays were written in the conventional style of the day, with elaborate metaphors and rhetorical phrases that did not always align naturally with the story's plot or characters. However, Shakespeare was very innovative, adapting the traditional style to his own purposes and creating a free flow of words. With only small degrees of variation, Shakespeare primarily used a metrical pattern consisting of lines of unrhymed iambic pentameter, or blank verse, to compose his plays. At the same time there are passages in all the plays that deviate from this and use forms of poetry or simple prose.

William Shakespeare was born on 26 April 1564 in Stanford –upon-Avon. His father was a successful local businessman and his mother was the daughter of a landowner. Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18. She was eight years older than him. They had three children. After his marriage information about his life became very rare. But he is thought to have spent most of his time in London writing and performing in his plays. Between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part-owner of a playing company called the lord chamberlain's men, later known as the king's men. Around 1613, at the age of 49, he retired to Stratford, where he died three years later. Few records of Shakespeare's private life survive. He died on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1616, at the age of 52. He died within a month of signing his will, a document which he begins by describing himself as being in "perfect health". In his will, Shakespeare left the bulk of his large estate to his elder daughter susanna.

About 150 years after his death, questions arose about the authorship of Shakespeare's plays. Scholars and literary critics began to float names like Christopher Marlowe, Edward de Vere and Francis Bacon- men of more known background, literary accreditation, Inspiration- as the true authors of the plays. Much of this stemmed from the sketchy details of Shakespeare's life and the dearth of contemporary primary sources. Royal records from 1601 show that Shakespeare was recognized as a member of the king's men theatre company and groom of the chamber by the court of king James I, where the company performed seven of Shakespeare's plays. There is also strong circumstantial evidence of personal relationships by contemporaries who interacted with Shakespeare as an actor and a playwright.

*Antony and Cleopatra*, tragedy in five acts by him, written in 1606-07 and published in the First Folio of 1623 from an authorial draft in a more finished state than most of his working papers or possibly from a transcript of those papers not yet prepared as a playbook. The story concerns Mark Antony, Octavius Caesar, and Lepidus are a triumvirate ruling the Roman Empire; but Antony prefers to spend his time at leisure in Egypt as a consort to Queen Cleopatra rather than in Rome. News of his wife's death, and of threatened revolt by young Pompey, motivates his return, much to Cleopatra's disapproval. A meeting takes place between Caesar, Lepidus, and Antony, at which they acknowledge the importance of maintaining their alliance. As a sign of good faith, Antony agrees to marry Octavia, Caesar's widowed sister. Cleopatra receives news of this arrangement with great anger, to the discomfiture of the messenger who brings it.

The triumvirs and Pompey meet and agree a peace, which they celebrate with a drunken feast. Following the successful campaign of Antony's general Ventidius in

Parthia, Antony and Octavia leave Rome. However, it is not long before Antony receives news of Caesar's increasing disaffection, and of renewed wars by Pompey. He allows Octavia to return to Rome to attempt reconciliation. But he then returns to Egypt, and to Cleopatra, which incense Caesar further. Lepidus meanwhile has been arrested for conspiracy, leaving the stage clear for a confrontation between Caesar and Antony.

Antony ignores advice from his officer and friend Enobarbus not to meet the Romans at sea, and is defeated near Actium, following the flight of Cleopatra and the Egyptian fleet. Caesar sends Thidias to negotiate with Cleopatra, but Antony has him whipped and sent back to Rome. Enobarbus then deserts Antony for Caesar, leaving his personal treasure behind; but when Antony generously sends this after him, Enobarbus dies consumed with grief, and dies. Caesar and Antony continue their conflict. Antony has some success by land, but the Egyptian fleet once again loses at sea, and he charges Cleopatra with betrayal. In attempt to win back his affection, she takes herself and her maids off to her burial monument, sending him word that she is dead. Grief stricken at the news, Antony asks his servant Eros to kill him, but Eros kills himself rather than carry out the task.

Antony then attempts to kill himself, wounding himself grievously, only to hear that Cleopatra is still alive. He is carried to her monument, where he dies in her arms. Antony's follower Decretas informs Caesar of his death, and Proculeius is sent to bring Cleopatra to Rome. Cleopatra knows she will become a public spectacle there, and attempts to kill herself, but is prevented. She has a meeting with Caesar, where she feigns total submission, but her attempt to conceal some of her wealth is revealed by her treasure Seleucus. Arrangements to take her to Rome are made, but she manages to have a

clownish rustic smuggle in a basket of figs containing asps, and she and her maids all die from their bite. This is the summary of the play *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Pupul Jaykar was an Indian cultural activist and writer, best known for her work on the revival of the traditional and village arts, handlooms, and handicrafts in post independence India. She organized a series of Indian art festivals in the 1980s in France, the US and Japan that helped to popularize Indian arts in the west. She was a friend and biographer to both the Nehru-Gandhi family and J Krishnamurti. Jayakar had a close relationship with the prime ministers: Jawaharlal Nehru, his daughter Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi, and it was well established that she was one of Indira Gandhi's closest personal friends. She served as cultural adviser to the latter two, confirming her preeminence in cultural matters. She "presided colossus like over the country's cultural scene for nearly 40 years," founding key arts and crafts institutions and promoting talented artists, and Indian arts and crafts through festivals and exhibitions worldwide.

Jayakar had an unerring eye for excellence. She talent-spotted people long before they blossomed and encouraged several painters and artists who are today household names in India. She was a good organizer, tirelessly promoting local handloom and handicraft products and establishing the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage [INTACH], primarily to preserve decaying monuments, in the early 1980s. She also opened several design workshops, devised marketing strategies to develop traditional crafts and started the National Crafts Museum in the late Eighties and, in 1990, the National Institute of Fashion Technology in New Delhi. But Jayakar used India's cultural vastness as a lever of power. She began by organizing cultural festivals during the internal emergency declared by Indira Gandhi in the mid 1970s, to divert attention from

the suspension of civil liberties which was brutally imposed. These were followed by the grandiose and hugely expensive festivals of india in London, Paris and America lasting several months in the early 1980s and the politically correct Apna Utsav or “Our Festivals” in Rajiv Gandhi’s time which earned the silver haired and plump Jayakar the sobriquet of “cultural tsarina”. She travelled extensively to remote places in India, seeking out local handicrafts and traditional skills and was a cultural chameleon, at home in contrasting milieux. Convinced she could do no wrong, she said once, “I do not have to justify my actions to anyone. I can look back with satisfaction that I have lit a few lamps in this country.”

She was born in 1915 into a Brahmin family from the western state of Gujarat, jayakar was tutored privately at home by an Irish governess employed by her father, who was a member of the Indian civil service. She attended Bedford College in London before graduating from the London school of Economics in 1936. In 1940 she was appointed the National Planning Committee headed by Nehru and came into close contact with Indira Gandhi who, on becoming prime minister in 1966, appointed Jayakar as her cultural adviser. During the late 1940s Jayakar had become an ardent follower of the philosopher and theosophist J Krishnamurti and wrote his biography which was published in Britain in 1986. She also wrote Earthen Drum [1981], an illustrated book on India’s mural art forms, and The Buddha [1982], a philosophical treatise for young people. A gracious and charming conversationalist and host, she had impeccable taste in clothes and was a graceful mixture of Indian and Western traditions. She died in 29<sup>th</sup> march 1997 at Bombay.

One of her main book is *Indira Gandhi*, biography of the only women prime minister in India. Indira Gandhi's life spanned over two-thirds of century. By the time of her brutal assassination in 1984, she had established herself as the most significant political leader India had seen since the death of her father, Jawaharlal Nehru. In this book, written with the close cooperation of her subject, Pupul Jayakar seeks to uncover the many personalities that lay hidden within Mrs Gandhi. Much more than a political biography, the book reveals the complex personality of Indira Gandhi-her thoughts and feelings, her hates and prejudices, her insights and her faults, her loves and emotional entanglements. Full of startling insights, *Indira Gandhi: A Biography* paints a magnificent portrait-at once empathetic and unprejudiced of one of the twentieth century's most remarkable women.

Indira Priyadarshini was born on November 19, 1917 in Allahabad as the only prime minister of Jawaharlal Nehru. Her mother passed away in 1936 of tuberculosis. As a member of the Indian National Congress, Nehru had been influenced by party leader Mahatma Gandhi, and dedicated himself to India's fight for independence. The struggle resulted in years of imprisonment for Jawaharlal and lonely childhood for Indira, who attended a Swiss boarding school for a few years, and later studied history at Somerville College, Oxford. In 1942 Indira married Feroze Gandhi, a Parsi lawyer and the couple soon had two sons: Rajiv and Sanjay.

In 1947, Nehru became the newly independent nation's first prime minister, and Gandhi agreed to go to New Delhi to serve as his hostess, welcoming diplomats and world leaders at home and traveling with her father throughout India and abroad. She was elected to the prominent 21- member working committee of the congress party in 1955

and, four years later, was named its president. Upon Nehru's death in 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri became the new prime minister and Indira took on the role of minister of Information and Broadcasting. But Shastri's leadership was short lived; just two years later he abruptly died and Indira was appointed by Congress Party leader to be prime minister.

Within few years Indira gained enormous popularity for introducing successful programs that transformed India into a country self-sufficient in food grains- an achievement known as the Green Revolution. In 1971, she threw her support behind the Bengali movement to separate East from West Pakistan, providing refuge for the ten million Pakistani civilians who fled to India in order to escape the marauding Pakistan army and eventually offering troops and arms. India's decisive victory over Pakistan in December led to the creation of Bangladesh, for which Indira was posthumously awarded Bangladesh's highest state honor 40 years later.

Following the 1972 national elections, Indira was accused of misconduct by her political opponent and, in 1975, was convicted of electoral corruption by the High Court of Allahabad and prohibited from running in another election for six years. Instead of resigning as expected, she responded by declaring a state of emergency on June 25, where by citizen's civil liberties were suspended, the press was acutely censored and the majority of her opposition was detained without trial. Throughout what became referred to as the "Reign of Terror", thousands of dissidents were imprisoned without due process. Anticipating that her former popularity would assure her reelection, Indira finally eased the emergency restrictions and called for the next general election in March

1977. Riled by their limited liberties, however, the people overwhelmingly voted in favor of the Janata Party and Morarji Desai assumed the role of prime minister.

Within the next few years, democracy was restored, but the Janata Party had a little success in resolving the nation's severe poverty crisis. In 1980, Indira campaigned under a new party-congress-and was elected into her fourth term as prime minister. In 1984, the holy Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab, was taken over by Sikh extremists seeking an autonomous state. In response, Indira sent Indian troops to regain the temple by force. In the barrage of gunfire that ensued, hundreds of Sikhs were killed, igniting an uprising within the Sikh community. On October 31, 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated outside her home by two of her trusted bodyguards, seeking retribution for the events at the temple. This is the short biography of Indira Gandhi.

Cleopatra was the ambitious last ruler of Macedonian Dynasty of Ancient Egypt, known for her superior intelligence and improving its country's country standing and economy. Indira Gandhi, the first and only prime minister of India, was a controversial but very powerful figure in the history of india. Both of them have some similarities. They were both the powerful women leaders, which can influence the women in the world. And they are most important figures in proving that women are not inferior to men and women can change the world.

## Chapter Three

### Resemblance between Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra: A Feminist Approach

There is a long and rich history of women and leadership, leadership that has existed beyond the vestiges of official power. Over time countless women have led governments, empires, tribes and even armies. They have started and ended wars, governed nobly as well as savagely, and, as has been the case with male leaders, some female leaders have been successful while others were not so successful. A number of powerful women have shaped the course of history with their intelligence, strength, passion, and leadership qualities. They have challenged the status quo, made lasting reforms, and many have presided over their countries for decades, ushering in prosperity and cultural revolutions. Cleopatra, the Egyptian queen and Indira Gandhi, the only women prime minister in India are some of them. Their story about achieving political influence around the world and ruling the country efficiently, was incredibly inspiring all the women in the world. As the embodiment of strong-willed, independent, and confident leaders, Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra standing as a symbol for women's political rights around the world. They are the true inspiration to the feminists who fighting for gender equality throughout the world.

Indira Gandhi was India's third prime minister and the only women prime minister of India till date. She is considered by many to be the strongest Prime Minister India has ever seen. Indira Gandhi belongs to the Indian National Congress and was elected as the PM for the first time in 1966 after Lal Bahadur Shastri died in office. Indira Gandhi was the second longest-serving prime minister after India's first prime minister and her father

Jawaharlal Nehru. Cleopatra was the last active ruler of Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt. As a member of the Ptolemaic dynasty, she was a descendant of its founder Ptolemy 1 Soter, a Macedonian Greek general and companion of Alexander the Great. Cleopatra was perhaps the first women sovereign in history to rule alone for a period of over a decade. Both these women have some similarities in their life, ruling etc

The first similarity is, Cleopatra and Indira Gandhi are the most powerful women leaders in their country and the world. They encountered several challenges one after the other in their personal and political career. However they come out with flying colors with their grit and determination. Both of them were renowned for her courageous leadership and bold decisions. They survived and succeeded in a male dominated society. It is evident from their challenges and controversies that they were exciting and inspiring leaders during their period. They remains an inspiration for all women and will be remembered forever in world history for their courageous leadership and contribution.

The second similarity is that their life involved politics from a young age. In case of Indira Gandhi, almost from the moment she was born in 1917, Indira Nehru's life was steeped in politics. Her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, was a leader in the fight for India's independence from British rule, so it was natural for Indira to become supporter of this struggle. When she was 12, Indira played an even bigger role in India's struggle for self determination by leading children in the Vanar Sena. Also Cleopatra, daughter of King Ptolemy, Cleopatra destined to become the last queen of the Macedonian dynasty that ruled Egypt at the young age after the death her father. The 18 year Cleopatra, older than her brother by about eight years, became the dominant ruler. Both of them come to

politics through their fathers. Their fathers are the rulers of the country that they belong to.

The third similarity is the presence of a mentor in the life of Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra. Caesar is the mentor of Cleopatra. Caesar finds 16 year old Cleopatra sleeping between the paws of sphinx and she behaves to him very childish and immature. Intrigued by Cleopatra's political potential, as well as by her youth and beauty, Caesar becomes her mentor in her struggle to defend her throne against the rival claim of her 10 year old brother, Ptolemy. Caesar teach her how to rule the country. For Indira Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, her father was her mentor and guide. Letters from a father to his daughter is a collection of letters written by Jawaharlal Nehru to his daughter Indira Gandhi when Indira was 10 year old. The letters were education pieces on the subjects of natural and human history. Jawaharlal Nehru influenced her lot in administration and political career.

Cleopatra and Indira Gandhi were well educated and very efficient in variety of fields. This is the fourth similarity. Both of them were active in intellectual fields. Cleopatra spoke as many as a dozen languages and was educated in mathematics, philosophy, oratory and astronomy, Egyptian sources later described her as a ruler "who elevated the ranks of scholars and enjoyed their company". Also she would have gained Grecian education, geometry, medicine, music and religion. Indira Gandhi was taught by tutors at home and she did not attend school regularly. She attended modern school in delhi, St Cecilia's and St Mary's Christian convent schools in Allahabad, the International school of Geneva, the Ecole Nouvelle in Bex, the pupil's Own School in Poona and Bombay, Vishwa Bharati to attend her ailing mother in Europe and continued

her education at the University of Oxford. After the death of her mother, she attended the Badminton School and then enrolled at Somerville College in 1937 to study History. In early 1941 she entered England and then returned to India without completing her studies at Oxford. Later, she was awarded an honorary degree by the Oxford University.

The fifth similarity is Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra faced so many challenges during their reign. In 51 B.C, Ptolemy died, leaving the throne to 18-year –old Cleopatra and her brother, the 10-year-old Ptolemy. It is likely that two siblings married, as was customary at that time. Cleopatra would take control of a downtrodden empire that was in economic as well as political disparity. Cleopatra would use her sexuality and political powers to raise her empire out of the harsh times that they were facing. Cleopatra would use her powers of seduction and her godlike personification to raise herself and her empire forever in the history books of the world. Over the next few years after taking control over the country, Egypt struggled to face down a number of issues, from an unhealthy economy to floods to famine. Political turmoil also shaped this period. Soon after they assumed power, complications arose between Cleopatra and Ptolemy. Eventually Cleopatra fled to Syria, where she assembled an army to defeat her rival in order to declare the throne for herself. In 48 B.C, she returned to Egypt with her military might and faced her brother at Pelusium, located on the empire’s eastern edge. Then she met Caesar. In Caesar, Cleopatra now had access to enough military muscle to dethrone her brother and solidify her grip on Egypt as sole ruler. Following Caesar’s defeat of Ptolemy’s forces at the battle of the Nile, Caesar restored Cleopatra to the throne. Antony, who presided over Rome’s eastern areas, saw in Cleopatra the chance for financial and military support to secure his own rule over the empire. Cleopatra had her

own motivations, as well: in exchange for her help, she sought the return of Egypt's eastern empire, which included large areas of Lebanon and Syria. In 34 B.C, Antony returned with a triumphant flair. In 31 B.C, Cleopatra and Antony combined armies to try to defeat Octavian in a raging sea battle at Actium, off Greece's west coast. The clash however, proved to be a costly defeat for the Egyptians, forcing Antony and Cleopatra to flee back to Egypt.

Indira Gandhi took charge in mid 1960s when India was at its most vulnerable moment economically and politically. The wars of 1962 and 1965, two successive monsoon failures of 1965 and 1966, a fall in agricultural output by 20%, high inflation rates rising from a low of 2% till 1963, with food prices rising annually at 20%, food stocks so low as to threaten famine conditions in some areas and a deteriorating balance of payment situation with very low foreign exchange reserves had placed India in a 'begging bowl' situation. Following soon after the economic crisis of the mid 1960s, there was the genocide in East Pakistan resulting in the huge burden of over ten million refugees taking shelter in India and contributing to the 1971 [Bangladesh] war with Pakistan. This was followed by two droughts of 1972 and 1974, the major oil shock of 1973 involving a quadrupling of international oil prices and hence of cost of oil imports, the oil shock of 1979 when oil prices again doubled and disastrous harvest of 1979- 80 caused by the worst drought since independence. Taken together, the period appeared to present an almost impossible economic scenario, especially for poor and backward country. Indira Gandhi was quick to realize that India would not be able to maintain a sovereign independent stance. She therefore set about addressing this issue on a war footing. She pushed the 'Green Revolution' strategy vigorously and it began to pay

immediate dividends. Between 1967-68 and 1970-71, food grain production rose by 35%. Food availability continued to increase sharply to 110.25 million tonnes in 1984, and food stocks had crossed the 30 million tonnes mark by mid 1980s, putting an end to India's 'begging bowl' image and creating considerable food security even in extreme crisis situations.

The sixth similarity is both of them brought so many administrative reforms to the nation. In case of Indira Gandhi, on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1966, Indira Gandhi was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India. Years of training, shouldering responsibilities, work tours and assistance to her father, culminated her assuming the leadership of the Government of India. As the Prime Minister, Indira carried forward the Nehru legacy in economic planning. Like Nehru, she was committed to achieving self-reliance in crucial sectors like food grains, defence and technology. Through the measures pursued by her, the Indian economy was insulated from adverse international issues such as the oil crisis. She also worked towards the bringing down inflation to a reasonably low level, both in the mid-seventies and early eighties. The domestic production of the crude oil had been stepped up substantially during this period. Like Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira pursued an imaginative policy of developing scientific laboratories and institutions through increased funding. It is now widely recognized that India occupies a leading position in the developing countries with respect to scientific manpower and know-how. The second phase of land reforms undertaken in the early seventies altered the scenario in rural India by preventing the concentration of land in just a few hands. It provided land to millions of landless families. She took special interest in space research for peaceful uses of atomic energy. The nationalization of banks drive not only helped increase household

savings, but also provided considerable investments in the informal sector, in small and medium-sized enterprises and in agriculture. It contributed significantly to regional development and to the expansion of India's industrial and agricultural base. She also nationalized oil companies after the 1971 war. The green revolution in India was one of the important pieces of Indira's radical program in the mid and late sixties. The result was that India became self sufficient in food- a heartfelt aim for Indira after American President Johnson's erratic and condition-laden food aid. India started its own nuclear program in 1944 when Hom J. Bhabha founded the Tata institute of fundamental research. She took special interest in space research and in the research for peaceful uses of atomic energy. She initiated a communication revolution in the country the reach of television network which promised to become a major instrument of socio-economic change, with dissemination of useful information and knowledge. Indira Gandhi brought drastic changes in the different fields.

Following the death of her father, Cleopatra ascended to the throne in 51 BCE with one of her younger brothers as co-regent. From that moment until her death by suicide almost 20 years later, Cleopatra ruled her kingdom with little sedition or revolt, although she had to contend with the expansion and power of Rome. Documented monetary reform supports the ancient tradition that Cleopatra wrote treaties on coinage and on weights and measures. She strengthened her nation's economy by making explicit the fiduciary nature of the bronze coinage in circulation, the value of which was determined by Cleopatra and not based on weight. The result of this reform approximated the value of her bronze coinage to the Roman denarius, the contemporary currency of choice throughout the western world. The queen played an active role in the administration of

her realm, confirmed by a papyrus written in Greek. That document, like a present-day inter-office memo, was written to Cleopatra by a high-ranking Alexandrian court official.

The seventh similarity is Cleopatra and Indira Gandhi led wars bravely. In 32 BC, Octavian convinced the Roman Senate to declare war on the Egyptian queen Cleopatra. Her lover and ally Mark Antony, who was Octavian's rival, gave his support for her cause. 40% of the Roman Senate, together with both consuls, left Rome and joined the war on Antony's side. After a decisive victory for Octavian at the Battle of Actium, Cleopatra and Antony withdrew to Alexandria, where Octavian besieged the city until both Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide.

The 1971 India- Pakistan war symbolizes the bravery of the country's soldiers and also strong leadership of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. On this day in 1971, over 90,000 Pakistani soldiers had surrendered before Indian troops, bringing to an end the bitterly fought war on the eastern and western fronts. This war symbolizes the bravery of Indian soldiers along with the strong leadership of Indira Gandhi.

The eighth similarity between them is they were very efficient in foreign policies. Cleopatra's foreign policy goal, in addition to preserving her personal power was to maintain Egypt's independence from the rapidly expanding Roman Empire. By trading with Eastern nations- Arabia and possibly as far as away as India- she built up Egypt's economy, bolstering her country's status as a world power. By allying herself with Roman general Mark Antony, Cleopatra hoped to keep Octavian, Julius Caesar's heir and Antony's rival, from making Egypt a vassal to Rome. Ancient sources make it clear that Cleopatra and Antony did love each other and that Cleopatra bore Antony three children;

still the relationship was also very useful to an Egyptian queen who wished to expand and protect her empire.

Indira's regime was a landmark period for India's foreign policy resulting into India's establishment as regional power in South Asia. Some of the major successes in her foreign policy include creation of Bangladesh [1971] and the assertion of dominance of Indian power in South Asia; normalization of relations with Pakistan via Shimla Agreement [1972]; improving relations with China; boundary and sea zone pacts with Sri Lanka, with Indonesia and Bangladesh; friendship with Iran; merger of Sikkim as 22<sup>nd</sup> state of Indian Union; sturdy nuclear test. However she did not meet with desired success in her pro-Arab policy, antagonism of ASEAN and snubbed an important power Japan during her period.

These are the different similarities between Cleopatra and Indira Gandhi. Both of them are very successful and efficient rulers in the world. Their time period was the golden ages of those countries they belong to.

Indira Gandhi, popularly known as the Iron Lady of India, earned a formidable reputation across the globe as a 'statesman'. She was fearless and led India in most difficult times. Despite being daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, she made her way through the congress with hard work she put in. She was an independent woman who took some of the toughest decisions keeping in mind her country's welfare. That Iron Lady has given milestones to India.

Cleopatra was an intelligent and brave woman. She did not need help to rule her kingdom, she could do it all by herself and showed the world that women are great rulers.

Cleopatra's independence and ambition made her an amazing leader because she did not let people discriminate her for being a woman she took the responsibilities that needed to be a great queen and this actions made her become one of the most admirable rulers till this day

They were true feminists to the core, women of substance who helped the country through a testing phase, possessed all the virtues of a woman and fought valiantly for women's rights in a man's world. They proved that guys are not superior creatures in this world. They are the true role models to every woman in the world. They are true feminists also, because they challenged the existing patriarchal norms in the society. And proved women are not inferior to men. But they are equally powerful to men. Both of them contributed much to the feminist movements in the world. They can influence more women. Also their life story will give more strength to the girls who are suffering the oppression in this patriarchal world. They are truly inspiration to all the people in the world. More women must come out to the society by taking inspiration from these two leaders. And we can achieve the equality between all genders. .

## Conclusion

Our world is purely male dominated. Most of the countries do not achieve gender equality till now. And most of the countries have male leaders than females. The feminist theory and the movements argue that women and man have equal capabilities and should possess equal rights. But males possess a great domination over females in all fields. But there are so many women leaders in the world who, proved that women can do wonders. They have a great skill in administration, politics, and in various other fields. Two among them is Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt and Indira Gandhi, the only women prime minister in India.

Both of them ruled their own country independently and very efficiently. They marked a new history in the world. They show that women are not inferior in any ways than men. Both of them have some similarities in their personal life and also in their political career. More than that, they are women rulers who change the history. They entered in politics at very young age and proved that gender does not matter for proving one's efficiency. Being a woman is not a barrier or a matter for incapability but strength.

The book *Indira Gandhi* by Pupul Jayakar and the book *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakespeare explores the life of Indira Gandhi and Cleopatra. They explain that how a woman can inspire all the women in the world through their successful career. Their life is an inspiration for all the women and especially the feminist movements throughout the world and also a great strength for all feminists in the world.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**THE FOREMOST THEME OF CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE :**

**A TRAUMATIAN READING OF *THE GOLDFINCH* BY Donna**

**Louise Tartt**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Arts

**MARIAT BENNY**

**Register No. DB18AEGR030**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mrs. Ansa George

March 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “The foremost theme of contemporary literature: A Traumatian Reading of *The Goldfinch* by Dona Louise Tartt ” is a bonafide work of Ms.Mariat Benny who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sharath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mrs. Ansa George

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Mariat Benny, hereby declare that the project work entitled “The foremost theme of contemporary literature:A Traumatian Reading of *The Goldfinch* by Donna Louise Tartt” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Ansa George of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science college.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

26-02-2020

Mariat Benny

DB18AEGR030

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## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	
Pathogenic reminiscences: rupturing the limits of vocabulary	3
Chapter Two:	
A spark of light towards the magnificent chronology	7
Chapter Three:	
The fortuitous spell on contemporary literature	9
Conclusion	16
Works cited	18

## Introduction

Donna Tartt's 'The Goldfinch' is a complex story about a young boy named Theodore,

“ Theo Decker” a young boy who suffers the loss of his mother in a terrorist attack at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Disoriented during the attack, he takes the masterpiece The Goldfinch with him. This, along with the death of his mother, becomes the catalyst for a decade of adventure, sorrow, mystery, and redemption for Theo. As Theo matures, his mother's absence and the presence of the painting prompt him to make extreme choices, even to the point of risking his life and safety. However, his tremendous vulnerability creates an opportunity for him to become incredibly strong, and all of the action culminates in a final shootout and forced exile to Amsterdam, followed by Theo's temporary return to New York

City before he sets out to travel the world. Throughout Theo's adventures, the novel explores the meaning and purpose of art as well as love, friendship, and the pain of loss.

Throughout the book, Tartt explores the tension between adolescence and maturity. While Theo is only a boy when his story begins, he experiences a sudden transition to adulthood. The horrific death of his mother causes him to come of age in a moment of pain, violence, and loss rather than safety or security. He is forced to adopt survival tactics, beginning with his need to be accepted by the Barbour family, a potential adoptive family. However, Theo's relationships show that forced maturity is not mutually exclusive of childhood.

Tartt analyzes the value of art throughout the novel. She defines it in a variety of ways through Theo's ever-changing relationship with the masterpiece The

Goldfinch. The paradox of The Goldfinch is that it is both priceless and worthless . A stolen masterwork cannot be bought or sold in the open market, and Theo finds that the simple possession of it puts him in harms way. However , the existence of the painting holds tremendous personal value to him because of its connection to his mother, it's connection to the day of the terrorist attack and it's value as something so intimate and beautiful in a life wrought with pain and confusion.

Love lost ,love thwarted, love betrayed and love unrequited are recurring themes as Theo finds himself at the mercy of others whims and emotions. He falls love with Pippa before the explosion but is unsure what to make of his feelings. He calculates his actions regarding her so that he can enjoy her company without revealing his true feelings and destroying their relationship. Juxtaposed to Theo's relationship with Pippa is his relationship with Kitsey which is convenient and easy.

## Chapter 1

### **Pathogenic reminiscences: rupturing the limits of vocabulary**

Trauma studies first developed in the 1990s and relied on Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether.

This model of trauma indicates that suffering is unrepresentable.

Starting with Freud: Freud's theories on traumatic experience and memory. Define the psychological concepts that guide the field. Psychoanalytic theories regarding the origins and effects of trauma arose in the nineteenth century study of shock and hysteria by researchers who in addition to Freud, include Joseph Breuer, Pierre Janet, Jean Martin Charcot, Hermann Oppenheim, Abram Kardiner and Morton Prince. Freud's early theories in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) written with Joseph Breuer and especially his adapted theories later in his career in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) dominate trauma's conceptual employment by literary trauma critics today. In Freud's early work he argues that traumatic hysteria develops from a repressed, earlier experience of sexual assault. Freud and Breuer emphasize in *Studies in Hysteria* (1895) that the original event was not traumatic in itself but only in its remembrance. Because the original event continues to inflict harm, the talking cure or abreaction is required to understand the effects of the past and gain freedom from its symptom-causing grasp. Importantly, the traumatic event is understood only after a latency period of deferred action that delays the effects and meaning of the past. It is only after a contemporary event that the past event can become known in the process of remembering.

Freud and Breuer write: We may reverse the dictum “cessante causa cessat effectus” and conclude from these observations that the determining process continues to operate for years not indirectly through a chain of intermediate causal links, but as a directly releasing cause just as psychological pain that is remembered in waking consciousness still provokes a lachrymal secretion long after the event. Hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences.

The process of remembering inflicts the psychological pain but also ascribes value to a previously experienced event in the unconscious. This traumatic remembering is termed “pathogenic reminiscences” for a pathologic symptom the memory causes. Trauma is thus defined in relation to the process of remembering and as an event harbored within the unconscious that causes a splitting of the ego or dissociation. The author, citing Janet’s work on dissociation, writes: “the splitting of consciousness which is so striking in the well known classical cases under the form of double consciousness is present to a rudimentary degree in every hysteria and that a tendency to such dissociation and with it the emergence of abnormal states of consciousness is the basic phenomenon of this neurosis.

The fundamental phenomenon of hysteria involves dissociation which the author’s argument is a defense mechanism that arises from repression; another mode of defence is amnesia. The notion that trauma causes dissociation or a gap in the psyche is taken up by Freud throughout his career. The concept of the latency period between the event and its pathological effects along with the idea that trauma fragments the psyche can cause dissociation and continuously wreaks havoc or infect later in his career but still influence the contemporary definition of trauma for literature critics. Freud’s later work on war neurosis and the problem of traumatic repetition in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) extends and adapts his earlier theories on the defense

mechanisms of the ego as well as the origin and effects of trauma upon the psyche.<sup>2</sup>

Traumatic events create conflicts in the ego which “split off” from the unity of the ego and are repressed but return later often in dreams (Freud 1920: 8). The conflicts caused by trauma create traumatic neurosis, which is “a consequence of an extensive however, when “fright” occurs, that is “the state a person gets into when he has run into danger without being prepared for it,” the lack of anxiety coupled with the external stimuli cause neurosis (1920: 11, 32, 36).<sup>3</sup> Anxiety acts as a protection mechanism against traumatic neurosis but unexpected fright carries no defense.

The external stimuli rupture the barrier and enter the inner psyche without the adequate internal defense. He writes: “We describe as ‘traumatic’ any excitations from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield ... with a breach in an otherwise efficacious barrier against stimuli” (1920: 33). Trauma is imagined as both an external agent that shocks the unprepared system and an internal action of defense against overstimulation. Traumatic neurosis is marked by the “compulsion to repeat” the memory of the painful event with the hopes of mastering the unpleasant feelings (1920: 19). The dreams of the traumatized patient repeat the experience as a way to “master the stimulus retrospectively, by developing the anxiety whose omission was the cause of the traumatic neurosis” (1920: 37).<sup>4</sup> Freud writes that because the patient “cannot remember the whole of what is repressed in him, and what he cannot remember may be precisely the essential part of it” the patient “is obliged to each being made in the protective shield against stimuli” (1920: 35). The mind as an organism, according to Freud, contains outer and inner layers, with the outer layer having a “protective shield” against harmful external stimuli (1920: 35). repeat the repressed material as a contemporary event instead of ... remembering it as something belonging to the past” (1920: 18, 19). The narrative the event is crucial to recovery.

According to Freud the self does not remember the actual event but only the “reproductions” of the traumatic experience that arise in dreams (1920 19). Although Freud remains ambivalent about the processes of remembering and questions whether experiences leave permanent traces or records in the mind, he argues that through abreaction and the talking cure the patient gains a greater understanding of the past (Freud 1955-73: 150; 1959: 19, 20). Traumatic memory is abnormal and lacks the narrative necessary to integrate it into the psyche.<sup>5</sup> The emphasis on narrative recall for normal integration of memory and the general idea of memory as a <sup>store</sup>house of experience are important points for the literary-critical conceptualization of trauma.

The medicalization of trauma was crystallized by the American Psychiatric Association’s new classification of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders third edition (DSM-III) published in 1980. The DSM-III classified the external stressor for PTSD as “a psychologically distressing event outside the range of usual human experience” that is accompanied by “intense fear, terror, and helplessness” and causes “significant distress in most people” (DSM-III: 236–8, 248). The current DSM-IV classifies PTSD as a trauma or stressor related disorder rather than an anxiety disorder.

## Chapter 2

### **A spark of light towards the magnificent chronology**

Everything takes me longer than I expect. It's the sad truth about life.

Donna Tartt Donna Louise Tartt (born December 23, 1963) is an American author. Tartt's novels are *The Secret History* (1992), *The Little Friend* (2002), and *The Goldfinch* (2013). Tartt won the WH Smith Literary Award for *The Little Friend* in 2003 and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *The Goldfinch* in 2014 . She was included in Time magazine's 2014 "100 Most Influential People" list. Tartt is 5 feet tall. She has said "Je ne vans zamias me marker." She has live in Greenwich Village, the Upper East Side, and on a farm near Charlottesville, Virginia Tartt is notably private, and does not give talks at book festivals. She has stated that she participates in book tours no more once every ten years. She has, however, also stated that her day-to- day life is not that of a recluse, and that she spends much of her time writing. Tartt talks on the phone, every day, with her mother, but has not had contact with her father since 1982.

Tartt published her first novel, *The Secret History* in 1992. Amanda Urban as her agent, the novel became a marketing, critical, and lucrative achievement. Many considered Tartt a precocious literary genius, as she was just 29 years old, and setting high expectations for what she would publish next.

Tartt is a convert to Catholicism and contributed an essay, "The spirit and writing in a secular world", to *The Novel, Spirituality and Modern Culture* (2000). In her essay Tartt wrote that "...faith is vital in the process of making my work and in the reasons I am driven to make it".[35] However, Tartt also warned of the danger of writers who impose their beliefs or convictions on their novels. She wrote that writers

should "shy from asserting those convictions directly in their work". She has spent about ten years writing each of her novels. Tartt was born, the elder of two daughters, in Greenwood, Mississippi, in the Mississippi Delta, and raised in the nearby town of Grenada. Her father, Don Tartt, was a rockabilly musician, turned freeway "service station owner-cum-local politician", while her mother, Taylor, was a secretary. Her parents were avid readers, and her mother would read while driving. "I know a ton of poetry by heart, When I was a little kid, first thing I memorized were really long poems by A. A. Milne... I also know all these things that I was made to learn. I'm sort of this horrible repository of doggerel verse. "In 1968, aged five, Tartt wrote her first poem. In 1976, aged thirteen, Tartt was published for the first time when a sonnet was included in *The Mississippi Review*. In high school, Tartt was a freshman cheerleader for the basketball team and worked in the public library. In 1981, Tartt enrolled in the University of Mississippi where her writing caught the attention of Willie Morris while she was a freshman. Finding her in the Holiday Inn bar one evening, Morris said to her, "My name is Willie Morris, and I think you're a genius."

Following a recommendation from Morris, Barry Hannah, then an Ole Miss writer-in-residence, admitted the eighteen-year-old Tartt into his graduate course on the short story. "She was deeply literary," said Hannah. "Just a rare genius, really. A literary star." In 1982, following the suggestion of Morris and others, she transferred to Bennington College. At Bennington, Tartt studied classics with Claude Fredericks, and also met Bret Easton Ellis, Jonathan Lethem, and Jill Eisenstadt,[19][2] graduating in 1986.

## Chapter 3

### The fortuitous spell on contemporary literature

This essay examines the dominant psychology model of trauma in literary Criticism, especially intergenerational trauma theory , introducing alternative approaches for analysing trauma in literature, including place theory. The essay analysis the function of the traumatized protagonist in fiction and discusses the influence of place in the reformulation of the self. The novel begins with Theo recounting a dream he has about his mother. This dream foreshadows the revelation of his mother's death, and introduces the haunting presence of her death. Her Presence fills the room, and he is overwhelmed by her ghost .But , he also Knows that he cannot look behind him in this dream a metaphor for his Inability to resurrect his mother.

Even though he is preoccupied with memories and thoughts of her she is ultimately a ghost and a figure that only exist in his memories. “ Thanks for my fever I had a lot of weird and extremely vivid dreams, sweats where I trashed around hardly knowing if it was day or night, but on the last and worst of these nights I dreamed about my mother :a quick mysterious dream that felt more like a visitation. I was in Hobies shop or more accurately some haunted dream space staged like a sketchy version of the shop when she come up suddenly behind me so I saw her reflection in a mirror. At a sight of her I was paralyzed with happiness; it was her down to the most minute detail, the very pattern of her freckles she was smiling at me more beautiful and yet not older black hair and funny upward quirk of her mouth not a dream but a presence that filled the whole room. A force all her own a living otherness and as much as I wanted to, I knew I couldn't turn around that to look at her directly was to violate the laws of her world and mine. She had come to me the only way she could, and our eyes met in a

glass for a long still moment ; but just as she seemed about to speak with what seemed a combination of amusement, affection ,exasperation a vapor rolled between us and I woke up.” Theo. After Theo finds out about Andy’s death in a sailing accident, he recalls scattering his mother ashes scattering his mother’s ashes in Central park.

Though he tries to honor her by leaving her last remains in the park , her urn is wrapped in pornographic classified ads. These ads almost desecrate the urn and his kind gesture, as Theo realizes that he cannot preserve the sanctity of his mother’s memory. His final interaction with her remaining parts is fundamentally imperfect , and he accepts that he will never have a perfect moment with her in death.“ For the deepest , most unshakable part of myself reason was useless .she was the missing kingdom , the unbruised part of myself diedlost with my mother.Everything about her was a snowstorm of fascination ,from the antique valentine’s and embroidered Chinese coats she collected to her tiny scented bottles from Neal’s Yard Remedies; there had always been sometimes bright and magical about her unknown faraway life.”

For Theo and Kitseys engagement party,Anna de Larmission a family friend organized most of the event and plans their wedding . Theo shows up to the party drunk and regrets the hundreds of people crowding the hall as it prevents him from seeing the fine architectural details of the building. At the party . Theo darts around and is introduced to Havistock Irving who knows Lucius Reeve and says that Theo should respond to his message as Lucious is looking into Theo s other fraudulent sales. Theo tells Hobie about the interaction and learns that Havistock is not his real name and that he used to go by Sloan. He and his partner Lucian Race were caught by Hobie and Welty as they tried to exploit elderly people and illegally sold their antiques.welty testified against them and sent Lucius Reeve, then finds Boris asks him to leave the party and to bring his passport and cash so they can go to Amsterdam for three days

and retrieve the painting. Theo kisses Kitsey then leaves his engagement party with Boris.

Probably the most skillful thing about the novel is the way Tarrt is able to create a character who is compelling for almost 800 pages, especially because he's not very likable. He's emotionally distant from those around him, makes really bad life decisions, does some outright criminal things - and yet, I wanted to see what happened to him. I didn't want him to have a happy ending - he doesn't really deserve that, but I also didn't want him to have a tragic ending - he doesn't really deserve that either, and Tarrt masterfully gives a satisfying ending that is not too perfectly tied up or justified. This "flow of chance," in spite of the shortcomings that Theo finds with his father's gambling. In *The Goldfinch*, Theo's avoidance of meaninglessness in relation to his tragedy—Audrey's death—hinges less upon refusing to acknowledge the distortion of his own narrative as it does upon a simple but incredibly powerful fear of chance. As discussed in the previous section, Theo's hold on *The Goldfinch*, and the association he forges between it and his mother, enables him to live with an ongoing attachment to Audrey, one which dictates that she, like the painting, was never truly subject to mortality, and certainly not to something so random as a terrorist-planted bomb. A main motivation of Theo's grip on the painting, and what it signifies to him, is that it allows him to avoid the possibility that Audrey's death was meaningless—that it was the result of pure chance, a nothing that Theo can do that will be able to justify any rational way.

Theo, for the most part, does not come to recognize for himself that it is Chance that drives him to rely so heavily upon this narrative about the painting, as he spends the Majority of the novel largely unaware of the narrative's strong grip on him (though he does come To draw his own conclusions about the narrative after the novel's climax,

as I will discuss in the Next section). Still, Tarrt makes it clear that Theo's obsession with the painting largely results from an aversion to chance by comparing it to various other, similar situations throughout the Novel. One of the more prominent examples includes Theo's own father Larry, a former actor who spends most of the novel before his untimely death in a car accident gambling and engaging in unspecified, unquestionably legal activities in Las Vegas. When Theo is sent to live with him and his partner, Xandra, he quickly becomes aware that much of his father's income is derived from gambling. Though his winnings from gambling are primarily the result of chance, Larry at one point tells Theo that he in fact has a grand, though convoluted, strategy he employs when gambling, one that appears to be based on little more than astrology and related concepts. He explains his betting on football games to Theo in the following way: "A or what? What?" He consulted spread breakdowns, matchup reports, and—Occasionally—a paperbacked book called *Scorpio: Your Sports Year in Forecast*. Always looking for an edge," he said when I found him running down the tables and punching out numbers on his calculator like he was figuring out his income tax. "See, I'm not one of these saps that gets all starry-eyed about the Giants rain or shine—Shit, your mother could have told you that. Scorpio is about control—that's me.

I'm Competitive. Want to win at any price... Anyway, whatever, I always take my lead from Defensive-offensive lines, but all the same it never hurts to pay attention to these transits and solar-arc progressions on game day —" (372-3) While Theo finds his father's predictions interesting to witness, he has little faith in their effectiveness, believing them to be, at the very least, overly complicated and difficult to follow (374). Despite this general attitude, though, he does soon after compare father's words to the Painting itself. But instead of characterizing his strategy in such a dubious light within this While Theo finds his father's predictions interesting to witness,

he has little faith in their effectiveness, believing them to be, at the very least, overly complicated and difficult to follow(374). Just as my dad's rituals, his betting systems, all his oracles and magic were predicated on a field awareness of unseen patterns, so too the explosion in Delft was part of a complot of events that ricocheted into the present. The multiple outcomes could make you dizzy.

Andy's death perhaps seems even more unexpected and random than Audrey's: Audrey's death occurs at the beginning of the novel and informs much of its plot, while Andy's seems to do little else than to shock Theo, as well as the reader. While Andy plays only a very minimal role in the novel after Theo moves to Las Vegas, there are certainly no hints that he will later die in a freak sailing accident. Yet, when Theo hears of Andy's death, he can think of little else except of Andy's known fear of water, and how that must have played some role in his death. As he visits Andy's mother, he contemplates Andy's seemingly ironic end: I'd been looking at the scrimshaw (a whaling ship) set in the lid of her sewing basket, and thinking of poor Andy: black water, salt in his throat, nausea and flailing. The horror and cruelty of dying in his most hated element.

Though Theo might find his father's gambling strategies somewhat puzzling, he does share a common interest in decoding apparent acts of chance by discovering patterns within them. And since Theo does this quite visibly with Andy's death later on in the novel as an adult, it follows that a much younger Theo would react to something as traumatizing as his own mother's death in a similar, though much more pronounced, way. Thus, in his attempt to avoid chance, Theo constructs a narrative through *The Goldfinch* that eliminates the role of chance generally, and therefore makes Audrey's death more bearable. In *The Little Friend*, Harriet's chosen narrative—that of solving Robin's death by fixating on Danny Ratliff as its perpetrator—possesses a similar

motivation to Theo's, in that she, like Theo, is attempting to assign meaning of some sort to the tragic death of a relative. However, as I previously discussed, the nature of these tragedies differs in one key aspect: Theo was extremely close to his mother, but Harriet never knew Robin personally, only experiencing the personal effects his mysterious death had on her relatives and others who knew him. This difference, which plays a significant role in shaping the differing courses of their narratives, also affects the nature of the meaninglessness that each protagonist attempts to counter: Theo fails to confront the prospect that Audrey's death was the result of meaningless chance, and Harriet fails to confront the possibility that Robin's death cannot be resolved in the way that her narratives of Tribulation and Captain Scott possess resolutions.

As I discussed in my previous section, the story of Robin's death captivates Harriet in large part because it lacks a resolution of any kind. Because the nature of his death is unknown, it has not been addressed and recorded in the way that her other family stories have been—in contrast to what she knows about Robin's death, Harriet finds herself able to virtually relive all aspects of Tribulation's history in great detail, despite having no personal experience with the house, because her family has constructed a more complete narrative around the house's existence. The great influence of literature in Harriet's life also fuels her desire to make sense of Robin's story: not only do the books she reads possess clear resolutions of their own, but they also feature protagonists—most notably Captain Scott, whom, as discussed, Harriet quotes like a prophet—who, through exploratory or detective work, are able to make sense of profound mysteries. That Harriet so readily takes on the role of detective in her quest to solve Robin's death indicates either an inability or a refusal of some sort to acknowledge the possibility that Robin's death cannot be resolved as neatly as the story of Tribulation, or the adventures of Captain Scott. Throughout the novel, Harriet

approach her investigation of Robin's death with a sort of quickness and self-assurance that simply does not allow for doubt of any sort, even though her assertions about the death have very little credible evidence. A major example of this tendency is Harriet's decision that Danny Ratliff must be Robin's murderer. Having offhandedly heard that some of the Ratliffs have been in prison at some point (142), Harriet proceeds to ask her family's longtime housekeeper, Rhew, what she knows about the family. When Ida informs Harriet that some of the Ratliffs were likely responsible for committing arson against the local Black church, an incident that left Ida herself with burns (147), Harriet, shocked at the crime, proceeds to ask Ida about Danny, noting that he is around Robin's age. Ida, her disdain for the Ratliffs quite evident at this point, recalls to Harriet that Danny frequently came to the Dufresnes residence, allegedly fighting Robin and behaving mischievously (150).

## Conclusion

“Theo” Decker. As a thirteen year old boy , Theo’s life is turned upside down when he and his mother visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art to see an exhibition of Dutch masterpiece including a favourite painting of hers Carel Fabritius The Goldfinch. There , he becomes intrigued by red headed girl with an elderly man . A bomb explodes in the museum , killing his mother and several other visitors Theo’s life is disrupted when his deadbeat dad arrives with new girlfriend and whisks him away to Las Vegas. He takes the painting with him and in Las Vegas, makes a new friend, Boris pavlikovsky , the cosmopolitan son of a Ukrainian émigré . The two boys both with absentee parents spend most of their afternoons drinking , smoking marijuana, and using other illegal drugs. While hounded by a loan shark Theo’s father gets drunk and dies in a car crash. Fearful of what his father’s death may mean to his living situation, Theo decides to return New York and he takes a cross country buss. With nowhere to stay he needs Hobies who welcome him. Pippa now enrolled in a school for troubled teens in Switzerland is visiting on break.

The narrative skips ahead eight years. Theo has become a full partner in Hobarts business. He has concealed The Goldfinch because he is afraid of being accused of theft. He is engaged in child hood friend but is still confused and obsessed with this love for Pippa who is living in London with her boyfriend. Over the years he became addicted to prescription medication and saves Hobie from bankruptcy by selling fake antiques.

Theo.had already told Hely everything that she had to tell, but she was so agitated after her conversation with Ida that she kept fidgeting and pacing and repeating

herself: “She knew it was Danny Ratliff. She knew. She said herself it was him...”

(151) Her conviction that Danny is guilty is so great, even though her suspicion of him is based on little more than cursory information about Danny and his family, that she immediately begins plotting extremely dangerous acts against him. As discussed, she and Hely soon plan to poison him with a venomous snake, and Harriet’s unquestioned conviction quickly drives her and Hely to undertake dangerous stunts in order to fulfill this plot, including a visit to a swampy subdivision to capture a venomous water moccasin that results in Harriet suffering from heatstroke (170-173). While this willingness to undertake such hazards illustrates on its own that Harriet is thoroughly convinced and driven in her suspicions, her insistence that she bring Danny to justice herself further indicates a refusal to have her suspicions scrutinized by anyone else.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**ROOTING OF THE MIND IN THE BODY:**

**A PSYCHOANALYSIS READING**

***OF THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**NAYANA JOLLY**

**Register No: DB18AEGR031**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project Supervisor: Ms. Anu P Thomas**

**June 2021**

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Rooting of the Mind in the Body: A Psychoanalysis Reading of *The House on Mango Street*” is a bonafide work of Nayana Jolly, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Anu P Thomas

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Nayana Jolly, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Rooting of the Mind in the Body: A Psychoanalysis Reading of *The House on Mango Street*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Anu P Thomas of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Nayana Jolly

10-06-2021

DB18AEGR031

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## Table of Contents

	Page No
Introduction	1
Chapter One	2
Freudian Psychoanalytic theory	
Chapter Two	12
<i>A Gist of The House on Mango Street</i>	
Chapter Three.	20
Rooting of the Mind in the Body: A Psychoanalysis Reading <i>of The House on Mango Street</i>	
Conclusion	33
Works Cited	34

## Introduction

The work titled “Rooting of the Mind in the Body: A Psychoanalysis Reading of *The House on Mango Street* ” is an attempt to analyze how Freudian psychoanalytic elements can influence and mould individual’ slife using the characters from the novel *The House on Mango Street*. The story revolves around the life of Esperanza and her friends who cannot accommodate the values set by the society in her life.

The projectis divided into three chapters. Chapter one “Freudian psychoanalytic theory” specially focusing on Sigmund Freud’s area of psychoanalysis for getting clear view on Freud’s three psychoanalytic elements of personalities that is the Id, the Ego and the Super-ego. This chapter also mentions about conscious and unconscious mind of a person. Author’s biographical details along with a plot of the novel *The House on Mango Street* discussed in the second chapter. Chapter three deals with how Freudian concepts id, ego and super-ego can influence in a person’s life using the life of characters from the novel, *The House on Mango Street*.

## Chapter One

### Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalysis is a type of therapy that aims to release pent-up or repressed emotions and memories in or to lead the client to catharsis, or healing (McLeod, 2014). In other words, the goal of psychoanalysis is to bring what exist at the unconscious or subconscious level up to consciousness. This goal is accomplished through talking to another person about the big questions in life, the things that matter, and diving into the complexities that lie beneath the simple – seeming surface. Psychoanalytic theory is a theory of personality organization and dynamics of personality that guides psychoanalysis. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century marking the beginning of modern psychology and with the pace of this psychology the psychological analysis of literary texts evolved. This method of critiquing used the concepts advocated by noted sociologists, including Carl Jung, Alfred Adler and Otto Rank and above all Sigmund Freud.

Sigmund Freud was born in Austria and spent most of his childhood and adult life in Vienna. He entered medical school and trained to become a neurologist, earning a medical degree in 1881. Soon after his graduation, he set up a private practice and began treating patients with psychological disorders. His intention was captured by a colleague's intriguing experience with a patient; the colleague was Dr. Josef Breuer and his patient was the famous "Anna O.," who suffered from physical symptoms with no apparent physical cause. Dr. Breuer found that her symptoms abated when he helped her recover memories of traumatic experiences that she had repressed, or hidden from her conscious mind. This case sparked Freud's interest in the unconscious mind and spurred the development of some of his most influential ideas.

Freud and Breuer observed that, when the sources of patient's ideas and impulses were brought into consciousness during the hypnotic state, the patients showed improvement. Observing that most patients talked freely without being under hypnosis, Freud evolved the technique of free association of ideas. The patient was encouraged to say anything that came to mind, without regard to its assumed relevancy or propriety. Noting that patients sometimes had difficulty in making free associations, Freud concluded that certain painful experiences were repressed, or held back from conscious awareness. Freud noted that in the majority of the patients seen during his early practice, the events most frequently repressed were concerned with disturbing sexual experiences. Thus he hypothesized that anxiety was a consequence of the repressed energy (libido) attached to sexuality; the repressed energy found expression in various symptoms that served as psychological defense mechanisms.

Freud and his followers later extended the concept of anxiety to include feelings of fear, guilt and shame consequent to fantasies of aggression and hostility and fear of loneliness caused by separation from a person on whom the sufferer is dependent. During the first World War, psychologists implemented screening processes which they hoped would delineate which soldiers exhibited appropriate mental fitness to cope up with the stress of war. Second World War was a turning point for the field of psychology. Up until that time, psychology was largely seen as an academic and philosophical discipline with little practical utility. Psychology began to take a clinical foothold through its involvement with the following Second World War.

In 1930, psychologist Sigmund Freud published one of the most radical books of the time about human psychology: *The Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. This book described his ideas about the human mind, which completely changed the way psychiatrists treated their patients. Freud's novel revolutionary theory argued that

human beings are completely controlled by their unconscious mind. His model divides the mind into three layers, or regions. The first one is conscious, this is where our current thoughts, feelings and focus live. The second one is pre-conscious or subconscious, this is the home of everything that can retrieve from a person's memory. The third one is unconscious, this is the deepest level of our minds resides a repository of the processes that drive our behavior, including primitive and instinctual desires. Later, Freud posited a more structured model of the mind, one that can coexist with his original ideas about consciousness and unconsciousness.

Freud theorized that many of his patient's problems arose from the unconscious mind. In Freud's view, the unconscious mind was a repository of feelings and urges of which we have no awareness. Gaining access to the unconscious, then, was crucial to the successful resolution of the patient's problems. According to Freud, humans are not in control of the everyday decisions they make, but that they are completely controlled by three sections of the unconscious mind: the id, the ego and the superego. Although the three components are purely symbolic concepts about the mind and do not correspond to actual structures of the brain, Freud believed they are all constantly working against each other in order to push ideas into our conscious or "awake" mind.

Freud in his 1933 book *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, described the id as the "dark, inaccessible part of our personality." Freud compared the relationship between the id and the ego to that of a horse and rider. The horse represents the id, a powerful force that offers the energy to propel forward motion. The rider represents the ego, the guiding force that directs the power of the id toward a goal. Freud noted, however, that this relationship did not always go as planned. In less ideal

situations, a rider may find himself simply along for the ride as he allows his horse to go in the direction the animals wants to go.

Freud proposed that the human psyche has an area into which go all desires and fantasies that cannot be expressed. This area he termed the *unconscious*. The process through which certain desires, especially sexual, are pushed into the unconscious so that they do not influence our daily lives and our conscious mind is called *repression*. All human life, for Freud, is caught in the tensions generated by two basic principles. The *pleasure principle* is one where all our acts are governed by the need to attain pleasure and avoid 'un - pleasure'. The *reality principle* enables us to understand that our pleasures cannot all be fulfilled the way we want them, and, therefore, inspires us to seek other routes of attaining pleasure.

Id is entirely unconscious. The id is the very immature component of personality. The id is the reservoir of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy. "Naturally, the id knows no values, no good, no evil, no morality," says in his essay "The Structure of the Unconscious" (1940). In short, the id is the source of all aggressions and desires. It is lawless, asocial and amoral. Its function is to gratify our instincts for pleasure without regard to social conventions or moral restraint. The *id* as defined by Freud is identical in many respects to the Devil as defined by theologians. The id is the primitive, instinctive component of personality that operates according to the pleasure principle, which demands immediate gratification of its urges. He meant that the id controls biological urges like eating and sleeping, which energize human behavior.

According to Freud, id is driven solely by impulses. The impulses like thirst, hunger, sexual drive act as demands and the id seeks to satisfy these demands. The id

doesn't care about reality, about the needs of anyone else, only its own satisfaction. The id, according to Freud is the only part present at birth. At this stage a person doesn't understand how their actions have anything to do with, or affect their surrounding environment. Thus, their actions might or might not conflict with the standards that society has placed on the individual. They have no care for time, whether their parents are sleeping, relaxing, eating or bathing. When id want something, nothing else is important. The id is governed by the "pleasure principle". Freud also suggested that this primitive component of personality existed wholly within the unconscious. Id provides all energy necessary to drive personality.

In Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality, the pleasure principle is the driving force of the id that seeks immediate gratification of all needs, wants and urges like hunger, thirst, anger, and sex. When these needs are not met, the result is a state of anxiety or tension. The id is one of the strongest motivating forces, but it is the part of the personality that also tends to be buried at the deepest, unconscious level. During early childhood, the id controls the majority of behavior. Children act on their urges for food, water, and various forms of pleasure. The pleasure principle guides the id to fulfill these basic needs to help ensure survival. Sigmund Freud noticed that very young children often try to satisfy these often biological needs as quickly as possible, with little or no thought given whether or not the behavior is considered acceptable.

The id uses primary process to fulfill the need to act on an urge that is dangerous or unacceptable by creating a mental image of the desired object to substitute for the urge. This mental representation then diffuses psychological tension and relieves anxiety. Daydreaming and masturbation would be common examples of the Primary Process. The id is an important part of our personality because as newborns, it allows us to get our basic needs met. In other words, the id wants whatever

feels good at the time, with no consideration for the time, with no consideration for the reality of the situation. When a child is hungry, the id wants food, and therefore the child cries, when the child needs to be changed, the id cries. The id speaks up until his or her needs are met. The id doesn't care about reality, about the needs of anyone else, only its own satisfaction. For instance, babies are not real considerate of their parent's wishes. They have no care for time, whether their parents are sleeping, relaxing, eating dinner or bathing. When the id wants something, nothing else is important. Another example is, Jack is walking down the street and he is very hungry. He only has an id so when he sees an apple pie cooling in a window, he takes it for himself. As the child grows older, his education develops another group of mental processes, known as the ego.

The ego is the regulating agency which protects the individual from the dangerous posed by the id. This is the rational governing agent of the psyche. Though a large portion of the ego is unconscious, even then the ego comprises what an individual think as the conscious mind. The ego stands for good reason and good scene, while the id stands for the untamed passions. While id is governed by the pleasure principle, the ego is governed by the reality principle. The ego acts as both a conduit for and a check on the id, working to meet the id's needs in a socially appropriate way. It is the most tied to reality and begins to develop in infancy. The ego is the decision – making component of personality that operates according to the reality principle, which seeks to delay gratification of the id's urges until appropriate outlets and situations can be found. The ego meditates between the id and the external world. The ego considers social realities such as etiquette, rules, customs in deciding how to behave. The ego engages in secondary process thinking, which is relatively rational, realistic and oriented toward problem solving.

The ego develops to mediate between the unrealistic id and the external real world. It is the decision making component of personality. Ideally, the ego works by reason, whereas the id is chaotic and unreasonable. The ego operates according to the reality principle, working out realistic ways of satisfying the id's demands, often compromising or postponing satisfaction to avoid negative consequences of society. The ego considers social realities and norms, etiquette and rules in deciding how to behave. Like the id, the ego seeks pleasure and avoids pain, but unlike the id, the ego is concerned with devising a realistic strategy to obtain pleasure. The ego has no concept of right or wrong; something is good simply if it achieves its end of satisfying without causing harm to itself or the id.

If the ego fails in its attempt to use the reality principle, and anxiety is experienced, unconscious defence mechanisms are employed, to help ward off pleasant feelings or good things feel better for individual. The ego engages in secondary process thinking, which is rational, realistic, and oriented towards problem solving. If a plan of action does not work, then it is thought through again until a solution is found. This is known as reality testing and enables the person to control their impulses and demonstrate self-control, via mastery of ego. The reality principle forces an individual to consider the risks, requirements and possible outcomes as to make decisions by temporarily halting the discharge of the id's energy until a suitable time and place. An example for ego is that, if a girl was thirsty. However, that girl knew that server would be back soon to refill her water glass, so girl should waited until then to get a drink, even though really just wanted to drink from her friend's glass. The other example is, if a person cuts you off in traffic, the ego prevents you from chasing down the car and physically attacking the offending driver. The prevention is done by that person because of the conscious mind.

The last component of personality to develop is the superego. According to Freud, the superego begins to emerge at around age five. The superego includes both a punishing and a rewarding function. The superego is the ethical component of the personality. The superego holds the internalized moral standards and ideals that an individual acquires from our parents and society. The superego provides guidelines for making judgements. The superego has two parts and the first is the conscience which includes information about things that are viewed as bad by parents and society. These behaviors are often forbidden and lead to bad consequences, punishments, or feelings of guilt and remorse. The second one is that the ego ideal includes the rules and standards for behaviors that the ego aspires to. The superego tries to perfect and civilize our behavior. It works to suppress all unacceptable urges of the id and struggles to make the ego act upon idealistic standards rather than upon realistic principles. The superego's criticisms, prohibitions, and inhibitions form a person's conscience, and its positive aspirations and ideals represent one's idealized self-image, or "ego ideal." The superego is present in the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious.

The superego develops during the first five years of life in response to parental punishment and approval. This development occurs as a result of the child's internalization of his parent's moral standards, a process greatly aided by a tendency to identify with the parents. The developing superego absorbs the traditions of the family and the surrounding society and serves to control aggressive or other socially unacceptable impulses. Violation of the superego's standards results in feelings of guilt or anxiety and a need to atone for one's actions. The superego continues to develop into young adulthood as a person encounters other admired role models and copes with the rules and regulations of the larger society. The superego is developed through a process called identification. Motivated by love, fear, and admiration, children actively imitate

their parent's characteristics and internalize their parent's values become the ideals and aspirations of their children. In this way, the moral standards of society are transmitted from one generation to the next.

The primary action of the superego is to suppress entirely any urges or desires of the id that are considered wrong or socially unacceptable. It also tries to force the ego to act morally rather than realistically. Finally, the superego strives for moral perfections, without taking reality into account. The superego is also present in all three levels of consciousness. Because of this, a person experience guilt without understanding exactly why he or she felt that way. When the superego acts in the conscious mind, person will aware of their resulting feelings. If, however, the superego acts unconsciously to punish or suppress the id, people might end up with feelings of guilt and no real understanding of why they feel that way.

An example for superego is; the cashier only charged the couple for one meal even though they had eaten two. They could have gotten away with only paying for one, but they pointed out the cashier's mistake and offered to pay for both meals. They wanted to be honest and they knew that the restaurant owner and employees needed to make a living. The other example is , on the playground, two kids were making fun of Joseph because he wore glasses. John was tempted to join in so that he could make himself look good, but when he thought about how bad Joseph must already feel, he knew that he couldn't.

When talking about the id, the ego, and the superego, it is important to remember that these are not three separate entities with clearly defined boundaries. These aspects are dynamic and always interacting to influence an individual's overall personality and behavior. With many competing forces, it is easy to see how conflict

might arise between the id, ego, and superego. Freud used the term ego strength to refer to the ego's ability to function despite these dueling forces. Freud believed that an imbalance between these elements would lead to a maladaptive personality. For example, an individual with an overly dominant id might become impulsive, uncontrollable, or even criminal. Such an individual acts upon their most basic urges with no concern for whether their behavior is appropriate, acceptable, or legal. On the other hand, an overly dominant superego might lead to a personality that is extremely moralistic and judgmental. A person ruled by the superego might not be able to accept anything or anyone that they perceive to be "bad" or "immoral".

## Chapter Two

### A Gist of *The House on Mango Street*

Sandra Cisneros was born in 1954 in Chicago to a Spanish-speaking Mexican father and an English-speaking mother of Mexican descent. She was the third child and only daughter in a family of seven children. She spent most of her childhood and youth moving back and forth between Chicago and Mexico. By addressing themes of identity, poverty and gender in lyrical and sensual language, she has become one of the nation's most well known and respected Chicana authors. By creating a voice and style uniquely her own, Cisneros tells stories that reflect her own, Cisneros tells stories that reflect her interests as well as those of her community. Cisneros's novel *The House on Mango Street* modifies stories that she heard throughout her life, especially those she witnessed firsthand while working as a counselor for inner-city high school children in Chicago.

Much of Cisneros's writing asks how women have been complicit in permitting the perpetuation of their own oppression. She writes frequently about sex and relationships between men and women, focusing on the dangers incumbent in many women's hyper-romanticized notions of sex, love and marriage. Cisneros's works include two books of poetry, *My Wicked Wicked Ways* (1987) and *Loose Woman* (1994), and a collection of short stories, *Women Hollering Creek and Other Stories* (1991) a children's book titled *Hair/Pelitos and* most recently, a second novel, *Caramelo*.

“A las Mujeres - To the women” *The House on Mango Street* dedication reads, as author Sandra Cisneros simultaneously acknowledges the bilingual – or, in other words, Spanglish - nature of the story she's about to tell, and intention she has of creating a female space in a male dominated world. *The House on Mango Street*

portrays the story of Esperanza. As Esperanza grows up, she realizes that she can't live there forever. Esperanza had many dreams in her life and one of her dream was writing. The novel's innovative style- it is a collection of short, poetically phrased vignettes- allows her to depict urban life in a unified way while representing the varied influences that shape the feminist consciousness of her main character, Esperanza.

The novel begins with Esperanza describing how her family came to live at the house on Mango Street. She her parents, her brothers, Carlos and Kiki, and her sister, Nenny, moved to Mango Street when the pipes broke in their previous apartment and the landlord refused to fix them. Before they moved into the house on Mango Street, the family, moved around a lot. The family had dreamt of a white house with a lot of space and bathrooms, but the house on Mango Street has only one bedroom and one bathroom. Esperanza notes that this is not the house that she envisioned, and although her parents tell her it's only temporary, she doubts they'll move anytime soon. The house, however, does have some significant advantages over the family's previous apartments. The family owns this house, so they are no longer subject to the whims of landlords, and at the old apartment, a nun made Esperanza feel ashamed about where she lived. The house on Mango Street is an improvement, but it is still not the house that Esperanza wants to point out as hers.

Esperanza describes the different types of hair of all the members of her family. Her own hair doesn't do what she wants it to do, while her sister's is smooth and oily. Her mother's hair is beautiful and smells like bread. Esperanza likes to sleep near her mother so she can smell it. Esperanza notes that boys and girls do not socialize with each other in the neighborhood. Even though she can talk to her brothers at home, they refuse to talk to her outside. Esperanza must socialize with her younger sister Nenny, who, Esperanza notes, is too young and would not be her sister. Worse, Nenny is

Esperanza's responsibility. Esperanza has to make sure that Nenny does not play with the Vargas kids. Esperanza longs for a best friend. Without one she compares herself to a "red balloon tied to an anchor".

Esperanza muses on the meaning of her name, but she does so in a random, nonsensical way. In English, she reflects, her name means "hope", while in Spanish it means "too many letters" as well as "sadness" and "waiting". She likes the way her name is pronounced in Spanish, but not in English. Esperanza is named after her great-grandmother was born in the Chinese year of the horse. The horse is an animal that represents strength, being born under the sign is supposed to be bad luck for women. Esperanza rejects this superstition, explaining that she believes both the Chinese and Mexicans discourage women from being strong. Esperanza never met her great-grandmother, but she compares her to a wild horse. She did not want to get married but was forced into marriage and never forgave her husband. She spent her life gazing sadly out the window. Esperanza says that while she has inherited her great-grandmother's name, she does not want to "inherit her place by the window". Esperanza would like to change her name to one that expresses her true self. She lists several possible choices, setting eventually on Zeze the X.

Cathy becomes Esperanza's first friend in her new neighborhood. Cathy claims to be related to the queen of France and hopes to go to France someday to inherit the family house. She tells Esperanza about the other people on Mango Street and disparages nearly all of them. She agrees to be Esperanza's friend only for a week, until next Tuesday, when her family will move. She offends Esperanza by telling her that her family is moving because the neighborhood is getting bad, when clearly what makes it bad is that families like Esperanza's are moving in. Lucy and Rachel are Chicana sisters whose family is from Texas, and they are more similar to Esperanza than Cathy

is. Esperanza is embarrassed to tell her new friends her name, but they don't laugh at it or find it unusual. Esperanza knows she eventually must share her friends and bike with her sister Nenny, since she took money from Nenny to help pay for the bike, but for now, she decides to wait and keep her new friends herself. The three girls ride their new bike together around the block, and Esperanza describes the geography of the neighborhood.

Esperanza explains that although she and Nenny do not alike as Lucy and Rachel do, they do have a lot in common. They laugh in the same, loud way, and sometimes they have the same ideas. One day Esperanza sees a house that reminds her of houses in Mexico, although she can't say exactly why. Rachel and Lucy laugh at her, but Nenny tells them she was thinking the same thing as Esperanza. In Esperanza's neighborhood, an old black man runs a junk store, and he doesn't turn on the lights unless he knows his customers have money. Esperanza and Nenny wander around the store in the dark. Esperanza is afraid to talk to the owner and only does so when she buys a little Statue of Liberty. Nenny is not intimidated by him, and one day she asks him about a wooden box in the shop. It is a music box, and the man plays it for them. Esperanza finds the music surprising and emotional. Nenny tries to buy the box, but the man tells her it's not for sale.

Meme, whose real name is Juan, and his dog, who has both English and Spanish names, move into Cathy's house after her family leaves the neighborhood. Esperanza describes the house, a wooden house Cathy's father built. It has a tree in the backyard that is taller than Esperanza's house. When the kids had a Tarzan jumping contest, Meme jumped out of the tree and broke both his arms. Meme Ortiz's family rents their basement apartment to a Puerto Rican family. The family's son Louie is a friend of Esperanza's brother. Louie's cousin Marin also lives with the family in the basement.

Marin has a boyfriend in Puerto Rico whom she plans to marry when she goes back. At the same time, she hopes to stay in Chicago next year so she can get a job downtown. She hopes to meet a rich man on the subway who will marry her and take her to live outside the barrio. She tells Esperanza and her friends useful things like how girls got pregnant and how to remove unwanted facial hair, as well as girlish superstitions. In every society there will be some bad and good groups. Esperanza is mentioning about one such group in her neighborhood.

Esperanza says that people “who don’t know any better” think her neighborhood is dangerous, and that if they find themselves in it at night, they fear they will get stabbed. Esperanza describes the Vargas kids, whom she described earlier as being bad. They have a single mother, Rosa Vargas who is overwhelmed by and unable to control her many children, who is still sad about the fact that their father let her without a note or any money to help. The children don’t care about themselves or anybody else. At first the people in the neighborhood feel bad for the children and try to make them stop misbehaving, but eventually the people become tired of trying and stop caring. They don’t care when the children hurt themselves, even Angel Vargas falls from a great height and dies.

Alicia is a neighborhood girl whose mother has died. She must do all the cooking and cleaning for her father. Alicia is also trying to attend college, traveling far on public transportation every day so she can escape a life of domestic toil. She stays up all night studying and thus sees the mice that don’t exist and that a woman’s job is to get up early to make tortillas for her younger siblings lunches. A conversation about clouds between Esperanza, Nenny, Lucy and Rachel turns into a fight. One of the girls says Esperanza has an ugly fat face, and after this the girls playfully exchange creative insults.

Esperanza pleads with her mother to let her take her lunch to school, but when she is allowed to do so, she doesn't enjoy it. She goes to a baptismal party for a baby cousin and dances with her uncle. Esperanza, Nenny, Lucy, and Rachel talk about getting hips, and Esperanza gets her first job, in a photo – developing store. Esperanza just has to show up and lie about her age. In the office a man, Esperanza describes as older and Oriental befriends her. Esperanza feels more comfortable now that she has someone to eat lunch with in office other ways she was alone. He asks her to give him a kiss because it's his birthday, but when Esperanza leans over to kiss him on the cheek he grabs her face and kisses her hard on the lips for a long time.

Esperanza's grandfather dies in Mexico, her Aunt Lupe dies in Chicago, and Esperanza goes to a fortune-teller who informs her that she will have a home in the heart. At a dance, her friend Marin meets a man who is later injured in a hit- and –run accident; Marin waits in the hospital while he dies. Esperanza describes two neighborhood adults whom she finds interesting: Edna's daughter Ruthie and a jukebox repairman named Earl. She tells about a boy- Sire – who sometimes stares at her, and talks about her relationship to four trees growing from the sidewalk in front of her house.

Then Esperanza describes a married women she knows- *Mamacita*, who is very fat, very homesick, and cannot speak English, and Rafaela, who is young and beautiful, and whose husband locks her in their apartment while he goes out to play dominoes with his friends. Sally, who is about Esperanza's age, makes herself attractive to boys and young men but is mistreated by her father, who is afraid she will run away with someone. And Minerva (who also writes poems), not much older than Esperanza, has two little children and a husband who leaves her sometimes but then comes back and beats her. When she has a house, Esperanza says, it will be a big, fine one, and she will

let “bums” stay upstairs in the attic. She has decided to be independent, like a man. Her mother tells her that she herself quit school because she was ashamed of her clothes.

Esperanza describes her new friend, Sally, a girl who is more sexually mature and interested in boys than Esperanza. Esperanza wishes she were beautiful like Sally and admires Sally’s sense of style. She wants to have shoes and stockings like Sally’s. Esperanza identifies with Sally because she knows Sally also wants to get away from Mango Street. Esperanza soon learns that Sally has a troubled home life, the victim of constant physical abuse by her father. Sally’s father beats her so badly that her mother allows her to come and stay with Esperanza’s family, but he comes to get her, begs her to come home with him, and then beats her worse. Esperanza and Sally go to play in an overgrown and deserted garden, but Sally would rather hang out with the boys, and Esperanza’s embarrasses herself by trying to protect Sally, who doesn’t want to be protected. The two girls go to a carnival and Sally leaves with a boy; Esperanza, waiting for her to return, is overpowered by several strangers and sexually assaulted by one of them.

Now Sally has married a young man she met at a school function, and he makes her stay in their house and won’t let her friends visit. Lucy and Rachel’s youngest sister, an infant, dies; at their house, Esperanza meets her friends three aunts, who draw her aside and tell her she is special. When she leaves Mango Street, they say, she must not neglect to come back for those who can’t leave. Her friend Alicia echoes this advice when they talk on Edna’s steps. And, at last, Esperanza says that she will have a house of her own, she will someday leave Mango Street – and, sometimes, writing helps her make it leave her – but she will come back for others.

By the end of the novel, Esperanza is poised to become what is, in her society a kind of New Woman – soon to attain a level of independence that was unheard of for women in earlier generations, and possessing the confidence, education, and means to exist in the world without relating to men in a hierarchical way. Women occupy a central role in *The House on Mango Street*. Almost all of the major characters are women, and the protagonist's understanding of her own motives as a woman. Esperanza notices that beauty is not an infallible weapon, and that it can backfire – the beautiful women in the novel are often the ones who suffer the most at the hands of men. In her struggle to define her own femininity in a society that is often oppressive to women, Esperanza seeks new forms of feminine power – ones that will allow her to maintain her independence. *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros is an example for women oriented work.

## Chapter Three

### Rooting of the Mind in the Body: A Psychoanalysis Reading

#### Of *The House on Mango Street*

The novel *The House on Mango Street* written by Sandra Cisneros records the life of a girl, Esperanza and the whole novel goes through the perspective of her and narrates the stories using her innocent tone. Esperanza has experienced extreme poverty, racism, patriarchy, sexual offense, and other traumatic situations. *The House on Mango Street* tells the journey of Esperanza's struggling for her identity. The theory of personality is Freud's prominent idea. It contains id, ego, and superego. According to Freud's idea, people's psychology has more than one aspect. Id, ego and super-ego are not coming up in sequence. They are significant at different life stages, which has a great impact on Esperanza's destiny. Cisneros used id, ego and super-ego to depict different characters.

Esperanza's friends also have gone through unpleasant experiences. However they give different responses to society. They choose to surrender to society. Their ego, prevails over id and super- ego. However, Esperanza chooses to fight against society, trying to satisfy her id. When she successfully meets her initial id, her super-ego does not allow her to escape for her individual's good, but pulls her back to help her neighborhood gain freedom and rights. Esperanza, as a frail individual, changes the society due to her firm inner emotions. The environment in society has different impacts on individual's id, ego and super-ego.

People would like to fulfill their desires immediately regardless of the consequences. As the author mentions at the beginning of the story, Esperanza introduces her house "The house on Mango Street is ours, and we don't have to pay

rent to anybody, or share the yard with people, be careful not to make too much noise, and there isn't a landlord banging on the ceiling with a broom".(3)With many economic advantages, Esperanza still does not like her house and wants to change their residence. The desire to change the house is the id from Esperanza's heart. Although she knows her family is too poor to have a decent house, she still desires for good one. The id is the primary hope which cannot be affected by the environment. The name "Esperanza" derives from her grandmother's name. Her grandmother is a tragic woman. As the author describes, "She looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow".(11)Esperanza does not want to have the same experience as her grandmother experienced. Moreover, her classmates often laugh at her name because of the cultural differences in understanding the word. Thus, she has been hoping to change her name since her childhood; though she cannot rename herself. No matter what the environment is, people have the primary drive for something pleasant, comfortable and enjoyable.

Like any other girls, Esperanza had many dreams in her life. She does not have a best friend so she wishes that one day she would get a friend of her own. Esperanza wishes to share all her secrets to her best friend. She also wishes that her best friend can understand her jokes without explaining them. The narrator really wishes to get a best friend for her to share her all feelings. She had many plans to do with her buddy. Esperanza's id boosted her to longing for a best friend.

Although id is limited by reality or would cause bad results, the drive naturally exists. Some people follow id. Sex is one of the primary desires. Esperanza gets her first job, her boss molests her at work. On a carnival night, three boys rape Esperanza, seeking bodily pleasure. Her boss and three boys put the sex desire in their mind into practice. They do not restrain the id regardless of the hurt to the girl and the worm of

conscience. Hence, the society affects individual little in the aspect of id. Like id, ego also plays an important role in human beings life. During lunchtime, Esperanza scared to eat alone in the company lunchroom with all those men and ladies looking. The fear of Esperanza about others or the society is due to her ego. So to overcome that situation she ate fast in one of the washroom. The narrator, Esperanza's activity is result of her ego. Marin is a girl who lived in the Mango Street, and Esperanza, the narrator says about Marin that

“And Marin just looks at them without even blinking and is not afraid. Marin, under the streetlight dancing by herself, is singing the same song somewhere. I know. Is waiting for a car to stop, a star to fall, someone to change her life”.(27)

Marin is doing what her mind says, she is not at all bothered about her society, she focuses only on her id and gives herself some pleasure. The pleasure principle is worked in the particular activity of Marin. She is really enjoying herself and her activity. In the above lines it is visible that Marin is looking at them indicates the boys, and she is not at all afraid of them and neither society. She is in short skirts and she likes to get attracted by boys and also she is also gazing at them. She finds pleasure in doing so.

Esperanza introduces her mother by describing her mother's curly and pretty hair, not only that but also how much she liked her Mama's presence. Her description makes readers realize that Mama functions as the center of Esperanza's life. In this novel Mama narrates Esperanza's sense of shame about the house on Mango Street and the family's relative poverty. She warns Esperanza not to let shame keep her down. It is clear that, Esperanza's ego is the reason why she felt shame about family situation.

Esperanza also introduces her papa as the source of her family's dream. There is a situation where Esperanza's papa tells Esperanza about her grandfather's death and he cries. In that situation, Esperanza empathizes with his suffering also at one moment she thought about what she will do when her own papa dies. She hugs him to make herself less afraid as well as to comfort him. The particular activity of Esperanza towards her papa is a perfect example for super-ego.

“Because I am the oldest, my father has told me first, and now it is my turn to tell others. I will have to explain why we can't play. I will have to tell them to be quiet today. My Papa, his thick hands and thick shoes, who wakes up tired in the dark, who combs his hair with water, drinks his coffee, and is gone before we wake, today is sitting on my bed. And I think if my own Papa died what would I do. I hold my Papa in my arms. I hold and hold and hold him”.(56-57)

As novel progresses, Esperanza's attitude towards her life changes. Esperanza becomes increasingly aware of her family's relative poverty and of their low status in the world. She recognizes that her family can't have and this recognition traps her. Such feeling comes from her conscious mind. She has normal emotions for a teenager, a fact that Papa recognizes when teases her about her age, according to Esperanza's father what he was his moral responsibility, indicating super- ego. Esperanza feels ashamed and sorry for herself and fails to give Papa the appreciation he deserves. Esperanza's reaction towards her father was the result of ego and super ego. She gave respect to her father's feelings and she tried to live according to her father's wish.

Most women character's in *Mango Street* have id: they would like to gain equality, freedom, and love. However, the social environment says no to them to become writer, to mingle with opposite gender and so on. Women know that they cannot change the norms, they have to accept the reality and live with it. In Sandra Cisneros *The House on Mango Street*, there are many female characters that come across in Esperanza's life. One character in particular catches her attention and who she starts to envy is Sally. Sally is a foil character in the novel. Sally is everything that Esperanza isn't, in fact they are yin and yang. They both have the same goal of wanting to leave Mango Street just like the other women of the neighborhood.

Sally was very fond of boys and friendship with them. The presence of boys makes her pleasure. Like Esperanza, Sally had many dreams in her life but she repressed in her mind because of the fear of society. Ego always controlled her life, especially her dreams. As a friend Esperanza once motivated Sally to think about her dreams. Esperanza said;

“And you could laugh Sally. You could go to sleep and wake up and never have to think who likes and doesn't like you. You could close your eyes and you wouldn't have to worry what people said because you never belonged here anyway and nobody could make you sad and nobody would think you're strange because you like to dream and dream. And no one could yell at you if they saw you out in the dark leaning against a car, leaning against somebody without someone saying it is wrong, without the whole world waiting for you to make a mistake when all you wanted, all you wanted, Sally, was to love and to love and to love and to love, and no one could call that crazy.” (83)

It is very clear that Esperanza tries to give color to the wings of Sally's repressed id. Esperanza helps to give life to the unconscious mind of Sally and all her hidden desire. Through Esperanza's words it is clear that she and at same time Sally also like to live according to their wish without bothering society and without any influence of ego and super-ego, indicating no emotional attachment towards their belongings.

Esperanza and her friend Sally and some boys had been playing in an empty lot when the boys ganged up to kiss Sally; Esperanza thinks the boys are attacking Sally but unfortunately Sally and boys were enjoying the kissing game. The id of Sally and boys are revealed through their kissing game. Pleasure principle worked between Sally and boys. Sally's father punished her because of her attempt. Sally gets married because of her id: she wants to get rid of her father. When she is abused by her husband again, she does not fight against him. Ego also searches for pleasures as id, but ego avoids bad consequences, which is affected by environment and reason. Sally does not try to change the situation again, because she knows the social environment cannot be changed, and she would feel the pain if she fights back. Thus, the society will affect ego people.

Esperanza has a sense of independence since her father is not controlling and doesn't try to be a patriarch. Esperanza's id is filled with the desire to leave the Mango Street, but she doesn't choose marriage as a solution to fulfill her dream, like Sally had done to escape from her father. Esperanza is guided by her ego more than her id because she attempts to achieve her want in a way that is acceptable without being instinctive and doing the wrong thing. Esperanza had a great dream to become a writer and she used to write poems. Esperanza read this poem, to her aunt, who is blind on her deathbed. Her desire to become writer is part of her id.

The friendship between Sally and Esperanza, affects Esperanza's life in different way. Sally was sexually mature and interested in boys than Esperanza. Her maturity is part of her ego. At the same time, her interest in boys and her time with boys give her pleasure. Esperanza finds pleasure in writing and reading while Sally finds at in sexual pleasures. After being assaulted by a group of boys, Esperanza blames Sally for abandoning her making her vulnerable. She also feels angry at Sally for misleading her into the matter of romance. The angriness was the result of her sadness. The sadness arose in the mind of Esperanza due to the influence of super-ego. Admiring and following Sally has led Esperanza into danger. There is an instance in novel where Esperanza fights with Sally for lying and leaving her alone in one night.

“Why did you leave me all alone? I waited my whole life. You're a liar. They all lied. All the books and magazines, everything that told it wrong. Only his dirty finger-nails against my skin, only his sour smell again.”(100)

From these lines, the extreme pain of Esperanza for what was happened to her is clear. Her super-ego activated and her moral value was hurt. The boy who misbehaved to Esperanza was motivated by to satisfy his pleasure principle.

Once at a large family party honoring a cousin's baptism and surrounded by her extended family, Esperanza overcomes her shyness and self-consciousness about her shoes and successfully dances with her uncle. This change of Esperanza is a perfect example of ego. Earlier in the party a young boy asked her to dance. Though she declined, she remains conscious of his eyes upon her. Esperanza's feelings about dancing show that she is becoming aware of boys and starting to realize that she can be

attracted by them. The conscious part of mind indicates ego and the awareness of Esperanza about boys is representing maturity incorporated with ego.

Esperanza remembers how she and her friends made fun of the way her aunt, Gaudalupe moved and talked. Her aunt encouraged Esperanza to become a writer. Esperanza later felt guilt by herself regarding her behavior she had done to her aunt. She learns to use language to resolve her feelings and take control of her life. Esperanza's conscious mind help her to overcome her bad behavior. Her ego and her super ego helped her to control her bad behavior and her awareness of values made her to felt guilt and lead a good life.

Esperanza is not as beautiful as her sister Nenny, and she knows she can't wait for a man to rescue her from circumstances. Esperanza was ready to understand such fact and it indicates that she gained maturity and that is what is ego. According to Esperanza beautiful women make men crazy. Esperanza was not like other girls and she begin her resistance, leaving the dinner table like a man, without putting back the chair or picking up the plate. This resistance is a part of her ego. Actually she is in conscious and trying to get rid from what make her irritated.

Nenny had many dreams and she had some stand for herself. Her decisions are purely based on herself and not by anyone's influence. Her id is worked incorporate with her ego. Esperanza describes an reality of Esperanza which is understood by herself and also the decision of Nenny.

“I am an ugly daughter. I am the one nobody comes for. Nenny says she won't wait her whole life for a husband to come and get her, that Minervas sister left her mother's house by having a baby, but she doesn't want to go that way either. She wants things all her

own, to pick and choose. Nenny has pretty eyes and it's easy to talk that way if you are pretty.”(88)

Lucy and Rachel were the friends of Esperanza in the Mango Street. Their baby sister dies and the neighborhood gathers in Lucy and Rachel's house before she is buried. The neighbours consoled Lucy and Rachel and their activity were the symbol of morality and affection. Their matured mind, is representing ego and also the society's moral responsibility to join in others pain is also beautifully crafted in this incident. The moral responsibility is aroused from the result of super-ego. Three aunts who had magical powers attended the funeral, they compliment Esperanza on her special name and asked her to make a wish. Esperanza wishes in her mind to leave Mango Street. The wish of Esperanza for herself without considering anyone is an example for id. One of the women takes Esperanza aside and tells her that even though she will be able to leave but she comes back for others. The request of the woman towards Esperanza is the part of ego. Later, Esperanza felt guilty for wishing for such a selfish thing. Morality works in Esperanza and super- ego is the reason to make feel guilty in her.

All women who want to leave Mango Street have one thing in common: they all are feeling trapped by a man. Sally wants to leave just like Esperanza. Their id always stimulated to leave Mango Street Sally's father beats her whenever she looks at boys and he tries to control her physical and verbal abuse. Her father tried to control her id because of the influence of ego. His father felt irritated and tensed about his daughter's attitude to the opposite sex even though Sally is seeking pleasure from her doings. One day Sally's father caught her when she talked with the boys, then

“And the next. Until the way Sally tells it, he just went crazy, he was her father between the buckle and the belt. You’re not my daughter, you’re not my daughter. And then he broke into his hands.”(93)

Her id is filled with this desire to put herself out there for boys despite the consequences that she is going to receive from her father. Sally’s father tried to protect her due to his responsibility which he achieved from his matured experiences and also because of some moral values, so it reflects super-ego and the same time great influence of ego too. Esperanza had many desires in her life. But because of her ego she cannot fulfill many of her dreams. Life of Sire, a neighborhood boy, and her girlfriend Lois not only irritated Esperanza but also attracted. Ego worked in the mind of Esperanza. Even though she had many desires, conscious mind always reminded her to think about society and to control some of them. Whatever may be the society’s mentality, the id inside the narrator was so strong. She says;

“Everything is holding its breath inside me. Everything is waiting to explode like Christmas. I want to be all new and shiny. I want to sit out bad at night, a boy around my neck and the wind under my skirt.”(73)

Esperanza’s intensity of desire is cleared. Sire and his girlfriend Lois relationship disturbed Esperanza and also stimulated hidden sexual pleasure in her. Esperanza is guided by her ego more than her id because she attempts to achieve her want in a way that is acceptable without being instinctive and doing the wrong thing. Even though she had desire of sex, she was controlled by her conscious mind. While Sally is out there letting herself be controlled by men in order to escape her father,

Esperanza doesn't allow herself to be controlled and she doesn't rely on anyone to help her achieve her goal. Sally's father has hindered her growth making her dependent on men while Esperanza's father has helped her to grow and develop a sense of independence.

Rafaela is a young married woman whose husband does not let her out of the house because of her beauty. She leans out the window and listen to the music from the bar down the street and her great desire is to dance before getting older. Rafaela was also affected by id. She also wishes for sweeter drinks, she drops a dollar into the street and asks neighborhood kids to get her drink. Her all such wish is an example for her ego and her such wish led her to get her needed things using any way without bothering others. The characters in the novel *The House on Mango Street* is going through different mental stages. After marriage, eventhough Sally was happy but she was controlled by her husband for some matters. Esperanza is describing the situations of Sally.

“And he doesn't let her look out the window. And he doesn't like her friends, so nobody gets to visit her unless he is working. She sits at home because she is afraid to go outside without his permission. She looks at all the things they own: the towels and the toaster, the alarm clock and the drapes.”(102)

Through this description of Esperanza about her friend Sally is clear that she is really controlled by her husband. Sally was fear of her husband and that makes her to sit inside the house. Her consciousness about her husband and to satisfy her husband's wish, she controlled her id. She is working by the force of ego and super-ego.

Esperanza's family shifts their house from one place to another. They lived in Loomis before they settled in the Mango Street. Esperanza faced certain ego problems regarding their house on Loomis. It is clear by the conversation between Esperanza and a nun from her school. When nun asked Esperanza whether she lives there and the question repeated, Esperanza nodded with dissatisfaction. The house on Mango Street was also not a house for Esperanza that she dreamt of. Her dream was, one day she wants to own her own house, which is the result of her id. And she clarifying that if she own a house, she will not forget who she was or where she came from. This mentality of Esperanza came from the influence of super ego, because it indicates her affection towards her beloved.

The environment will affect super-ego, and the super-ego will also influence the environment. Esperanza never surrenders to fate. She dreams big and wants to change her situation and surroundings. It is because of her id. When Esperanza starts high school, she feels ready to contribute to the family finances. Esperanza's family believes in hard work and education. Although their house is tiny and crowded, they own their home. In addition, they pay to send their children at Catholic school, Esperanza gets her strength from her family's values. It represents the super-ego.

While evaluating the novel *The House on Mango Street*, it gives a clear picture of Esperanza's strong desire to leave Mango Street. She wishes that one day she will pack her bags of books and paper, then say goodbye to Mango Street. It is one of her greatest desire and it helps a person to realize that how much an individual is influenced by her id. Esperanza's temptation for her own house was so strong. "Not a flat. Not an apartment in back. Not a man's house. Not a daddy's. A house all my own."(108)

Esperanza wished very much to become a writer and she was strong enough to accomplish her dreams. She no longer feels trapped because she has begun her journey of working toward her dreams. She also recognizes her connections to the other residents of Mango Street, whose stories helped her to become a writer. It is clear that Esperanza's super-ego and id collaborated to achieve her dream.

Id, ego and super-ego become significant at different stages in Esperanza's life, shaping her destiny. In the first life stage, when she was a child, she shows her id but hides the id subconsciously. In the second stage, the id, and ego of Esperanza are fighting fiercely with her precocious mind. In the first two stages, the individual is controlled by society. In the third stage, after the three sisters give her directions, the id of Esperanza defeats the ego, and super-ego controls her from surrendering to the environment. Super-ego refers to social morals and values. What is more, her super-ego pulls her back to help women on Mango Street to liberate themselves. The main character Esperanza is a typical character who is always negotiating between individual desire and social environment. At last, her super-ego changes the society through her effort. It is clear that id, ego and super-ego create an impact on individuals mind by analyzing characters from the novel *The House on Mango Street* especially focusing the lives of the protagonist Esperanza and the foil character Sally.

## Conclusion

Man is a social being thus it is very difficult for him or her to break the social shackle according to their desires. The project aims to analyze how Freudian psychoanalytic concepts like id, ego and superego affect individuals during their life time using the characters from Sandra Cisneros's novel, *The House on Mango Street*. It is understood that id, ego and superego are not coming up in sequence but they incorporate each other. They become significant at different life stages and it is analyzed through various characters especially with respect to the character of Esperanza who is the protagonist.

Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street* has different characters and they face numerous problems in their life journey. The psychic problems or the emotional feelings that the characters undergo lead them to take adverse decisions. They never take a note on the society but only about their desire and pleasure that indicates their id. Influenced by the ego, sometimes, the characters are aware of the society and react according to satisfy others. The individuals become very aware of moral values at times which is an indication of superego.

It is clear through the analysis that the activities done by a person is based upon the influence of any of these three elements: id, ego and superego. Conscious and unconscious mind have a great role to detect person's behavior that influence the decisions taken by individuals. Human life is filled with the mixture of id, ego and super-ego. It follows them since their birth to death.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

***ROOTS: THE SAGA OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY: A  
REPRESENTATION OF SUBJUGATED SUBALTERN  
LIVES***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**NAYANA M NAIR**

**Register No: DB18AEGR032**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mrs. JESNA KURIAKOSE

June, 2021

## Kannur University

### Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “*Roots: The Saga of An American Family: A Representation of Subjugated Subaltern Lives*” is a bonafide work of **Nayana M Nair**, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mrs. Jesna Kuriakose

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, **Nayana M Nair**, hereby declare that the project work entitled “*Roots: The Saga of An American Family: A Representation of Subjugated Subaltern Lives*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Jesna Kuriakose of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

**Angadikadavu**

**NAYANA M NAIR**

**DB18AEGR032**

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**NAYANA M NAIR**

## Table of Contents

Sl. No.		Page No.
1.	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
2.	<b>Chapter One</b>	<b>3</b>
	<i>Subaltern theory: An overview</i>	
3.	<b>Chapter Two</b>	<b>12</b>
	<i>Perusing <i>Roots</i></i>	
4.	<b>Chapter Three</b>	<b>21</b>
	<i>Subaltern lives in <i>Roots: The Saga of an American Family</i></i>	
5.	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>35</b>
	<b>Works Cited</b>	<b>37</b>

## Introduction

Subaltern studies refer to the study of social groups excluded from dominant power structures, whether these are (neo) colonial, patriarchal, cultural, racial, socio-economic, linguistic and ethnic groups. When people lack voice and when they are excluded from systems of political or cultural representation, they are called subaltern, or the subordinate. Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist and Communist declared the subaltern to be the subordinate lower class in a society in which the dominant power wields the dominant influence.

The main objective of this thesis is to detect the subjugation faced by the subalterns in various scenarios and circumstances. This is explored through the novel *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* written by an African American writer Alex Haley. This project tries to point out the various ways by which the subalterns are degraded or discriminated in the society. It tries to bring to light the various struggles experienced by the African- American subalterns and their sufferings. It acknowledges Blacks in *Roots* as subaltern and discusses the numerous ways by which they are treated unequally by the so-called authorities (Black men in the case of Black women and Whites in the case of the whole Black community).

The project is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the origin and the development of subaltern theory. The term subaltern is derived from Antonio Gramsci's work on cultural hegemony, which identified the groups that are excluded from a society's established structures for political representations and therefore denied the means by which the people have a voice in their society. This chapter discusses about literary critics like Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak who has contributed to the development of the theory. The first chapter also speaks about various writers and their

works in which subaltern theory can be applied. Arundhati Roy and Anita Nair have contributed such writings.

The second chapter contains the analysis of the novel *Roots* exploring the subaltern lives depicted in the novel along with various other themes the novel consists of. In other words, this chapter is all about *Roots*. It is a novel about the life of Kunta Kinte, an African who was kidnapped from Juffure to America by the slave traders, and his generations. It demonstrates the sufferings of the characters as slaves and the ways they retaliated, adjusted, accustomed and surpassed the condition.

The third chapter deals with the application of the particular theory in the novel *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*. It is about the subaltern livings. In this chapter subaltern theory is applied to various aspects of the novel. The Black lives in America is attributed as subalterns because of their inferior position in the country. They are not considered as the part of the nation neither as fellow beings by the Whites. Women regardless of the group is always oppressed. In the novel one comes to know the harsh reality of subjugation faced by Black women in both the Black and White community. This chapter is all about the application of subaltern theory into various circumstances in which the subaltern lives are mentioned.

## Chapter 1

### Subaltern theory: An overview

Subaltern is a word used by the British army to denote a subordinate officer and Subaltern studies aimed to describe a variety of approaches to the situation of South Asia, in particular in the colonial and postcolonial era. A common feature of this approaches is the claim that though colonialism ended with the granting of independence to the former colonies of Britain, France the United States and other empires, the imperialism did not. Instead, the imperial powers continued to exert so much cultural and economic hegemony that the independence of the former colonies was more notional than there. Insisting on free trade and anticommunism, the old empires, as the subaltern theorists saw it, have reverted to the sort of indirect rule that the British had reverted over Argentina and other countries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*Orientalism* (1978), by the literary critic Edward Said, announced many of the themes of the subaltern studies. The Orient that Said discussed was basically the Middle East, and the Orientalism was the body of fact, opinion and prejudice accumulated by western European scholars in their encounter with it. Said stressed the enormous appetite for this lore, which influenced painting, literature and anthropology no less than history. It was, of course, heavily coloured by racism, but perhaps the most insidious aspect of it, in Said's view, was that the Western categories not only informed the production of knowledge but also were accepted by the colonized countries. The importation of Rankean historiography into Japan and Russia is an example. The result has been described rather luridly as epistemological rape, in that the whole cultural stock of colonized people came to be discredited.

During their initial Oriental explorations, the European's mythologies were reinforced, when the travellers returned to Europe with reports of monsters and savage lands. The concept of the difference and the strangeness of the Orient were perpetuated through the mass communications media of the time, and through discourse that created an Us and Them binary social relation with which the Europeans defined themselves by defining the differences of the Orient from the Occident, the European west. The Us and Them binary social relation was a foundation of colonialism, because it represented the Orient as backward and irrational Islands, and, therefore, in need of European help to become modern, in the western sense. Hence, the discourse of Orientalism is Eurocentric, and does not seek to include the voices of the Oriental peoples, the subalterns, themselves.

The cultural theorist Stuart Hall argued that the power of discourse created and reinforced western dominance. The discourses on how Europe described differences between itself (The west) and others, used European cultural categories, languages, and ideas to represent 'the Other' in Edward Said's *Orientalism*. The knowledge produced by such a discourse becomes praxis, which then becomes reality; by producing a discourse of 'difference'. Europe was able to maintain its dominance over the 'Other', with a binary social relation between the European and the Other, thereby creating and establishing the Subaltern, made possible by excluding the Other from the production of the discourse.

Although originally and most thoroughly applied to the Middle East and South Asia, subaltern history is capable of extension to any subordinate population, and it has been influential in histories of women and of African Americans. Its main challenge to world history is that most subaltern theorists deny the possibility of any single master

narrative that could form a plot for world history. This entails at least a partial break with Marxism, which is exactly such a narrative. Instead, most see a postmodern developing world with a congeries of national or tribal histories, without closures or conventional narratives, whose unity, if it has one at all, was imposed by the imperialist power.

Historians who use the term subaltern take it from Antonio Gramsci an Italian Marxist and Communist who was imprisoned for a long time by Mussolini's police until his death at age 46. In prison he wrote notebooks on politics, history and philosophy. He declared that the subaltern was the subjected underclass in a society on whom the dominant power exerts its hegemonic influence. Subaltern studies emerged around 1982 as a series of journal articles published by Oxford University Press in India. A group of Indian scholars trained in the west wanted to reclaim their history. Its main goal was to retake history for the underclass, for the voice that had not been heard previous. Scholars of the subaltern hoped to break away from histories of the elite and the Eurocentric bias of current imperial history. In the main, they wrote against the Cambridge School which seemed to uphold the colonial legacy- i.e., it was elite centred. Instead, they focus on subaltern in terms of class, caste, gender, race, language and culture. They espoused the idea that there may have been political dominance, but this was not hegemonic. The primary leader was Ranajit Guha who had written works on peasant uprisings in India. Another of the leading scholar in subaltern studies is Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak. She draws on a number of theoretical positions in her analysis of Indian history: deconstruction, Marxism, feminism. She was highly critical of current histories of India that were told from the vantage point of colonizers and presented the story of a colony via the British administrators. What she and other historians wanted was to reclaim their history, to give voice to the subjected people. Any other history

merely reconstructs imperialist hegemony and does not give voice to the people- those who resisted, those who supported, those who experienced colonial incursion.

In other words, proponents of Subaltern theory suggest that we need to find alternative sources to locate the voice of subaltern historically. The introduction of subaltern studies, like all of our theories we have encountered this term, has tremendous political repercussions. In a society like Great Britain, that claims to operate as a commonwealth yet sees racism around every corner as well as the desire to keep out the blacks who cause all the problems, the writing and mapping of a history of a previously silent groups create an undercurrent throughout the society.

As a method of intellectual discourse, the concept of the term subaltern is problematic because it is originated as a Eurocentric method of historical enquiry for studying the non-Western people of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. From its inception as a historical research mode for studying the colonial experiences of South Asian people, Subaltern studies transformed from a model of intellectual discourse into a method of vigorous post-colonial critique. In the last two decades of the twentieth century, subaltern studies, post-colonial theory and criticism gained momentum thanks to the effects of the globalization on the Third world countries. If post-colonial criticism is taken as an upshot of postmodernism, subaltern studies derive its force from Marxism, Post structuralism and becomes a part of Post-colonial criticism. The term subaltern, as it has been developed by theorists such as Homi K Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak in postcolonial studies, has its origins in a particular reading of the Italian social theorist Antonio Gramsci. In his, 'Notes on Italian History' in *Quaderni del Carcere* (1948-51 trans prison notebooks) Gramsci defined the subaltern classes by contrasting them to the historical unity of the ruling classes which is realized in the

state: The subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a state: their history therefore, is intertwined with that of civil society and thereby with the history of states and groups of states.

In Antonio Gramsci's definition, the history of the subaltern classes in nineteenth century Italy was subordinated to the political will of the ruling class. While Gramsci doesn't explicitly define the social composition of the subaltern in his 'Notes on Italian History' his earlier account of the historical conditions in Southern Italy in some Aspects of the Southern Question (1920), offers a concrete example of what Gramsci mean by the term Subaltern. As Gramsci puts it, the Northern bourgeoisie has subjugated the south of Italy and the Islands, and reduced them to exploitable colonies.

In post-colonial theory, the term subaltern describes the lower classes and the social group who are at the margins of the society. A subaltern is person rendered without agency due to his or her social status. Nonetheless, the literary critic Gayatri Spivak advised against a too-broad application of the term in 1992. In Marxist theory, the civil sense of the term subaltern was first used by the Italian communist intellectual Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937). In discussions of the meaning of subaltern in Gramsci's writings, Spivak and others have argued that he used the word as a synonym for the proletariat, but this interpretation has been contested, with evidence indicating that it was a novel concept in Gramsci's political theory. In several essays, the postcolonial critic Homi K Bhabha, emphasized that the importance of social power relations in defining subaltern social groups as oppressed, racial minorities whose social presence was crucial to the self- definition of the majority groups who had hegemonic power.

Post-colonial Marxists such as Aijaz Ahmad have suggested that Bhabha and other 'Westernised' non-Europeans are hardly in the best position to speak for the

colonized and neo-colonized masses. The postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak, has no trouble admitting that her position as an academic working in the West separates her from the masses of India, her country of origin. At the same time, however, she has drawn our attention to that large majority of the colonized that has left no mark upon history because it could not, or was not allowed to, make itself heard. Millions and millions have come and gone under the colonial dispensation without leaving a trace: men, but even more so women. Since colonized women almost by definition went unheard within their own patriarchal culture, they were doubly unheard under a colonial regime. Spivak can be said to be first post-colonial theorist with fully feminist agenda. That agenda includes the complicity of female writers with imperialism.

Spivak represents the voice of difference among the major postcolonial theorists. In spite of their poststructuralist sources of inspiration, Said and Bhabha virtually ignore the question of difference. Said's analysis of western representations of the East has been charged with gender-blindness and how feminist scholars have argued that female representations are different from male ones. This is in fact rather plausible on purely theoretical grounds. If Western representations routinely set up a binary opposition 'West versus East' in which the West is superior and masculine and the East inferior and feminine one might indeed expect female authors to deviate from the pattern. Bhabha makes no difference between men and women in his theorizing of the interaction between colonizer and colonized. Said and Bhabha also largely ignored cultural difference. Said makes no difference between the various European cultures- Protestant or Catholic, liberal or authoritarian- he puts on the rack in *Orientalism* and Bhabha writes as if the interaction of the colonizer and colonized can be completely separated from the cultures involved. Spivak, however, tries to be attentive to difference, even within feminism itself: she has taken Western feminism to task for

operating within a horizon determined by white, middle-class, and hetero-sexual preoccupation.

There are lots of works in literature discussing the subaltern lives. *The God of Small Things*, a Booker Prize winning novel written by Arundhati Roy, is a very famous novel that speaks for the subaltern. The novel deals with the troubled history of females and the untouchables. The novel draws attention to the mental as well as physical exploitation of both the females and the untouchables. The contrast between males/females, and touchable/untouchables is explicit throughout the novel. The God of Small Things revolves around a forbidden relationship between a Syrian Christian divorcee, Ammu, and a low caste carpenter, Velutha. It is a story about the rights of the women and the untouchables versus age-old restrictions imposed by the traditionalist Indian society. The story tells us about Ammu's twins called Estha and Rahel, about the inter-caste affair, about the subsequent beating and killing of Velutha by the police of Ayemenem, a village in Kerala, and about the death by drowning of the children's cousin, Sophie Mol.

Subaltern theory can be applied to some Victorian works. Heathcliff is one of the protagonists of Emily Bronte's novel *Wuthering Heights*. He is described as heathen, a lascar, a gypsy, and an Indian or Chinese prince. Being the quintessence of savagery, madness, and intolerance, Heathcliff is definitely a subaltern figure in the novel to all the characters including the love of his life, Catherine Earnshaw. Dehumanizing Heathcliff is one aspect of dealing with him as inferior subaltern who has no known origins. Other characters in the novel compare him to the devil, a villain, wicked boy, frightful thing who is not fit for a decent house, and a savage. All that in addition to Heathcliff's foreignness, associate him with the subaltern who are always oppressed and looked down upon. Heathcliff never had a chance in the novel to express

his own feelings or even defend his monstrous actions towards the Earnshaws or Lintons. Emily Bronte did not even allow him to narrate the story from his own perspective. In contrast, the whole story is narrated by Nelly Dean who is rather the mouth piece of the society, always siding Edgar Linton and depicting Heathcliff as a soul less creature who never knew the meaning of love or care. Being a subaltern, Heathcliff never speaks of or about himself. Falling prey to oppression, Heathcliff resorted to retaliation in an attempt to be recognized, felt and represented.

In Victorian narratives, the subaltern never speaks for himself or tells his own story. In *Jane Eyre*, Bertha Mason is the epitome of madness, imprecating evil and darkness. Harriet Beecher Stowe treats her as the subaltern, whose inferiority is inherent within her nature. In the case of Tonga, Doyle's *The Sign of Four* silences him utterly, forbidding him from speaking a single word or even exhibiting any kind of uncontrolled behaviour. In these novels, the subaltern figures are un-represented, that is, they are never allowed to speak for themselves or express their inner feelings. However, the only issue that remains unresolved in these novels, even if it appears otherwise, is whether the subaltern groups are intrinsically brutal, or whether they turned bestial in response to the despotic manners they were treated with. The response is rather implied but we never listen to the voice of subaltern to conform it.

Anita Nair is a well-known novelist, dramatist, essayist in the postmodern writings. She attempts to raise the voice of the subaltern in her novels and set examples for the society who thinks woman as an inferior human being or a woman who has identity only through her husband or family. Anita Nair in her novel *Lessons in Forgetting* sets an example for the woman society who completely forgets her identity in taking care of her husband and her family, through the protagonist Meera. She turns

completely dependent on her husband and submits herself to listen to her husband. Anita Nair shows the dark reality of the society where many women can make themselves independent but fails in making it as they remain dependant. She raises the voices of the subalterns in all her novels and asks women to be strong and realize themselves.

Subaltern studies analysis the binary relationship of the subaltern and ruling classes, and thus studies the interplay of dominance and subordination in colonial systems. Though it is highly notable in India, the methods of the movement have been applied to other nations, spaces and historical moments. Subaltern studies as a whole, aims to uncover the histories of groups that within the colonial and nationalist archives went largely shunted to the margins or undocumented altogether. Not all the works that deal with race or racism are subaltern studies. There are plenty of critical works that still remain focused on European politics- these works are collectively known as the New Imperial History.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Perusing *Roots***

*Roots: The Saga of an American Family* is a book combining history and fiction, written by Alex Haley, was published in 1976 and was awarded a special Pulitzer Prize. *Roots* is an account of African-American history in the United States that take into culture and history of Africans in their home continent prior to being enslaved. This seminal work made a major contribution to extending the history of African-American beyond their arrival in the United States, and attempted to describe the fullness of their

lives in the small African villages where they had lived for at least hundred years. The book was a major contribution to both literature and history.

Tracing his ancestry through six generations of architects, lawyers, blacksmiths, farmers, freedmen and slaves, Alex Haley's research took him back to Africa and a sixteen-year-old youth named Kunta Kinte. Torn from his homeland and brought to the slave markets of the New World, re-imagining Kunta's journey would allow Haley to explore his family's deep and distant past. Beginning with the stories recounted by his grandmother Cynthia in Henning, Tennessee, Haley spent twelve years tracing the saga of his family, beginning with Kunta Kinte, his ancestor from The Gambia who had been enslaved and brought to America in 1767. Through oral tradition, the descendants of Kunta Kinte kept alive the tales of their forebears through each generation.

Alex Haley, in full Alexander Palmer Haley, (born August 11, 1921, Ithaca, New York, U.S.-died February 10, 1992, Seattle, Washington) is an American writer whose works of historical fiction and reportage depicted the struggles of African Americans. Although his parents were teachers, Haley was an indifferent student. He began writing to avoid boredom during voyages while serving in the U.S. Coast Guard. His first major work, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965), was an authoritative and widely read narrative based on Haley's interviews with the Black Muslims spokesman. The work is recognized as a classic of African American literature. Haley's greatest success was *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* (1976). This saga covers seven American generations, from the enslavement of Haley's African ancestors to his own genealogical quest. The work forcefully shows relationships between races. Almost 9 million copies were sold, and it has been translated into 26 languages. The screening of a television adaptation in 1977 increased its impact on American culture. *Roots* spurred much interest in family history, and Haley created the Kinte Foundation (1972) to store

records that aid in tracing black genealogy. Although *Roots* is a work of fiction, Haley claimed that Kunta Kinte, the protagonist of the story was his forefather and his daughter named Kizzy was his great-great-great grandmother. Haley also claimed that his portrayal of life of slaves and masters in Virginia and North Carolina were based on facts which he had found through historical documents. In final chapter of the *Roots*, he asserts:

To the best of my knowledge and of my effort, every lineage statement within *Roots* is from either my African or American families carefully preserved oral history, much of which I have been able conventionally corroborate with documents. Those documents, along with the myriad textual details of what were contemporary indigenous lifestyles, cultural history, and such that *Roots* flesh have come from years of intensive research in fifty old libraries, archives, and other repositories on three continents (Haley,884).

Alex Haley grows up hearing stories from his grandmother about the family's history. She tells him of an ancestor named Kunta Kinte, who was landed in Naplis and given the name Toby. The old African called a guitar *ko*, and a river the *Kamby Bolongo*. While on a reporting trip to London, Haley sees the Rosetta Stone in the British Museums and thinks of his own family's oral traditions. In the United States Census for Alamance County, North Carolina, he finds evidence of his ancestor Tom Murray, the blacksmith. He attempts to locate the likeliest origin of the African words passed down by Kunta Kinte. Dr. Jan Vansina, a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin and an authority on African linguistics, explains that the phonetic sounds or the words that he grew up hearing belonged to Mandinka, a tongue spoken by Mandingo people. Haley learnt that the word *ko* probably referred to the *kora*, one of

the Mandinka people's oldest stringed instruments. He also learnt that in Mandinka *Bolongo* meant "moving water", thus preceded by Kamby, it could indicate the Gambia River. In Banjul, the capital, Haley told his story to "a group of men knowledgeable in their small country's history".

They told him that Kinte was a well-known family name in The Gambia. Alex Haley travels to the Gambia and learns of the existence of Griots, oral historians who are trained from childhood to memorize and recite the history of a particular village. A good one is believed to have the ability to speak for three days without repeating himself. Alex Haley wanted to hear the history of the Kinte clan, which lives in Juffure. He was taken to a griot named Kebba Kanji Fofana. The Kinte clan had originated in Old Mali, men were traditionally blacksmiths and the women mostly were potters and weavers. In time, one branch of the clan moved into the country called Mauretania; and it was from Mauretania that one son of this clan, whose name was Kairaba Kunta Kinte- a *marabout*, or holy man of the Moslem faith- journeyed down into the country called The Gambia. He went first to a village called Jiffarong, and then to the village of Juffure. In Juffure, Kairaba took his first wife, a Mandinka maiden whose name was Sireng. And by her he begot two sons, whose name were Janneh and Saloum. Then he took a second wife; her name was Yaisa. And by Yaisa, he begot a son named Omoro. Omoro is the father of the protagonist of *Roots*, Kinte.

*Roots* by Alex Haley is a critical analysis of the traumas of slavery experienced by the Africans. As an Afro-American writer, he gives voice to the issues like racism, subjugation, identity crises of the Blacks, but most of all the institution of slavery. Slavery has been an important phenomenon throughout history. Africa has been intimately connected with this history through Americans. Slavery in America begin when the African slaves were brought to the North American colony of Jamestown,

Virginia, in 1619, to aid in the production of such lucrative crops like tobacco and cotton. After the research of twelve years, Haley describes the experiences of Kunta Kinte before and after his enslavement, who is the great-great-grandfather of the writer. *Roots* is not just a saga of an African American family; it is the symbolic saga of people. The dehumanization process of slavery assaults the mind, body, and souls of African slaves.

*Roots* tells the story of Kunta Kinte- a young man taken from the Gambia when he was seventeen and sold as a slave- and seven generations of his descendants in the United States. Kunta, a Mandinka living by the river Gambia, has a difficult but free childhood in his village, Juffure. His village subsists on farming, and sometimes they lack enough food, as the climate is harsh. Kunta is surrounded by love and traditions. Ominously, the village had heard of the recent arrival of toubob, men with white skins who smell like wet chickens.

Kunta is excited to see the world. At one point, Kunta sees men in hoods taking away some of the children. This confuses Kunta, but is eager to learn his father, Omoro, will take him outside Juffure. Omoro and Kunta set off, learning much more about their surroundings. When they return, Kunta brings to all his friends about the journey, but does not pay attention to his family's goats, which fall prey to a panther. Later on, Kunta is taken off from manhood training, with other children of his kafo (division or grade). Kunta learns even more about the Gambia, but fears the slave trade, which he learns is closer to home than he thinks. Kunta passes his training, and learns more about Juffure's court system. One day he witnesses the case of a young girl, who was kidnapped by the toubob, and came back pregnant. She gives birth to a mixed-raced child, and the case is unresolved.

One morning when Kunta is cutting wood to make drum, he is ambushed by slatees (black slave traders), and is knocked unconscious and taken prisoner. He awakens to find himself gagged and blindfolded. The toubob humiliate Kunta and other captives by stripping them naked, examining them in every orifice and burning them with hot irons. Kunta is then placed in the brig of a ship, naked and chained. After a nightmarish journey across the Atlantic on board the slave ship Lord Ligonier, he is landed in Annapolis, Maryland. John Waller of Spotsylvania County, Virginia purchases Kunta at an auction and gives him the name Toby. However, Kunta is headstrong and tries to run away four times. When he is captured for the last time, slave hunters cut off part of his right foot to cripple him.

Kunta is then bought by his master's brother, Dr. William Waller. He becomes a gardener and eventually his master's buggy driver. Kunta also befriends a musician slave named Fiddler. In the aftermath of the American Revolutionary War, Kunta marries Bell, Waller's cook, and together they have a daughter, Kizzy. Kizzy's childhood as a slave is as happy as her parents can make it. John Waller's daughter "Missy" Anne, was her close friend and she rarely experiences cruelty. Her life changes when she forges a travelling pass for her beau Noah, a field hand. When he is caught and confesses, she is sold away from her family at the age of sixteen. Kizzy is bought by Tom Lea, a farmer and chicken fighter who rose from poor beginnings. He rapes and impregnates her, and she give birth to George, who later becomes to be known as "Chicken George" when he becomes his father's cock fighting trainer. Chicken George is a philanderer known for expensive taste and alcohol, as much as for his iconic bowler hat and green scarf. He marries Matilda and they have six sons and two daughters, including Tom, who becomes a very good blacksmith. Tom marries Irene, a woman originally owned by the Holt family.

When Tom Lea loses all his money in a cock fight, he sends George to England for several years to pay off the debt, and he sells most of the rest of the family to a slave trader. The trader moves the family to Alamance County, where they become the property of Andrew Murray. The Murrays have no previous experience with farming and are generally kind masters who treat the family well. When the American Civil War ends, however, the Murray slaves decide rather than sharecrop for their former masters, they will move from North Carolina to Henning, Tennessee, which is looking for new settlers. They eventually become a prosperous family. Tom's daughter Cynthia marries Will Palmer, a successful lumber businessman, and their daughter Bertha is the first in the family to go to college. There she meets Simon Haley, who becomes a professor of agriculture. Their son is Alex Haley, the author of the book.

For Kunta Kinte, being kidnapped and brought from Africa to America isn't just incredibly traumatic but was incredibly confusing. In the strange land of toubob he is confronted with a culture wholly unlike his own, a culture that seems to show no respect for human life, especially for the Black lives. Although Kunta learns to adapt to life in America, he never loses hold of his African identity. For most people whose lives were destroyed by the American slave trade, suffering was just a part of life. Through a combination of faith, family, and community, Kunta is able to find small amount of relief from his suffering. In *Roots* religion take different forms. One is the traditional spiritual beliefs of Kunta's tribe known as the Mandinka, Kunta's own devout Islam, which is his guiding light through the most traumatic experiences of his life. Another form of religion is Bell's passionate Christianity, which is something she passes down through Kizzy to the rest of the family. Kunta, during his youth in Juffure is taught, that a good community is egalitarian and he carries this lesson with him to America. Without

the community he builds with Bell, the fiddler, and the gardener, Kunta would never have survived in his early years in America.

Beginning in Africa, where young Kunta Kinte was told that his blackness is beautiful, the novel sees its protagonist hold on this sense of pride even after being kidnapped and brought to a country where he is told the exact opposite. Kunta Kinte learnt a lot about how racism was systematically employed to subjugate black people in America-and how many of those systems still exist today. *Roots* portrays race as non-binary. Kunta seems to direct more ire towards American-born black people than American-born white people. This is because he believes that they have abandoned their heritage, accepting the toubob's lifestyle and submitting to their authority. Kunta understood the reason why black people allowed themselves to be debased during the several escape attempts. Although he plans them meticulously and utilizes every skill learned during his manhood training, the deck is stacked so far against him that he hardly has a hand to play with. His foot is even cut off by sadistic slave catchers. This help him realize that the other people enslaved here aren't wasting away, having accepted their fate-they are biding their time and trying to survive as best they can.

Finally, Kunta embraced the African-American community, though he retains a strong sense of his cultural heritage. He even holds onto it after marrying Bell-which might be what attracted his old lady to him in the first place. In a similar way, he develops strong bonds with the gardener and the fiddler, both of whom help him better understand this strange new world he finds himself in. His bond with his daughter Kizzy was something much stronger than any other. Kizzy is the only person he can truly share his African identity with, and he passed down his ancestral knowledge to her like his father did for him. They created a ritual; every time they go walking along the roads

of Spotsylvania, he would tell her the Mandinka name of the things they passed along the way. However, the family is torn apart by circumstances out of their control when Kizzy is sold for forging a travel pass for a runaway slave. This is symbolic of his agony at having his daughter stolen away from him.

At the heart of *Roots* lies a battle for individual autonomy, against slave owners, and then against an American intent on marginalizing black people. One of the ways in which Kunta is shown to retain his autonomy is through the passing on of stories to his descendants, who marvel in the tales of heritage. This tradition is shown to have continued throughout the generations, to Haley himself. Haley reveals the power of oral history, and the possibility of recovering identity against the odds. In so doing he like Maya Angelou, paved the way for the next generation of story tellers, from the likes of Steve McQueen to Zadie Smith, whose work picks where *Roots* left off.

The condition of being uprooted, the pain of being an outsider in a strange culture and a strange land, has fascinated many American intellectuals for a long time—as well as it should, in a nation made up so largely of the uprooted. In *Roots*, the relationship between African American identity and African culture is clearly depicted and what conditions they have to go through in America for centuries. It deals with diverse issues like racism, identity crises, sense of alienation, civil war, and the forced implementation of laws before and after the war. Like many other Afro-American novels *Roots* has focused on the alliance between the races specifically Blacks. But what make it unique from others is that it illustrates all this through the saga of seven generations of an African American family in America, the author's family.



## Chapter 3

### **Subaltern lives in *Roots: The Saga of an American Family***

*Roots: The Saga of an American Family* written by Alex Haley, is an autobiographical fiction or faction that mixes historical and fictional accounts to tell the story of an American family, beginning in Africa with Kunta Kinte's capture by slave traders and culminating into the experiences of Alex Haley, the author. *Roots* is the history of the black slaves whose identities were stolen from them. Black people have been always measured as servants and inferior to whites because of the white's power in America through centuries over the blacks. *Roots* is a story about the right of black people in a biased white society and the subsequent division of people through the race and the colour of their skins which pollutes the beauty of the natural world.

The theory that can be applied while analysing *Roots* is the Subaltern theory. According to Spivak "although the term 'subaltern' conventionally denotes an inferior military rank, it is more generally used as 'a name for the general attribute of subordination in society', often expressed in terms of gender and caste" (Spivak,93). Social division is found all over the world in all times based on various features wealth, religion, gender, race, and so on. However, the most important division is based on race and colour of skin. By treatment of black characters as the subaltern in his novel, Haley shows their pitiable position in the white society. The African-Americans in the story are subalterns who have lost their identity in a foreign land. Their constant efforts to preserve their native identity and culture is evident throughout the novel. *Roots* is a work that describes the most heart ripping experiences faced by mankind. It has the vivid descriptions on how men were abused and beaten to death. As it is indicated in the novel, black people or the so-called Negroes as subalterns are denied the basic

human rights in many ways, but Kunta is a man who cannot understand all these irrational rules and regulations for slaves. Throughout the history, Negro-Americans as subalterns were treated like outsiders within the white society. They were forced to leave their homeland for slavery in America because of their black race and culture. In the novel we see people having different definitions on slavery. In chapter 16, Lamin asks Kunta about the meaning of slave.

“What are slaves?” Lamin asked Kunta one afternoon. Kunta grunted and fell and silent. Walking on, seemingly lost in thought, he was wondering what Lamin had overheard to prompt that question. Kunta knew that those who were taken by toubob became slaves, and he had overheard grownups talking about slaves who were owned by people in Juffure. But the fact was that he really didn’t know what slaves were (Haley,67).

As it is mentioned in the novel a man with a dark skin is always identified as being a slave. “Fa, what are slaves?” Omoro just grunted at first, saying nothing, and for several minutes moved about in the grove, inspecting the trunks of different palms. “Slaves aren’t always easy to tell from those who aren’t slaves,” he said finally (67).

It is portrayed in the novel that over 300 years ago black people were taken away from their native land by the whites and were treated as their property. In 1767 Kunta, the protagonist of the novel along with 140 Africans were captured by white slave traders and shipped as cargo. “Then, screaming and struggling the people were shipped toward the water, where small canoes waited to take them out to the big canoes” (76). At Annapolis Kunta is sold to John Waller and continues his life as a slave. All through the novel we can see Kunta’s attempt to keep his African heritage. The search for the past is the important themes in *Roots*.

One of the main issues discussed by Alex Haley in *Roots* is that of identity, and the insecurity people have over knowing exactly who they are and what their purpose is. For example, Kunta is seen desperately obsessed with finding a meaning for his life and his fragmented being. In Annapolis he is sold as a slave and given the name “Toby”. Kunta felt it so difficult to live a life as a slave and he tried to escape four times.

“You—you Toby!” Kunta didn’t understand, and his face showed it, so the black one kept jabbing him and saying the same thing over and over... When Kunta continued to stare at him dumbly, the black one began jabbing at his own chest. “Me Samson!” he exclaimed. “Samson!” He moved his jabbing finger again to Kunta. “You Toby! Toby. Massa says you name Toby!” When what he meant to sink in, it took all of Kunta’s self-control to grip his flooding rage without any facial sign of the slightest understanding. He wanted to shout “I am Kunta Kinte, first son of Omoro, who is the son of the holy man Kairaba Kunta Kinte!” (275).

Subalterns are alienated and treated as outsiders in the society they live in. Blacks were treated as slaves by the Whites and were not treated with respect and dignity. They always humiliated Black and saw them as inferior. The Black’s identities were stolen from them and were not allowed to retain their identity. Kunta Kinte was renamed as ‘Toby’ which he couldn’t accept. Subalterns are often treated as objects, that is, something to be possessed and were sold in slave trade. They carried their master’s name and were not allowed to question their master at any time. Kunta is unable to decide where he actually belongs to. He feels himself as a fragmented being. Jacques Lacan, the famous psychologist calls Kunta an ‘incomplete self’. Most often, they are forced to reject their own identity as they are afraid of offending their masters.

Kunta had to reject the idea of marrying according to Muslim traditions as Bell was into Christian Broomstick ceremony. Bell was afraid of African way of naming the child. Bell was also questioned by John Waller, their owner, when he discovered the rocks which Kunta used to monitor his age. Due to all these fuss Bell tells Kunta that African things bring no good. Bell is forced to reject her glorious past as she is threatened by her master.

It is visible from the novel that Kunta seems to have problems to come in terms with himself as a slave. He is against this social discrimination. Kunta as a subaltern in this novel wants to speak, but he is beaten to death by slave catchers, proving the views of Gayatri Spivak that she expressed in her article, "Can the Subaltern Speak?". Kunta, as a subaltern is unpleasant with his present condition. Therefore, he tries to find the truth about the past and rebel against whites but after his last attempt to escape he is crippled and unable to run away and rebel. He finds himself trapped in the history of colonization. In the novel, a couple of diverse approaches that he adopted to explore the past is portrayed. One way that he uses is through driving Dr. Waller, which allows him to fetch news about the outside world.

By portraying the characters like Kunta, Alex Haley tries to go back to his racial past and unconsciously he is looking for his own identity. In this novel Haley depicts the different ways by which superior class of the society are suppressing the rights of the lower class and the way whites are trying to suppress blacks. In the novel, we see Haley trying to give black people their voice and guide them to destroy all bonds of the white dominated society in order to acquire an identity for themselves.

Subaltern- The inferiors:

Identity for black people as minority group or subaltern, is so important. In the novel we see, the main characters are looking for a way to establish them but the racist indoctrinate of the white men about black's inferiority has affected them. As it is mentioned in the story, White people consider Blacks as animals with lust to murder and sex and want the exclusion of Negroes from the society. And as it is shown, White could convince Black people that they are inferior and only White are right and the tragic part is the fact that some Negroes form their self-image on the base of what white racist defined for them. This inferiority complex has been passed to children by parents who were habituated to believe in their inferiority and hated their black skins.

'Hush!' said Bell, laughing, and went on to say that the Massa then told his horrified guests that for several generations in Haiti, so much breeding had gone on between white men and slave women that there were now almost twenty-eight thousand mullatoes and high-yallers, commonly called 'coloured people', of whom nearly all had been given freedom by their French owners and fathers. According to one of the other guests, said Bell, those 'coloured people' invariably sought yet lighter-complexioned mates, with their goal being children of entirely white appearance, and those who remained visibly mullato would bribe officials for documents declaring that their forefathers had been Indians or Spanish or anything but Africans. (449)

In this part of the novel, it is clear that the black people hate themselves and the colour of their skins more than their oppressors and as it is mentioned in this part, there were some light-skinned Negroes who believed that they could elevate themselves because they believed in having more white blood and some of them rejected their

darker brothers. They felt it much awkward to live as black skinned people in a society which considered Blacks as inferiors and Whites as masters or the superior ones. That is why these people tried to conceal their black identity at least in documents. The Black people were influenced to deviate from their culture and identity and mask them up as White cultured. Haley's *Roots* depicts some characters who are dominated by this system of ideas and representations and they are even scared to inspect these ideas and stand against them. But at the same time, these characters aspire to find their individuality, and personal identity.

Strategic essentialism:

It is a term coined by Spivak in 1980s in her deconstructive reading of the work of the Subaltern Studies Group. Spivak explain Strategic Essentialism as a concept which refers to "a strategy that nationalities, ethnic groups or minority groups can use to present themselves". Even though strong differences may exist between members of these groups they continued their negotiations and it is "sometimes advantageous for them to temporarily "essentialize" themselves and to bring to forefront their group identity in a simplified manner to attain certain goals or to opposing the equal effect of global culture. When Kunta is sold as a slave at first, he denies to accept the name Toby, given by the slave owners. But gradually Kunta finds that men are not defined under their condition and the fact that he as a slave exist only under the surface. Then he tries to pass his African heritage on to his later generations. And this act allows his descendants to see themselves as human being.

The lessons continued through the following days and stretched into weeks. To Kunta's astonishment, "he began to discover that he was becoming able not only to understand but also to make himself understood the brown one in a rudimentary way. And the main thing

he wanted him to understand was why he refused to surrender his name or his heritage, and why he would rather die a free man on the run than live out his life as a slave” (328).

*Roots* can be considered as a revolutionary work through which Alex Haley illustrates black's racial identity, and makes the audience to think about black identity and individuality, and the obstacles that African-Americans face in a white dominated society. Kunta as a subaltern resists oppressive social and political constructions and his actions contribute to the freedom of diverse types of subalterns. When we look at the actions of the characters like Kunta, Kizzy, George and Haley we see that black characters of the novel create a kind of resistance against the corrupted socio-political order in white dominated society. As a strong objection against Whites Kunta taught his daughter Kizzy Mandinka language and about the African way of living. Depiction of Bell reading newspaper even though she knows she isn't permitted to read or write. Kizzy as a way of showing resistance against White dominance helped Noah to run away and, instilled in George the African traditions to protect them. Haley's *Roots*, presents Black people as subalterns, some of them try to bring about changes through resistance. But as long as they remain to be subaltern, they do not have the clear voice that members of other groups in white dominated society have.

Signs representing traumatic subaltern lives:

In the beginning chapters of the novel, Haley has used a lot of sensory images as well as nature imagery to describe the setting and rich culture of Africa. For example, he depicts the sound of the birds, the seven beautiful colours of the rainbow, the flowing streams, the perfumes of the land and the different climate during the rainy and dry seasons. The oral tradition and storytelling are very effectively described in the novel.

The oral tradition, respect for elders, and sanctity of food are an integral part of Kunta's identity. It all stands in sharp contrast to the second half of the novel which is full of intense and gross description of oppression the slaves had to go through. The sign of darkness has always been used as evil or fear in the history of literature written by Whites. But in *Roots*, Haley uses the sign of darkness as parallel. The Blacks use to celebrate their black colour, even the girl who is blackest is considered more beautiful and privileged for marriage in The Gambia. The black colour is highly symbolic. Similarly, the imagery of the river is particularly very powerful in the novel. The beating of the drum is described as highly symbolic in African culture. Therefore, all the signs and the symbols that have been discussed in the earlier chapters bring forth the idea that slavery has its traumatic impacts which pass on generation to generation and left its indispensable footprints on the minds of the Blacks.

Representation of women as subaltern:

From the time immemorial, the male-folk were the bread winners of the family. Women were made to confine to the four walls of the houses engaged in child rearing and household duties. They were never allowed to go out of the house or express themselves and as a result they lacked vigour, vitality, exuberance and mobility. As a result, women were completely subjugated and this historical factor led to the treatment of women as 'other'. The condition of the Third World women or the subaltern women are doubly segregated; firstly, from their men, and secondly from the White upper class.

In *Roots*, Kizzy, the daughter of Kunta and Bell, was brought by Massa Lea as he was a womanizer. She was brutally raped and physically abused by him when she tried to resist. He forced himself upon her soon after her delivery, even though she told him that her wounds are not healed. Usually, Whites discriminate Blacks on the basis

of their colour but in the act of pleasing his senses and desires, he forgets his race consciousness. It is clear that what bothers are just the pride, ego and the superiority complex. The Whites don't want the Blacks to rise above them thus they kept the Blacks as slaves. They were not given any kind of freedom and were not allowed to hold an individual identity. They took advantage of the slaves and their conditions. Whites don't give any respect to Black women and their body and soul, they tortured Black women sexually too. Whites considered the Black women just as objects to make sex and to work. They were not bothered about the feelings of the Blacks especially the women at many a times. Whites don't care about the hurt they formed in those women; they just want them as pleasure providing objects.

We come across different situations in the novel where the ill treatment of Black women from the White masters is figured out. However, there are examples of discrimination and suppression faced by women in a different scenario. In Juffure, both men and women work in the fields for their livelihood. Women usually works in cotton field while men work in the crop fields. When there comes a pressure of heavy work, women finish their work at the cotton field and rush to help men. It is the same women who have to prepare the foods for those working at the fields and those members remaining at the home. They are made to work all the time as or more as the men do. But still men are considered as the bread winner or the one in charge of ruling the family, that is sustained by the help of the women. Also, there are religious restrictions imposed on women. According to the custom in Juffure, after child bearing women are not allowed to stay with her husband or even to see him. They are permitted to live together only after the child learn to walk. Kunta's mother Binta Kinte was afraid to stay away from her husband Omoro fearing that he will lose his interest in her. If it is so then Omoro can marry another woman as per the religious custom. Here from this

example, it is very intelligible that women were not given any right to raise their voice against the inequity shown to them. Also, they were not considered as an important fellow being unless they become an elderly person (as it is their culture to be fair to the elderly ones). They were just forced to obey the 'rules', the so-called traditions and customs, that are imposed upon them. Even, they are educated in a way to live abiding by their cultural and religious believes. Girls were not allowed to play with the boys in their teens and were restricted from engaging in sports or activities usually performed by boys. Women, regardless of their age or status, were treated as the secondary group in Juffure as per the novel.

The Other:

The term 'Other' is "used to refer to people or things that are additional or different to people or things that have been mentioned or are known about". Negroes in a white dominated society was consider as 'Other', they suffered a lot because they were placed in a society which was dominated by white biased people. In such a society they learnt to give up their black identity and consider Whites as their cultural models. In other words, in such a society whites were seen as a superior model of cultural improvement and it gives them the right to discriminate other races and cultures which were seen as inferior. As it is portrayed in the novel Black people also considered Whites as 'other'. Although they were aware of the fact that those who kidnapped blacks from Africa and sell them to Whites were 'Blacks', they blamed the Whites for encouraging Black to betray their brothers. They believed that Whites were evil and devilish. When a child whose father is a White man, is born Blacks felt pity for the child as he was a mixed blood child and it was a shame for a Black child to have a White father. In such a society, mixed blood children were considered as 'other' and had no chance to be a part of Black nor the White one.

In a White dominated society, they are considered as ‘Masters’ and to be a white means to be a superior human being that must be respected and blacks are considered slave and half human and animal like. In that society blacks have no identity and they have to be named after their masters and whenever the master is changed, their name changes. For example, when Kizzy works for Master Hamilton, she is called Kizzy Hamilton, but when she was sold to master Lea, she became Kizzy Lea. Even a new identity, which is so strange to them is thrust upon them by the white masters. Kunta was given the name Toby by the white masters without paying heed to his reluctance and disapproval. It was so difficult for him to accept the new identity as a slave named as Toby. Kunta realised that he couldn’t survive anymore with his real identity. The ‘other’ had no identity of his own nor any voice to question the authority. Everything that the black people owned was taken away from them without their consent.

Black identity and the dehumanization of the Blacks:

The suffering of the people who lost their identity is the dominant theme of the story. “Black identity” became an important element for Black people, in order to face white racists. As it was portrayed in the novel black existence in America is rooted to the time of slavery. From the beginning of the novel, we learnt that young people like Kunta were hunted and taken away by white people in order to be used as a slave, through the stories told by the elders. African-Americans consider themselves as forced immigrants.

After arriving at Virginia, Kunta is astonished to find that other Black speak English, practice Christianity and accepted the fact that they are slaves. Could it be? Had he heard an African speaking toubob? Was there a slatee there down among them? Kunta had heard that toubab would often betray their black traitor helpers and

throw them into chains. After the toubob had gone on down to the level below, scarcely a sound was heard on Kunta's level until they reappeared with their emptied tub and climbed back up outside, closing the hatch behind them (203).

While at America Kunta resisted to accept the new name 'Toby' given by the slave master at first. Later he learnt to speak English and recognised that he is forgetting his Mandinka language. He was not ready to follow the African-American rituals at the time of his marriage and he resisted to have his daughter Kizzy baptized. In many ways Kunta tried to keep his black identity. He chose to name his daughter by a Mandinka word and taught Kizzy many Mandinka words. As it is presented in the novel Black Africans try to keep their tradition in different ways. They even recognize each other through physical appearances like tattoo. Some Blacks like Kunta are so proud of their African heritage and dislike white people. He is proud of his African name and African traditions and in various ways tries to keep them. Kunta during his childhood lived in a village where they give much importance to their culture, tradition, religion and believes. He grew holding firmly on to all those believes which mould his character and personality. He never failed in following the faiths and never let himself to forget it.

After Kunta's failure in the fourth attempt of fleeing, his masters tied him and cut the toes off his foot. Fiddler, another black slave servant, tell him that he has good luck for not being killed after his four attempts at escaping. As per the law, the white has the right to kill a slave who has been caught while trying to escape. These laws have been declared after every six months in the churches of the whites. Before constructing any new county, the court is established first in order to impose further laws for the Negroes. The only thing that Virginia House of Burgess has to do is to introduce strange

laws against niggers. For example, according to the law the niggers cannot hold a gun or any kind of weapon not even a spade of wood. It is also a law that if a nigger has been caught without a permission letter, he would be whipped twenty times. The punishment is extended if a black see in the eyes of a white he would be whipped ten times and he would get twenty whippings at hitting a white Christian. It is in the law that one ear of black liar must be cut if a white testifies against him. On lying twice, he has to be bereaved by both ears. No one is dared to listen to black's teachings, according to the law. A black must be hanged for the killing of a white. There is also a charter against the education of blacks even to give them a book. Even a mandate has passed against the drum beating of niggers. Fiddler further adds by elucidating Kunta that as far as his foot is concerned, whites do not consider black's organs as feet or arms rather offshoots and boughs, which can be cut or broken anytime. He has witnessed many devastated niggers, who have been still working on the plantations. Their bodies have been excoriated and sprinkled by salt and turpentine oil and then viciously rubbed on the grass. If the niggers are arrested for planning any rebellion against the Government, they would be strictly punished. They are forced to walk upon blazing embers so that they fall down and ultimately die as a result. It is not a crime in the eyes of legislation if a black has died during this activity rather it was an executed law in the country, America.

In the novel *Roots*, Alex Haley shows the way how Africans were kidnapped to bring them to America and the way American culture was imposed on them. He also shows the way how blacks tried to keep their identity in a white dominated society like that in America. The struggle of the black identity is discussed in the novel by the remembrance of his grandparents and their African heritage. It was so hard for the Blacks to survive in the new environment where they were forced to be. The physical

and mental struggles that they faced and the suppressions they went through made them frail and feeble. They fought to withhold their black identity even in the most suffocating atmosphere of America. Kunta felt so lonely that he wanted to build his own family. He married Bell and had children. This was the same situation that occurred in the lives of almost all the kidnapped slaves who survived. They had no other way to discover happiness or to find self-worth than accepting the harsh reality of their life. It is the effort that the great grandparents took on that resulted in the formation of generations that Alex Haley is a part of.

## **Conclusion**

As it is mentioned in the third chapter the novel *Roots* can be evidently studied with the Subaltern theory. With the examples of characters like Kunta Kinte and other Blacks one could realize the sufferings and subjugation they underwent. The oppressions and the denial of rights has reduced the Black slaves in America to subalterns or the subordinate beings. They were always treated as someone so inferior to the Whites. Blacks were never considered as a part of the country. Also, the treatment of women as subordinate is depicted in the novel and in this thesis this subordination is studied with the help of the subaltern theory. The concept of the subaltern theory is undoubtedly present in the novel *Roots*.

Subalterns are always alienated and treated as someone outside the society. They were not given respect, dignity or individuality. Considering the explanation

provided by Spivak on subaltern theory one can conclude that Kunta Kinte, the protagonist of the novel is a subaltern. Kunta Kinte is forcefully named as Toby by his slave master. The Whites never allowed the Blacks to uphold their individual identity. Subalterns are often treated as objects that are meant to be possessed and sold. Kunta lost his toe in his fourth attempt to escape from the captivation. For the Whites, hurting the Black slaves or even killing them were not a crime instead it was their law. The Black had no voice or rights to question the White masters against the brutish rule. The inferior position of the subalterns in the American society was so intense that the subalterns themselves hate their identity and existence. Women subjugation is portrayed through the lives of the Black women in America and the African women in Juffure. In America the Black women were raped and impregnated by the White masters. They are physically and mentally tortured by them. While in Africa, their homeland, women were considered as the secondary citizen of the community. Every decision is made by the men and the women had no provision to question or to retaliate on the customs, rules or traditions that are against them. Therefore, the concept of subaltern theory is quite noticeable in the novel. The definition of the term subaltern given by Gayatri Spivak is well understood through the characters of the novel *Roots*. Therefore, through the thesis the novel is further understood in terms of the subaltern concept.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**UNHEARD RESONANCES FOR FREEDOM AS TRACED FROM**  
**ARUNDHATI ROY'S *AZADI: FREEDOM. FASCISM. FICTION***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**NEENU THOMAS**

**Register No: DB18AEGR033**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Aleena George

April 2021

## **Kannur University**

### Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “**Unheard resonances for freedom as traced from Arundhati Roy’s *Azadi: Freedom. Fascism. Fiction***” is a bonafide work of Miss Neenu Thomas, who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Head of Department

Ms. Aleena George

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Neenu Thomas, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**Unheard resonances for freedom as traced from Arundhati Roy’s *Azadi: Freedom. Fascism. Fiction***” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms Aleena George of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College. I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Neenu Thomas

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR033

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Neenu Thomas

## Table of Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	1-2
Chapter One:	3-13
Trauma theory an introduction	
Chapter Two:	14-26
Analyzing the thirst for Azadi in an absolute regime as seen in <i>Azadi.Freedom.Fascism.Fiction</i>	
Chapter Three:	27-34
<i>Azadi.Freedom.Fascism.Fiction: An anthology of traumatic testaments</i>	
Conclusion	35-39
Bibliography	40-41

## INTRODUCTION

Literature has the hidden possibility of reflecting the tyrannies of masses. Ever since the dawn of civilization, literary works have intended for some social change. It is because words are powerful in evoking the tender feelings of the common man as well as in making him or her aware about their surroundings, socio-political issues etc.

The objective of this paper is to examine the radical changes in Indian democracy and study its reverberations being heard as loud cries for 'Azadi' by analyzing the Indian society and its secular policies from post-independent period until this era of silencing the vulnerable.

This project work focuses on the traumatic sequences in India which is the largest federal-republican state in the whole world. Here, the validity of statements put forth by the renowned Indian English author, Arundhati Roy in her latest anthology *Azadi. Freedom. Fascism. Fiction* are evaluated. It is relevant in this contemporary context as the tantrums resulting from heinous denial of freedom can be ascertained with the application of trauma theory. The whole world has experienced some dark episodes of totalitarian regime ; to be precise, each regional province as well as huge enslaved territories. The Indian subcontinent is a microcosm and thus, fascism has a greater role in composing the minuscule beings' cries for freedom.

The first chapter of this work, depicts the inner layers of trauma theory. 'Trauma' is a psychological device and indeed a medical term, widely used to indicate the destabilization in the existence of an individual. Trauma arises from some serious depressive triggering agents which gets developed from occasions such as warfare anomalies, rape cases , death of beloved one's, accidents, deadly illness, natural disasters and so on. The early developments in trauma theory were by well known

psychologist Sigmund Freud. This theory emerged in the 1990's when a group of critics began to study the cultural effects of trauma.

In the second chapter, some real narratives from the anthology *Azadi. Freedom. Fascism. Fiction* are adjoined. India is suffocating under the very subjugating reign of Hindutva politicians who always collaborate for 'One -Nation. One Language. One Religion' (Hindustan/Hindi/Hindutva). This urge to develop a national language ever since the post independent period indeed hurts national sentiments and the cultural diversity. In fact, natives who speak tribal languages and languages without script cannot accept this stubborn move. Unification of religious viewpoints is something beyond practical sense when observing from pan-Indian context. A secular nation should uphold multiplicities of political ideologies rather than imposing a single political vision for whole population.

The eminent author Arundhati Roy is narrating the incidents from a country which offers graveyards for Muslims and pellet attacks for Kashmiri youth, demanding freedom. The nation and its citizens are widely manipulated with fake news transmission conglomerates. The decline of democracy will be discussed in detail.

The third chapter which portrays theoretical application will contain the real picture of trauma faced by millions of people. It includes gauging of the traumatic everyday lives of the minorities, Kashmiri's and the Abrogation Rule as well as its aftermath, the Delhi riots ; based on the C.A.A. and N.R.C bills etc. The depiction of miserable lives of native Assamese people and their fear of being sent into detention camps on failure to produce legacy documents is also summed up. All the contemporary events in a nation dismantled with fascism has some essence of trauma.

## CHAPTER : 1

### Trauma Theory an Introduction

“ Trauma is personal. It does not disappear if not validated. When it is ignored or invalidated the silent screams continue internally heard only one by one held captive. When someone enters the pain and hears the screams, healing can begin” (Bernock 250). Any kind of distractive events such as illness, violence, death or separation, natural calamities, war, accidents, rapes, verbal, mental or physical torture may pave way for psychological trauma. The psyche of the victim gets affected by the gravity of the causal-traumatic trigger (events which are highly stressful) and thus, S/he may begin to experience panic attacks, headaches, depressive mood swings, lack of emotions ,confusion, etc.

The word ‘trauma ’etymologically means a wound. It is an event, which involves incidents that evoke distressing feelings and emotions. Moreover, psychoanalytic trauma engages serious, long-term negative consequences. Essentially, past trauma and traumatic memories affect the mind of the characters by creating confusion and insecure feelings. Typical causes of psychoanalytic trauma are sexual abuse, employment discrimination, police brutality, bullying, domestic violences and particularly childhood experiences.

Trauma as a new phenomenon makes an interdisciplinary role for itself. It creates a point of ambiguity, thus denying the characteristic of self- sufficiency in the affected individual. In the development of trauma theory the history of contributions from scholarship on non-Western literature and theory has been relatively short but eventful. From its inception in the theorization of trauma in literary studies has aroused not only widespread scholarly approbation and enthusiasm but also resistance and opposition, and much of the latter has come from the side of postcolonial and non-

Western literary criticism. Although this response was slow to develop and only became a strong factor in the debates on literary trauma theory in the past decade, its impact on the development of trauma theory has been significant.

Margret Atwood has chosen the female characters and their psyches to begin a quest to two major approaches, namely Feminism and Psychoanalysis. She portrays trauma in the life of women. Atwood's three novels, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), *Cat's Eye* (1988) and *The Robber Bride* (1993) and their female characters represent the traumatized part of childhood and adulthood in literature.

In its continuing expansion, literary trauma theory presents a complicated entanglement of concepts and approaches. Offering a strong potential for fruitful connections among and within disciplines, it comprises research into many modes of cultural expression, such as written, visual and oral storytelling, drama, and song as well as written literary forms, as cultural modes of coming to terms with victimization and the many effects of traumatization.

Ellis Marder in her essay "Trauma and Literacy Studies : Enabling Questions " claims that trauma has a privileged relationship with interdisciplinary studies. She refers to the influence of trauma in different fields in which the subjects cannot completely overcome the phenomenon .The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma(Herman 143).

Trauma studies first developed in the 1990s and relied on Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether. This model of trauma indicates that suffering is unrepresentable. The traditional model was a more pluralistic

model which, depicts the difficulty of the victim in narrating the unprecedented traumatic experience. It continued to impact the critical flood of academicians in the 1990s and arose to examine the concept of trauma and its role in literature and society. Most prominently by Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, and Geoffrey Hartman. This first wave of trauma studies popularized the concept of trauma as an unrepresentable event. It revealed the inherent contradictions within language and experience.

Not all trauma victims are constructed equally, and if trauma studies will continuously deploy the concept of witnessing to account for its practices then it might ask itself whose stories are not being empathized with and witnessed. Collective memory is more complex than simply an extension of individual memory and collective trauma is more about politics than about psychology. A primary purpose of recalling the past through a model of collective memory is the self-image of a specific group in the present. What is termed collective memory is not so much about memory as about a story of shared social suffering agreed on by a specific social group and accepted by an audience

In the traditional trauma model pioneered by Cathy Caruth, trauma is viewed as an event that fragments consciousness and prevents direct linguistic representation. The traumatic event causes irreformable changes to the psyche of the victim. Trauma is an unassimilated event that shatters identity and remains outside the normal memory and narrative representation. Fragmentation or dissociation is viewed as the direct cause of trauma, a view that helps formulate the notion of transhistorical trauma, which suggests that trauma's essential or universal effects on consciousness and narrative recall afford the opportunity to connect individual and collective traumatic experiences on conversation even while alternative approaches displace this notion.

As an effective metaphor, cultural trauma may call attention to hitherto unrecognized suffering of a specific social or cultural group. Although social suffering cannot be avoided, shedding light on the sociocultural structures and processes through a social theory of trauma may allow for a space where victims, spectators, and perpetrators can achieve the necessary critical distance to avert the most atrocious consequences. Collective memory also involves what is chosen to be forgotten by social groups. Some social suffering may not achieve the status of collective trauma and so will have no audience outside the group, no redress, repair, or healing. Again, one cannot take a “we” for granted.

This trauma model figures most prominently in Cathy Caruth’s *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History* (1996) which takes a particular interpretation of Freud’s trauma theories to forward a larger post structural concern with the referential limits of language and history. Today the key factor in trauma studies can be traced to the abreactive model (type of catharsis) in which psychological dissociation is being relieved with the help of interaction. An even more explicit example of a trauma theoretical mode that attends primarily to narrative gaps and silences appears in Caruth’s extended interview with Hartman. Their conversation takes as its starting point the section of Wordsworth’s *Prelude* addressing the death of the boy from Winander. In that poem, the boy’s passing comes abruptly, as a shock whose impact seems to break the poem. Indeed, the moment of the boy’s death falls between two stanzas – into a literal gap in the text and Caruth and Hartman’s reading of the poem returns again and again to tropes of silence and speechlessness. Caruth suggests that the “poetic knowing” of the child’s death is also a “muteness” – a gap in both narrative and experience

According to Kali Tal , accurate representation of trauma can never be achieved without recreating the event since, by its very definition, trauma lies beyond the bounds of 'normal' conception. Those who are badly affected by the traumatic incidents frequently visualise the images of the event and develop hallucinations. They lose presence of mind with delusive segments which reflect inside their self with vague and false depictions. Thus, trauma victims live in a realm of illusions and fears. They feel quite irritable as recurrent images of the terrifying event from the past threatens their subconscious mind.

“Trauma novel” refers to a work of fiction that conveys profound loss or intense fear on individual or collective levels. A defining feature of the trauma novel is the transformation of self ignited by an external, often terrifying experience, which illuminates the process of coming to terms with the dynamics of memory that inform the new perceptions of the self and world. Traumatic experience becomes vague in representations as the individual’s brain may not properly encode the happenings due to the intensity of the shock and tremor. Trauma theory argues that trauma is only known through repetitive flashbacks that literally re-enact the event because mind cannot represent it otherwise.

Explained as such, traumatic realism might be thought of as a sort of mirror image of medieval allegory. Christian writers like Spenser and Bunyan use symbolic structures to talk about God and his heavens even when dogma suggests that such themes are ultimately ineffable. For some psychologists and neuroscientists, traumatic experience is similarly. Traumatic experience is understood as a fixed and timeless photographic negative stored in an untouchable place of the brain, but it maintains the ability to be transferred to non-traumatized individuals and groups. The idea that traumatic experience pathologically divides identity is employed by the literary scholar

as a metaphor to describe the degree of damage done to individual's coherent sense of self and the change of consciousness caused by the experience.

This form of literary trauma theory makes several important claims about trauma, stating that traumatic experience is repetitious, timeless and unspeakable ,yet is also literal, contagious and mummified event. Contemporary essayists and cultural theorists nurture their works with the real-time facts as well as the depth of the topic as it is compiled with lot of ground-level research,site visits etc.Therefore essays are indeed capable to portray the divergence in the politics,religious belief systems,ethnicity,linguistics,culture,tradition and much more!.

Research on traumatic experience addresses the limits and possibilities of testimony in an age of violence, abuse, genocide, torture, war, and terror and raises issues of how trauma can or cannot be represented. The way trauma is conceptualized and understood, and the meaning attributed to it, poses difficult problems to its representation. This chapter highlights some of the inherent tensions or unresolved issues within trauma studies, particularly as they relate to literature and literary representation. Questions such as how, what kind of, and whose trauma is depicted by whom and for whom problematize representation in terms of which texts are identified as trauma texts and which are not, which experiences or events are identified as traumatic and which are not, who is identified as victim, who as perpetrator, and by whom, and who benefits and who do not from these understandings. Ultimately, as this chapter will show, these issues have ethical as well as political implications.

Cultural theoretician Ashis Nandy in his work “Theories of Oppression and Another Dialogue of Cultures” opines : “The oppressed also have their own often-implicit theories of oppression and have no obligation to be guided by our ideas of the

scientific, the rational and the dignified. They have every right to be historically, economically and politically incorrect” (42).

Oppression is another manner in which masses are victimized with stress and thereby traumatic phases in life. Across the world, the minorities like the religious, linguistic or of any sort, the Dalits, the aboriginals, the differently abled, the folks with different sexual orientations etc, are being ridiculed and deprived from their freedom to live. Nowadays in the pan-Indian context, law and order system facilitates probably to loot the existing benefits of the downtrodden classes. Even the verdicts threatening the peaceful sustenance of citizens can become an agent for traumatic experiences especially, when the other side is vulnerable.

In the everyday life of a middle-class man or woman who toils hard for the day's morsel, the greatest traumatic event can be expelling from daily wages job and shortage in income with which entire family is to be fed, which seems to be trivial issues for the haves. Nandy opines that the oppressed and the poor remain a social category. A potentially revolutionary formation or a rebellious mob, and as such have agency only potentially, that is after adequate conscientisation or old-fashioned mobilisation. The oppressors have agency here and now, on the basis of historical role they have to play as innovative entrepreneurs. As a social sector having scientific and technical knowledge, and above all as self-aware citizens, liberated intellectuals, vanguard of the proletariat or simply as awakened, informed citizenry who have already brought about nothing less than a successful bourgeois revolution; One of the first tasks of social knowledge in India today, is to return agency to the communities at the receiving end of the system.

“Traumatized people chronically feel unsafe inside their bodies: The past is alive in the form of gnawing interior discomfort. Their bodies are constantly bombarded by visceral warning signs, and, in an attempt to control these processes, they often become expert at ignoring their gut feelings and in numbing awareness of what is played out inside. They learn to hide from their selves.” (Balae v 160).

As studies of trauma become more common, the term has been applied more liberally to circumstances beyond those initially imagined—such as war, natural disaster, abuse, and confinement—to include psychological trauma that might not have resulted in or from physical violence. The most cruel victims of transgenerational trauma are the survivors of the Holocaust. They saw the dusk of life in choking chambers and these memories play a crucial part throughout their cognitive functions and everyday life. Distrust of the world, impaired parental function, chronic sorrow, inability to communicate feelings, an ever-present fear of danger, pressure for educational achievement, separation anxiety, etc. were some of the circumstances they had to encounter .

Concepts such as “secondary trauma,” “intergenerational trauma,” “insidious trauma,” and “cumulative trauma” enrich our understandings of trauma but may also simultaneously undermine the meaningfulness of trauma as a concept. Their usefulness lies in their capacity to sharpen the distinctions between the past and the present as well as between victims and survivors, and between spectators and readers. Although it is crucial to differentiate between, for instance, the primary trauma of victims and survivors, and the secondary trauma that an audience or a reader may experience it as well.

Trauma studies provide a more natural transition to a "real" world often split off from that of the academics. There is an opening that leads from trauma studies to public, especially mental health issues, an opening with ethical, cultural, and religious implications. The result is not moral criticism exactly, because this newest perspective does not attempt a definitive judgment or evaluation of the individual work. The change introduced operates at the level of theory, and of exegesis in the service of insights about human functioning. To avoid the risk of trauma studies turning readers and viewers into voyeurs and arrogant or commiserate spectators and appropriators of other people's traumas, it is important to recognize the need to critically analyze the ethical and political implications of the position of trauma studies within the humanities. Susannah Radstone emphasizes trauma studies as a form of "tertiary witnessing" – through arts, literature, film, and historiography – and of examining the perils of inferiorizing primary trauma victims by constructing them as "helpless"

Memory studies have moved on from the idea of remembering as retrieval and recollection of faithfully stored stable information, picturing memory not so much as a fixed product but as a fluid and imaginative process in which the memory is remade every time remembering happens. Operating in a perpetual present, it reveals a past reworked in relation to current needs, fears, desires, and wishes. Memory indicates a relationship to past events that is shaped by, and in turn profoundly impacts, how the victims think, feel, and live in the present. The lens of "trauma" situates the subject in a specific temporality, illuminating the hold the past has on us and yet at the same time casting a shadow that threatens to obscure our agency as (political) subjects. The debilitating characteristics of trauma highlight the unconscious transmission and passive reproduction of the past while the ethical refusal of facile redemption casts

doubt on our ability to imaginatively explore and actively transform our relationship with the past to enable a different future.

The focus is on disclosing an unconscious or not-knowing knowledge—a potentially literary way of knowing, if a person wishes, in combining insight and blindness, play and earnest or an adult management of transitional objects, and linking inspiration to sound as well as sense. Emphasis falls on the imaginative use of language rather than on an ideal transparency of meaning. The real, the empirical or historical origin, cannot be known as such because it presents itself always within the resonances or "field" of the trauma. This much is known: in literature, as in life, the simplest event can resonate mysteriously, be invested with aura, and tend toward the symbolic. The symbolic, in this sense, is not a denial of literal or referential but its uncanny intensification. The reason for this convert ability of literal and symbolic is the "traumatizing", which constantly shatters basic trust yet always, in a symbolic mode, picks up the pieces.

## CHAPTER 2

Analyzing the thirst for Azadi in an absolute regime as seen in *Azadi. Freedom. Fascism. Fiction*

“There’s really no such thing as the ‘voiceless’. There are only the deliberately silenced or preferably unheard” (Roy 56). Arundhati Roy, is an activist known for her verbal fortitude and depth of knowledge even during worst scenarios of legal turmoil and chaos. Her novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, presented an aching love story spiralling through the Indian subcontinent with the blend of pitiless exposure of worst political and societal scenarios. *My Seditious Heart*, published in 2019 is an anthology of her works from the past two decades ;encompassing especially political essays .

*Azadi: Freedom. Fascism. Fiction* is a collection of essays. The book is loaded with worthy statements against the Indian crisis of absolute governance; the hurling winds of protests at the nook and corner of the country indicate a microcosm of the larger portrait of discrepancies.“ It is ironic that so much has been written about biological mechanisms of traumatic psychological amnesia when the very existence of the phenomenon is in doubt”(Mc Nally 182).

*Azadi: Freedom. Fascism. Fiction*, throws light upon the harsh realities of living in a nation which tries to compress off the plain folks. Traumatic events happen every now and then in a totalitarian regime which pays least worth for civil rights. The gravity of uncouth incidents is escalating.

In their struggle to deal with the feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability in the aftermath of trauma, many survivors wrestle with questions such as ‘why does this sort of things happen in the world?’, ‘how can people do this sort of things to other people?’

and ‘why did this happen to me?’ These are not simply rhetorical questions arising out of a sense of despair and disillusionment ( Kaminer and Gillian Eagle 62).

Language facilitates smooth transmission of ideas without interventions of any sort. After obtaining independence from the British Raj in 1947, Indian leaders chose Hindi as the official language of India in the hope that it would facilitate regional communication and encourage national unity as well as secular spirit. They were aware of many of the difficulties inherent with instating a single language in India's multilingual environment, and they accordingly laid out a clear timeline and plan for introducing Hindi and phasing English out. Even in contemporary India, tensions in between linguistic minorities and the majority of Hindi-speaking faction continues.

How many languages does she have ? Officially, approximately 780, only twenty-two of which are formally recognized by the Indian Constitution, while another thirty-eight are waiting to be accorded that status. Each has its own history of colonizing or being colonized. There are few victims or pure perpetrators. There is no official language. Not yet. Hindi and English are designated ‘official languages’ (Roy 10).

There are varied range of conflicts in the pan-Indian context back from freedom struggle wherein tensions arise in between proponents of Hindi and regional languages in this nation which consists of states in linguistic basis . One of the key factors which paved way for Gandhi assassination was his pro-Muslim attitude and his stance on Hindi or Hindustani, considered as a bastard tongue and cross breed between Hindi and Urdu. Linguistic minorities are facing serious humanitarian crisis with respect to the unification of a national language.

On 27th September 2019 , Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the 74<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly in Hindi, underlining its significance at the world stage and also reiterating the longstanding RSS-BJP policy on the national language. In the same year Union Home Minister Amit Shah had described Hindi as the ‘soul and heart of freedom struggle’.

This reflects the mentality of politicians who blindly try to incorporate Hindi as the official language in a nation of multifariousness. Urdu language which represents plethora of cultures is considered as a foreign language in India. The gravity of trauma experienced by the native Urdu speakers remains immeasurable. Even the children are labelled as ‘Mohemmedeans’ just because they speak their native tongue. “If Urdu is guilty of being a foreign tongue, Who, then, does India belong to? I cannot understand”(qtd.in Roy 27).The same attitude was propelled by the ‘correction’ of place names from Mughal regime ; Allahabad and Faizabad in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh to Prayagraj and Ayodhya respectively.

At present Muslims in India are labelled as Pakistanis, Sikhs as Khalistanis and activists as urban-naxals. The Jews experienced similar trauma as victims of Nazi persecution and also had inner conflicts to corroborate with the enslavement into a foreign language. Their psyches experienced a kind of tumult in between native and foreign languages.

The Prime Minister didn’t explain why Kashmiris needed to be locked down and put under a communication blockade while he delivered his stirring speech. He didn’t explain why the decision that supposedly benefited them so hugely was taken without considering them. He didn’t say how the great gifts of Indian democracy could be enjoyed by people who live under a military occupation (Roy 102).

The Kashmir valley has long history of subjugations and unrest. Children remain teary-eyed and blood stained in the most beautiful landscape on the earth. Kashmiris are wounded with tear gas shells and metal pellets as though it is a ritual akin showering flowers over idols. In this conflict-torn state it is not something with scope for becoming a 'news'. Children enjoying their leisure time or walking to their schools, playgrounds and so on may find littered mortar shells, abandoned pellets etc. These objects will explode and swipe off their invaluable lives. It is the most brutal death any living being can attain ; their body parts may turn beyond recognition and some children have to live impaired. Actually, these poor parents have been becoming bleak witnesses for children blasting off like crackers in the same playgrounds where they used to play as kids!

These shell attacks have ever lasting impact on the survivors as well as family members. A discourse on psychological trauma in the public domain occurred after World War I, when the term 'shell shock' was used to describe the mental state of many returning soldiers. The development of this disorder was attributed solely to the physical experience of a shell exploding and causing a shock to the nervous system of a soldier. Later, it was discovered that not all soldiers who developed 'shell shock' actually experienced a shell exploding.

According to reports by national media domestic violence is increasing alarmingly in the Kashmir Valley while the studies carried out revealed that more than 40 percent of Kashmiri women are physically or mentally abused by the husbands or by the in-laws. Hours after Home Minister Amit Shah effectively revoked Section 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, on 5 August 2019 ;social media was abuzz with sleazy videos of men revelling in the fact that they will finally be able to marry Kashmiri girls (gori or

fair girls). Women are vulnerable in the Indian society in any geographical boundary, be it in the northern frontiers or the southern frontiers.

Abuse cause dreams and memories of terror, mutilation, loss of humanity, and death. Unable to process these feelings as children, women continue to deal with their re-emergence. They suffered body memories: physical sensations, such as pelvic pain or stomach pain. Their memories are piecemeal and dissociated, including thoughts, physical sensations, intuition, and emotions. Emotional evidence of abuse was trusted least of all because women keep their pain in silence and as time erodes it becomes a part of history.

As Roy states Kashmiris are denied from all sorts of freedom under suppression and they even do not have access to stable networking. The trauma they have encountered cannot be fathomed. It may be the only part of this whole world where an 'Association of Disappeared Person's -Parents' function and many 'half-widows' wait for their beloved ones.

"We cannot have a world where everyone is a victim. "I'm this way because my father made me this way. I'm this way because my husband made me this way." Yes, we are indeed formed by traumas that happen to us. But then you must take charge, you must take over, you are responsible" (qtd. in Paglia). It replicates in this northern frontier state which is recurrently facing exploitations. Trauma inflicts deep level of discrepancies in the generations like a chain mechanism. Trauma is a recurrent aspect of life in the militarized zones of Jammu and Kashmir, where conflict has escalated sporadically since partition. From the time of independence in 1947 Jammu and Kashmir, a multi-ethnic state with a Muslim-majority population has remained a poor region of India, despite being well endowed with natural resources.

“ Imagine a whole population of millions of people like this, debilitated, rigid with fear and worry about their documentation. It’s not a military occupation, but it’s an occupation by documentation. These documents are people’s most prized possessions, cared for more lovingly than any child or parent ” (Roy 139).

It is ridiculous to be labelled as a ‘foreigner’ in one’s motherland. The world’s largest democracy has already concreted primary steps for this superimposition. Thousands of people are termed so by the Foreigner’s Tribunal in Assam and they had the fate to be imprisoned in detention camps .Yet many more immigrants as well as native men who do not have their claim of citizenship with legacy documents as proof will have to undergo brutal scrutiny. “ Trauma definitions generally agree on two elements : Trauma is caused by a severe violation of integrity (often described as the shattering of self and the world) and often it has a lingering, long-term effect” (Krondorfer 91).

In *Azadi:Freedom.Fascism.Fiction*, the author narrates the intensity of this deporting. Poor people who were crucified by imprisonment in congested cells never returned back to their real self. They are unable to smile, fearful of articulating details about those years of sufferings in detention camps. A man or woman thus, loses the equilibrium of their psyches with such traumatic events.

Another clear-cut indication of the traumatic psychological suppression can be cross-checked in the verdict by the Supreme Court, on the dispute over a contested holy site in Ayodhya, which Hindus believe is the birthplace of revered deity Ram and where Hindutva mobs demolished the 16th century Babri Masjid in 1992. Majoritarian coercion works in insidious ways and leads the common man to a point where even the apex judiciary has to sue for “peace and tranquility”, possibly at the expense of full

justice. This has been happening for decades. Only it has become so much more intense and transparent now. Minorities in India are always becoming prone to fanatic spirits' policies. They are privileged to advocate upliftment for their lush heritage by slashing off the backward communities and their rights.

According to Golwalkar, it is important to transform India into a racially pure Hindu nation with uniform Hindu culture and language. The religious domination and cultural assimilation were two strategies adopted and prescribed by Golwalkar to achieve the objective of establishing India as a Hindu nation. Mr. Golwalkar was also an adherent follower of European Nazism and fascism. His ultimate vision was to organise and produce ideally militarised Hindu manhood with a corporate personality. He found that caste is the only common organising principle among Hindus in India. Therefore, Golwalkar was a vehement supporter of hierarchical and discriminatory caste-based Hindu social order in the name of preserving unity in Indian society. Mob lynching has begun to develop as a custom in different parts of this nation. If an individual refuses to praise Lord Shri Ram, or transports cattle for domestic needs etc., chances are high that he may be lynched as if he is an invader or colonizer!. Reports depict that almost 130 people were mob-lynched in heinous ways across India just in the year 2015.

The citizens are to be ashamed of these deeds in a country wherein the Mahatma fought for freedom by uniting the folks and diverting them from 'himsa'. People who live by animal husbandry and farms in this agrarian country know very well the financial burden of feeding cows which are economically inviable and unproductive. Therefore, they are slaughtered. Hatemongers and fanatics are blind with religious charisma and they murder their brethren for the glory of ancient beliefs.

Those who are badly affected by the traumatic incidents frequently visualise the images of the event and develop hallucinations. They may even lose the presence of mind and behave odd. Intergenerational or multigenerational trauma is defined as the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding that is transmitted from one generation to the next. The concept of intergenerational trauma was first introduced when studies depicted how the effects of the Holocaust were transmitted to future generations. The resulting emotional effects of multigenerational trauma can be seen in the high rates of depression, anger, stress, hypervigilance, low self-esteem, and cultural shame as well as loss of language, culture, and traditions. In turn they reach to a stage of identity crisis.

In the sixth chapter ‘‘Intimations of an Ending: The Rise and Rise of the Hindu-Nation’’, Roy speaks about the category of ‘anti-nationals’ - human rights activists, lawyers, students, academics, ‘urban Maoists’ - who have been defamed and pushed into cells. Those who think and react to the fascist motives are labelled as Naxalites. The recent arrests of aged poet Varavara Rao, Sudha Bharadwaj and Jesuit priest Fr. Stan Swamy represent the movements of autocratic governing body in silencing the intellectuals.

"We fight for the 80 per cent of the poor population of this country. For us, this is nation worship. They are the ones who burnt the Tricolour. They are followers of Savarkar who apologised to the British. They are the ones who, in Haryana, have changed the name of one airport. There was one airport named after Bhagat Singh. We have full faith in Babasaheb (Ambedkar). We have full faith in the Constitution of India. We want to say this very forcefully that if anyone tries to challenge the Constitution, be it the Sanghis, we will not tolerate."

This is a statement made by Jawaharlal Nehru University Students Union President Kanhaiya Kumar back in February 2020. He spoke against the orchestrated violence inside the campus by the right-wing students front, while the protests against C.A.A. was going on. The caste system is one of the major threats to the rights of Indian citizens. It is perhaps the world's longest surviving social hierarchy and was developed by the brahmins to establish their superiority. In India nearly 240 million people are Dalits, which means they constitute about 25% of the population.

Caste is a socio-cultural construct specifically designed for the rule by upper majority. Even though the judiciary and the constitution have provisions to prevent untouchability and casteism; Dalits are deprived from democratic justice at the basic institutions like police stations. The Hathras incident which remains as a black mark in this progressing third world country reveals the threats faced by the downtrodden. The young girl who was working in the fields of Boolgarhi village was raped by a gang and her body was found drenched in blood with her tongue ripped off. Basically this happened and submerged to the blank spaces of judicial knots as she was a Dalit. The oppressed remains prone to systemic subversion. Cultural theoretician Ashis Nandy in his, "Theories of Oppression and Another Dialogue of Cultures" states, "The oppressed also have their own often-implicit theories of oppression and have no obligation to be guided by our ideas of the scientific, the rational and the dignified. They have every right to be historically, economically and politically incorrect" (43).

The term 'demonetisation' was new to the Indian economy. On 8 November 2016, the Indian government declared that the 500 and 1000 rupee notes will be stripped of their status as legal tender effective from midnight. A major portion of the Indian workforce is a part of the informal economy like daily wage workers. They use cash to meet all their expenses and demonetisation has resulted in a lot of them losing

their jobs due to unavailability of cash. Approximately 1.5 million jobs were lost during the final quarter of the financial year 2016-17. Negative impacts of this so called move by the Union government (organized to flush out black money, tax evaders etc.) also stabbed on the income of common man.

The Citizenship Amendment Bill (C.A.A.) is a back leashing by the rulers upon its own citizens. According to the Bill, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsi communities who have come from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh till December 31, 2014 and facing religious persecution will not be treated as illegal immigrants but given Indian citizenship. It also relaxes the provisions for "Citizenship by naturalisation". The "hum kya chahte, azadi" (We want, freedom) slogan reverberated in protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) across India.

It was in the streets of Srinagar that the chant was born in the early nineties, and, over the years, went on to become a veritable anthem for the separatist movement in the region. In contemporary India it has acquired a greater favourable as 'Azadi' denotes the yell for freedom from fascism. As the slogan gets louder, they try to impose more restrictions. Indians have been asking for azadi since the British Raj. The British, colonised India and looted its legacy, in two significant ways – economically, and by taking the Indian voice away and turning them into second-class citizens in their own land. Nationalists of the time laid their lives for India's azadi. Nationalists of today can't bear to hear the word, 'azadi'.

It is a word that then became something only heard in Kashmir and was branded as the demand of separatists who did not want Kashmir to be a part of India. Violence erupted in nook and corner of the country and especially in the National Capital

Territory. Students were injured from libraries and college corridors, public transport systems were vandalised but at the same time they had massive supporters.

In the first 2-3 years of Modi rule, the army was vigorously used as symbol of nationalistic pride, patriotism not to mention machoism. The army became another sacred cow and despite unconfirmed accounts of massive corruption within the ranks, they are deemed above the law. The worst example of ruthless and misplaced military supremacy was in Kashmir when the army fired metal pellets and a case of 'mass blinding', killed at least 90 and injured over 17,000 civilians, leaving hundreds blinded, including children. On 29 September 2016, the government claimed it had conducted a 'surgical strike' on militant launch pads across the Line of Control (LoC) in Pakistan and inflicted "significant casualties".

This was in response to Pakistani terrorist attack in Uri. Pakistan rejected these claims outright. This strike was supposed to have put an end to Pakistan's terrorist activities aimed at India. It did no such thing and since then there've been other skirmishes, and stand offs including one with China over the Doklam plateau.

The ruling elite has effectively used xenophobia as a way to implement its policy of nationalism. Issues of the most significant character have been side tracked by the government, by evoking the nationalistic sentiments of the people. People are always found to fall for this trick because it is always 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'. Talking of patriotism, even this sweet patriotic phrase has been employed as a tool to gain political mileage in the elections. Nationalism has not stayed confined to patriotism; it has transformed into chauvinism.

Capitalism is being heavily promoted, as a few business families are getting richer day by day, and the educated youth is being exploited by availing their services

for a meagre income. It is public knowledge that, where the state-run telecom company BSNL is facing heavy losses, another private telecom company is making huge profits even by providing free calls and data. There are only a handful of private companies whose presence can be observed in every industrial sector.

These incidents may thereby lead to eventual loss of self respect as wounds of traumatic memories take long periods to heal .There is a gigantic price to pay for such collective denial. All the more they are unspeakable and unthinkable episodes for the survivors. Another protest going on at the Singhu border near the National Capital Territory Region demonstrates the plight of poor farmers in this land of adversities. Agrarian sector is fundamental of all other networks in India, as they are the major share holders as well as grain producers.

The bureaucrats and the bourgeois consume from their toil but never pay back self-respect to these hard-working men . Right wing members of the Lok Sabha equivocally passed a bill (The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation). A Bill, which is the root cause for their protests. The farm bill is a package of legislation passed roughly once every five years that has a tremendous impact on farming livelihoods, how food is grown, and what kinds of foods are grown etc.

Within 100 days of this protest around 248 farmers have died. These numbers may not be a matter of concern as they are the voiceless set of people. Old men and young children irrespective of their age and health issues took part in this struggle. They are neither affected by the record-breaking temperature drops nor by the attacks by the cops. Protesters gathered attention of the mainstream media but, they have

flipped the coin when this 'stuff' gradually became trivial. It turns out to be another set of unheard cries by the marginalized people.

So, the chants for 'Azadi' goes on unheard in this era of fascist governance. The victims of all radical movements are experiencing variant levels of trauma. It is passed on to generations as if some asset is being exchanged. The nation had suffered enough and more to obtain independence from the Whites and now it is a battle for liberation from the internal clashes. A hope still persists that, some day traumatic memories would fade to the fragments of history.

## CHAPTER 3

*Azadi. Freedom. Fascism. Fiction: An anthology of traumatic testaments*

“ It is ironic that so much has been written about biological mechanisms of traumatic psychological amnesia when the very existence of the phenomenon is in doubt”(Mc Nally 182).

*Azadi: Freedom.Fascism.Fiction*, throws light upon the harsh realities of living in a nation which tries to compress off the plain folks. Traumatic events happen every now and then in an absolute regime which pays least worth for civil rights. The gravity of uncouth incidents is escalating. Arundhati Roy writes about the Azadi of a writer and Azadi in a fascist regime as well as the chant for Azadi amidst the global pandemic. Reverberations of Azadi were heard earlier from the Kashmir valley. A renowned feminist activist and poet Kamala Bhasin in 1991, during a conference at Jadavpur University in Kolkata recited the poem “Meri behane maange Azadi, meri bachhi maange Azadi, naari ka naara Azadi...” (My sisters want freedom, my daughter wants freedom, every woman’s slogan is freedom) (qtd.in Roy 33). Back then, it was a cry against patriarchy, demanding women’s rights.

‘Azadi’ was also used as a slogan in Iranian Revolution, where the demonstrators chanted "Independence, Freedom, and Islamic Republic" (Estiqlal, Azadi, Jomhuri-ye Eslami). Initially ‘Azadi’ derived from Persian language and later mingled with Hindi and Hindustani, turning out to be an Urdu word. In this historical juncture between pre-pandemic and post-pandemic era Roy scrutinizes the realms of forbidden freedom, also focusing on the locked lives of millions of Kashmiris. Students, activists, Dalits, think tanks, writers, journalists, professors, and all those people who recite the hymn called ‘Azadi’ are ruthlessly beaten up, molested or send to

prisons irrespective of their age, health anomalies and so on. The fascist rulers do their best to silence their viewpoints – the voices of oppressed and even sentence them to death.

Roy begins the essays with a personal narrative in the first chapter titled “In What Language Does Rain Fall Over Tormented Cities? ”. This title is an adaptation from Pablo Neruda’s quote “In What Language Does Rain Fall Over Tormented Cities? ” (The Book of Questions). The author is narrating about people questioning her freedom of choices in writing something budding from her heart. It is also about people telling her in which language she should and should not write.

She finds by deeply introspecting that all her writings are translations and literature is absolutely a conglomeration of languages. In her last novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, she had ascribed the role of antagonist to the concept of one nation, one religion and one language, which is getting stronger base in India. It is also indicating the emergence of fascist forces which thereby expand the scope for their dreamland of Hindutva. She observes her transition from the phase of slow-cooked novel writing language in fiction into a quick, urgent, public language of non-fiction. She mentions about her encounter with Anjum and Saddam Hussain, the characters of her novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* to depict multiple languages confederacy.

Although colonialism in India ended in 1947, India was more a continent than a country. It had many British Raj provinces, about five hundred princely kingdoms, including the currently abrogated Jammu and Kashmir. Indian independence came along with long struggle and partition (one of the largest ever displacements of human

population). Even before the division of nations there was a division of languages as it can be traced back into the diversion of Hindustani to Hindi and Urdu.

As Roy describes the destruction of tombs, like that old Urdu love poet Wali Dakhani, she is clearly exposing the deep rooted-interventions in a secular state. Thus, literary canons got partitioned and even classical music got divided, Urdu came to be foreseen as Muslim language whereas Hindi came to be known as Hindu language. Therefore, language is at the heart of violence according to Arundhati Roy (qtd. in Roy 89). India is the largest secular-sovereign state in the world with an estimated population of about 1.36 billion in which 79.8 percent are Hindus and 14.2 percent are Muslims. Fascism is prudent in Indian politics as election machinery is also delineated with voting on the basis of casteism rather than fundamentals of republicanism. The essay also discusses the arrests of activists in the Bhima-Koregaon case back in 2018.

By the Revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir on 5 August 2019, by abrogation of articles 35A and 375 the state of Kashmir was dissected into two Union Territories. The government-imposed ban on the internet and communication lines, and seven million people were sent to rolling curfews. Even today, the internet facility does not have reasonable speed. Kashmir valley saw the mass-modern version of human rights violation. Fascism is chiefly built on fantasy and fake news; which travels swiftly. In the Indian context, Hindutva fascists have developed their own glorious history, by advocating the falsehood of believing in God, which brings power. The fundamental claim of fascism is a crude simplification. India has diversity in everything. Roy once opined that if India has an enemy, it is the decline of its diversity. The fourth speech which was given at Apollo on May 12th, 2019 which is titled "The Language of Literature", speaks of the different takes in her writing ranging from baleful suspicion on one hand and selling like hot cakes on the other

hand. The place of literature is something built by writers and readers, fragile somewhere and indestructible somewhere, it is literature that provides shelter of all kinds of victims. As a socially committed citizen as well as author she responds to all kinds of socio-political issues though she gets labelled as an ‘anti-national’. Essays are the ways she directs with arguments in public life. According to her, essays are the invitations to uninvited places in India, where nobody shall be welcomed.

“Over the last five years, India has distinguished itself as a lynching nation. Muslims and Dalits have been publicly flogged and beaten to death by vigilante Hindu mobs in broad day-light. Th violence is flagrant, open and certainly not spontaneous” (qtd. in Roy 80). Fiction writer gathers experiences like a sedimentary rock with many layers of experiences. Essays are literary enterprises; one functions as a key to the another, novels are also political as essays. Fiction and facts are not necessarily opposites, every work of fiction bloom from a group of people, nation etc. Fiction and non-fiction accompany her like two legs around the world. The chapter titled “The Silence Is the Loudest Sound” reflects the unfinished business of the partitioned India, that is Kashmir; the serene valley which was made into a prison camp where seven million people were barricaded and humiliated inside their homes, spied on by drones. Abrogation stripped off the state’s special status and statehood. Tracing the history of Kashmir, she describes the pundits and Muslims getting murdered, ending up in refugee camps and the government not trying to find solutions for the issues. Their religious sentiments are used to fuel nationalistic narrative.

When the whole of Kashmiri’s was incarcerated, Prime Minister Modi was boasting of achieving one nation, one constitution with the Kashmir moves. Now this fashion of fascist ideology has made mob lynching, murders , arrests and disharmony the order of the day. She talks about the chameleon-like, millipede-like, R.S.S. walking

into the hell with millions of legs, blowing its way into every institution in our country. Right from 1925, some Hindus set up armed and fascist organizations like the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha, which were deeply nurtured with Hitler's Nazi propaganda against the minorities. They conceived India as a promised Hindu nation and the minorities like Christians, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs and so on were threatened like pests.

In Modi's second term, armed with an even larger majority in 2019, matters took a very serious turn for Indian Muslims. A plan for a Hitler-style reduction of the Muslim citizens was unveiled. It started due to a perceived problem of illegal Bangladeshi migration to Assam in the north east of India, which was allegedly changing the Hindu-Muslim population ratio. The government brought a National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam to decide between bonafide citizens and illegals. The documentation asked to prove citizenship were birth certificates, and parent's birth certificates. Detention centres or concentration camps started to be built in Assam for those without the citizenship document. Once sent to the concentration camp, the inmate would have no recourse to justice or law as the person was stateless.

The problem for many rural people of past generations was that there were no birth certificates. When the NRC was completed for Assam, the result was embarrassing: more Hindus than Muslims were deemed illegals due to lack of the required documents of citizenship. The plan had been to extend the NRC to the whole of India, but seeing that more Hindus than Muslims would be deemed stateless, the government sought a way out. According to C.A.A., Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh and Parsi migrants who have entered India illegally -that is, without a visa-on or before December 31, 2014 from the Muslim-majority countries of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh and have stayed in the country for five years, are eligible

to apply for Indian citizenship. Whilst believers of six religions are given exceptions, the only preys for this Act are the Muslim migrants.

“ ‘It is not Azadi from India, it is Azadi in India’, says Kanhaiya Kumar, the charismatic young politician credited with customizing and retooling the chant for the uprising in India today” (qtd. in Roy 158). Citizenship based on selective exclusion was reminiscent of the Nazi Germany’s Nuremberg Race Laws. The citizens of largest democracy are soon supposed to produce papers or documentations of their legacy and heredity. People who believed in democracy and the students who were alert about the existential crisis they will have to undergo, arranged All -India protest movement and sit-ins, as it was seen in South Delhi’s Shaheen Bagh, sit-in protest in Gandhian non-cooperation style.

In its frustration with the rise of mobs in Delhi, the BJP government and the RSS organised a riot and pogrom against Muslims in Delhi in Feb. 2020 – paradoxically when it was hosting Trump in Delhi (the much lauded ‘Namaste-Trump’ program in response to the grand welcoming Modi received in Texas titled ‘Howdy Modi’) The Delhi pogrom was done to intimidate the Muslims over the CAA-NRC protests.

The chapter titled “Election Season in a Dangerous Democracy” describes how it is a crime to belong to minorities in India. To be murdered, to be lynched, to be poor are all crimes and to defend the poor is to plot against overthrowing the government. The irony can be seen in the very notion of Muslims being arrested for attacking mosques and leaving the original culprits from majoritarian sect free to arrange more pogroms. Every day basic civil rights are violated in our nation and it is clearly visible from the periphery as it happens in the internal side ; the government has adapted a

policy of 'divide and rule'. When the government feels that it is losing popularity, they somehow divert the mobs attention by manufacturing murders and mob lynching.

In order to defame the Shaheen Bagh protests and the nationwide issues with respect to the Citizenship Amendment Act, they found a silver lining with the World Health Organization's caution statement which said that COVID-19 is a global pandemic. On March 24, 2020, the Government of India ordered a nationwide lockdown for 21 days as a preventive measure against the spread of the coronavirus. The lockdown in full force restricted 1.3 billion people from leaving their homes. National mainstream media did not report on unending streams of migrants trying to find their way home, the fear of loss of all income, deep privations, and even (in the space of days) hunger, starvation and death. The Modi government was conducting an experiment like a chemical trial by announcing the unprecedented lockdown and associated chaos. Modi asked people to come out of balconies, tap utensils and light the candles, how can these pomp and bang eradicate the virus! . Later on, the government gives publicity by appearing as the saviours of Indian state which is rough terrain as per their standards. They are indeed cleansing their brutality.

"Our Captured, Wounded Hearts" , focuses on how Modi through the Balakot 'pre-emptive' strikes made the internal matter between India and Pakistan an international dispute, calling the Pulwama attack the deadliest one. Roy says that in the Kashmir valley, there are young men like Adil Ahmed Dar who have been born into war and are even ready to become suicide bombers to attain freedom of their motherland. Kashmiri people live in terror of informers, double agents, triple agents, who could be anybody from their localities. Modi made use of the Pulwama attack by transforming tragedy into pity political advantage. The events take place in Kashmir and the native people become mute witness to unspeakable violence.

“The sixth chapter ‘Intimations of an Ending: The Rise and Rise of the Hindu - Nation’, Roy speaks of the growth of R.S.S. and its growth into power, contributions of Narendra Modi in taking the organization to violent heights with the issue of border states, Kashmir issue, NRC with reference to Assam. Roy calls ‘secularism’ as a hypocritical term, on which India stood and without which India would fall and become empty and lifeless. Change wording She also talks of GST, demonetization, building of Ram Temple; which has become a reality now by creating a cleavage between the minority groups who themselves have casteism in between their members. Atrocities against the minorities have reached greater heights, especially the Dalits and Muslims.

The book ends with a chapter titled “The Pandemic Is a Portal” where she says about the unliving, undead, unseeable blobs dotted with suction pads waiting to fasten themselves to our lungs. With the arrival of quarantine, isolation and lockdown, entire humanity was subjected to a sudden phase of stillness, expecting miracles to happen. The pandemic has force stopped immigration controls, biometrics, digital infrastructure and all kinds of data analytics. Roy’s writing against Hindu nationalism is also writing against capitalism, for she recognises that fascism and the profit motive are strongly linked. Neoliberal economic evangelists and Hindu nationalists had ridden into town on the same horse. With hope, she argues the pandemic could disrupt this bleak and dying world, and serve as a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.

The best part of Azadi is its strange ability to shout and scream as well as to whisper softly into the ears of the reading folks. The book is an amalgam of two similar but distinct Roy’s — Roy, the storyteller, and Roy, the political realist. Azadi. Freedom. Fascism. Fiction seems to be successful in narrating the ‘what-factors’ and ‘how-factors’ of fascism. The timely evolved authoritarian nature of the regime in a constitutionally democratic nation and the instrumentalization behind the process is

explained well. Even though the author has drawn out a rough sketch of the significant growth in fanatic spirits and laws promoting their agendas, she is not introspecting the causal factors for this growth within a short time span. In general, Roy represents the entire population as victims of biased attitudes towards these dominant class atrocities. The variety of locations and platforms indicates how far and wide she has travelled to speak out against political injustices.

The passion and beauty of her voice is unabated, but what comes through in this volume, is a new sense of maturity in both her execution and engagement as she comes to terms with her vocation and the choices she has made. She wrote in the chapter “The -Graveyard Talks Back” “I have often caught myself wondering, if I were to be incarcerated or driven underground, would it liberate my writing? Would what I write become simpler, more lyrical perhaps, and less negotiated?” (qtd in Roy 166). What she has produced, in *Azad. Freedom. Fascism. Fiction.*, is precisely such a text – the outcome of a life of writing from the frontline of solidarity and humanism, and from a writer who is perhaps only now reaching the height of her literary powers.

As a writer and an individual, Roy is wholeheartedly committed to the causes she stands for. Yet her prose is so poetic; it always feels like a conversation, never a monologue. She takes us through the grim realities that we live in, and she ends on a vaguely hopeful note, powered by the conviction, the rage and the pain we must feel within.

## Conclusion

Trauma studies is a recent branch of literature shedding light on the perspectives of trauma survivors and the individuals prone to trauma. In its theoretical realms, trauma theory has adopted fundamentals from schools of structuralism and psychoanalytics. Most survivors of trauma repeat aspects or the entirety of the event that was traumatic in their life in their mind. Usually, their soiled memories and aching hearts carry unspeakable and illegible traumatic burden. Trauma is transmitted across generations; the people who came back from most tragic events like the Holocausts, 9/11 attack, tsunamis share one thing in common. That is their post-traumatic stress and turmoil to lead a casual livelihood.

Indian democracy has witnessed the rise and tremendous growth of politics centred on religious propagandas. The soul of these brute hatemongers lies at the grassroot level. Indeed, they are nurturing the young generation of this democracy with venomous ideas of extreme spiritual biasing. So, from the 'shakhas' of these firms which function to promote hatred amongst citizens, gives supremacy for the epics and conventional philosophies henceforth, denying the growth and changes in the present era. They are experiencing a kind of blurry distinction in between modernity and their pre-defined conspiracy theories.

It is to be analyzed from the unbiased viewpoint and then facts become crisp and clear. Obviously, the lives of religious minorities in India have become miserable. They are questioned and attacked by the right wing supporters. In order to prove their existence, they are supposed to produce supporting evidence. This paints a picture of ambiguity and despair as a nation with freedom of speech, expression and movement is gradually losing its individuality.

India is also lacking the effective and trouble free functioning of an electoral system. What is the use of conducting elections within the timespan if the system has no specific change?. Most of the machinery is corrupt as per the records. If the officials are working in favour of money and power, then elite creed shall always cling onto power. Moreover, the excessive segregation of authority into the hands of fascist monopoly absolutely is a failure of principles of democracy.

The objective of this work to examine radical changes in Indian democracy by the absolute governance and to study its reverberations being heard as loud cries for Azadi is thence established. It is relevant in this context of a country wherein the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has not conducted any press meetings during his first and second tenure. The same man professes his great opinions during ‘Man Ki Baath’ and pre-recorded sessions as he always lacks strong personal opinions and needs the favour of facilitators.

Modi had once boycotted Karan Thappar’s interview program titled ‘Devil’s - Advocate’ during his term as Gujarat chief minister. He was speechless about the Godra riots and heinous murders of Muslim men ,rape cases as well as attacks on children and pregnant women. A nation’s leader should have depth of knowledge about the issues and the possible remedies. At the same time if he fears to face the media reporters who facilitate as the watchdogs of democracy, then it is an absolute regime with zero percentile hope for trustworthy politics.

The citizens, especially the poorer sections are critically affected by the unpredictable hike of petrol prices, L.P.G. cylinders for domestic use, price of fertilizers and food grains etc, .These commodities are not luxuries ; but the basic needs

of any common man. The central government is least bothered about the prices even though they can deduct the taxes to lessen the burden of lay men.

“Swacch Bharath Abhiyaan” was introduced with much pomp and show, commemorating Mahatma Gandhi on his centennial birth anniversary. This massive project by the government laid hopes for a better India, free from open defecation and communicable diseases as part of contamination in local areas. But the project has not been fruitful in tackling the goals. It is a failure of the government machinery and the Union Human Resource ministry as well. Public toilets (Shouchalay) are still very few in the rural localities and people practise open defecation. This is a source for all sorts of diseases. Manual scavenging is not yet prevented although, it is banned by the judiciary .

Dalits are supposed to clean these dry latrines and they are viewed as untouchables who carry out this job as a traditional one. There is no change in this practise even after a number of deaths inside manholes and drainage canals. They spent their entire lives in the stinking ambience of these dirt vents and defecation sites. What is the use of exclusive government centred projects if they are not transforming the decayed system of this country?.

When they raise voices for ‘Azadi’ ;cops silence their charisma with clenched fists. Moreover, individuals are subjected to mental degradation, which is the most brutal form of trauma. Anyone raising voice against fanatics will be labelled as ‘anti-national’. It is meaningless to yell for freedom when everything is chained with agendas for corporates.

From this dissertation it can be analysed that Arundhati Roy is ferocious about her viewpoints made in this anthology titled *Azadi.Freedom.Fascism.Fiction*. Upon

independence in 1947 India was declared to be a secular socialist republic. Roy does not hesitate to describe the RSS and the present government and prime minister as fascist. She opined back in 2016 that 'India' is a Hindu nation' according to the principles of R.S.S. . For its hundred and more million Muslims, the choice is Pakistan or the graveyard.

Arundhati Roy's comparison of the BJP's Citizen Amendment Act and its National Register of Citizens to Hitler's Nuremberg Laws is a pivotal statement. The second chapter of this project narrates other worst factors which made topsy turvies in the democracy like the demonetization over midnight, Abrogation Rule of Kashmir, arrests of intellectuals, poets and think tanks etc. Even the recent issues like the farmers protest at Delhi border as well as deficit in economic levels as part of the pandemic are included. The growth of fascist spirits will slay off democratic ideals at a threatening speed.

In the third chapter, the clear-cut evidences for the traumatic impact of silencing the downtrodden people are traced out. Trauma affects the pace and existence of millions of people when they are leading a suffocated life. There are traumatic sequences when a government tries to impose one nation-one language policy. India is a land of cultural pluralism thus, thousands of uncategorized languages also prevail beyond official recognition. They cannot embrace Hindi all of a sudden and forced amendments may make their lives miserable.

The Kashmir valley is the highest militant occupied territory in the whole world. These people have not ever experienced harmony. Their children play in the grounds which may momentarily turn into sites of explosion. They live with shell shock and traumatic memories of losing their kith and kin.

Azadi is relevant only if the citizens who are discriminated becomes aware of the necessity to exist as individuals with dignity. Universal literacy, that is education for all, poverty alleviation, elimination of gender discrimination, removal of regional imbalances, administrative and judicial reforms and sustained economic, social and environmental development etc. are some of the measures to tackle the hullabalos in this nation. Collective actions in society will grant the civil rights.

Hence the statements made in this project are pertinent within the contemporary scenario. Traumatic effects and its backlashes transfers as a transgenerational factor as a result of socio-political adversities.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**A STUDY OF ALIENATION AND ESTRANGEMENT IN  
HOSSEINI's *AND THE MOUNTAINS ECHOED***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial fulfillment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**NITHYALAKSHMI M S**

**Register No: DB18AEGR034**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

March 2021

## Kannur University

### Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “**A Study of Alienation and Estrangement in Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed***” is a bonafide work of Nithyalakshmi M S, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. ASWATHIKRISHNA

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## **Declaration**

I, Nithyalakshmi M S, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**A Study of Alienation and Estrangement in Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed***” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Aswathi Krishna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

**NITHYALAKSHMIM**

**DB18AEGR034**

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**NITHYALAKSHMI M S**

## Table of Contents

Sl. No.		Page No.
1.	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
2.	<b>Chapter One</b> Alienation and Estrangement	<b>3</b>
3.	<b>Chapter Two</b> <i>And the Mountains Echoed: Hosseini's Epitome.</i>	<b>9</b>
4.	<b>Chapter Three</b> <i>And the Mountains Echoed: A Study of Alienation and Estrangement.</i>	<b>16</b>
5.	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>24</b>
6.	<b>Works Cited</b>	<b>26</b>

## Introduction

The aim of this project is to study the complexities and effects of alienation and estrangement in human life. It aims at analysing the alienation and estrangement represented on the life of characters portrayed in the particular novel, *And the Mountains Echoed*. The work *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan – American depicts the life of common people of Afghanistan. The project focuses on how the phenomenon of alienation is working on a common rural family. The central theme of this novel is also considered as a reflection of the writer's own life story.

This thesis tries to find out how the novel clearly depicts the experience of a human being who gets alienated from his own surroundings. It also aims to show how each character of the novel faces alienation and estrangement at some point of their lives. The present study therefore intends to go through the lives of the characters portrayed in *And the Mountains Echoed*. It also makes an attempt to find out the condition of the lives of alienated people in the current common community.

The project is divided into five chapters including the introduction chapter and conclusion chapter. The introduction chapter introduces that main objective and relevance of the thesis. The first chapter traces Alienation theory and the concept of estrangement and it also gives a brief description about the phenomenon of estrangement. Alienation theory aims to point out the reasons, effects and roles of the condition of alienation in human lives. Alienation theory explores the categories of social, psychological and political notion of human identity and life. The second chapter analyses the novel *And the Mountains Echoed*. Through this chapter, the study tries to hold up the major concepts and ideas in the novel. The third chapter studies

the novel *And the Mountains Echoed* by the application of the concept of alienation. This chapter focuses on the problems and tragedies faced by the characters on the basis of their alienated condition. It focuses on the identity crisis and the lacking of self-awareness and examines how it is played in the day to day life of characters. The last chapter is the conclusion chapter in which a conclusion is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out in the third chapter.

## Chapter One

### **Alienation and Estrangement**

Alienation and estrangement is one of the oft-quoted ideas of Modern Contemporary fiction. It is clear that displacement and dislocation play a major role in creating a sense of unhomeliness. When an individual is displaced or dislocated it is common for him to feel alienation. Along with alienation, estrangement is a state of condition where people find difficult to discover where they belong to. This happens when an individual is not able to recognise himself to his surroundings. It is an internal conflict which occurs when there is a lack of self- awareness. When an individual is displaced or dislocated it is common for him to feel alienation.

Today's age can be called the age of alienation. In America, Erich Fromm is the one who has been the most responsible for popularising the term 'alienation'. Alienation is the separation or estrangement of human beings from some essential aspects of their nature or from society, often resulting in feelings of powerlessness or hopelessness and even helplessness. Man is said to be alienated from others, nature, society, and culture and perhaps most significantly from himself too.

The theoretical concept of alienation was developed by the most famous sociologist, philosopher and political theorist Karl Marx. Marx describes the isolating, dehumanizing and the disenchanting effects of working within a capitalist system of the production. Alienation is a state which an individual feels himself alone, worthless, meaningless and estranged. It is the result of socio political setup or due to capitalist surroundings. But it is an accepted fact that it is a psychological agony too. Loneliness makes a man estranged from one's own surroundings. For some thinkers, this strange situation is clearly psychological and for some others such as Hegel and

Feuerbach, it is clearly an intellectual process. But according to Karl Marx, this is a material and social process which affects human beings. He used the term 'Entfremdung', which means estrangement that he introduced in his "Alienation theory" which delineates the separation or detachment of individuals who have been naturally united together. It also describes the causes, placement and the effects of antagonism among individuals and things that are not in proper harmony.

Etymologically, 'Entfremdung' depicts the situation of alienation from prospects of human nature as a result of living in a class based society. Marx elaborates that in a capitalist society, the work are bound to sell their own Power, strength, hard work and their ability to the capitalists. Ultimately labour itself becomes a prey to alienation. Because of this surrounding, the workers or labourers becomes estranged from their own selves. On the other hand, they are also alienated from other individuals as well as from their works. According to Karl Marx, alienation of one's self is a result of being mechanistic part of the social class that takes away a person from his humanity. All these lead a society to get divided into two structures or forms - working class and capitalist class.

Alienation is the basic form of rootlessness. It is a major theme of human condition in the contemporary epoch. Alienation is a result of loss of Identity. Main files to perceive today the very purpose behind life and the relevance of his existence in a whole hostile world. Edmund Fuller remarks that in our age, "main suffers not only from war, persecution, famine and ruin, but from inner problems of a conviction of isolation, randomness, meaningless in his way of existence."

The concept of alienation describes the isolating, dehumanizing and also disenchanting effects of cooperating within a capitalist system of production. Social

alienation is a more wide concept mainly used by the sociologists, to explain the experience of people or community that feel disconnected from the values, norms, practices and social relation of their surroundings or society for a variety of social structural reasons, including in a relation to the economic status. Those who are experiencing social alienation will not share the basic, mainstream values of society and not more attached to the society, also socially isolated from the mainstream.

From Marx to Seeman and other sociological writers, alienation has made it their aim to understand the relationships. Sociologist Melvin Seeman provided a definition of social alienation in a paper published in 1959, titled “On the meaning of alienation.” Melvin Seeman defined alienation on the basis of five basic variance of alienation. Those are powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, social isolation and self - estrangement. In this aspect, powerlessness means that “nothing I do makes a difference.” It means, does not more in life that a common ordinary man can control by his own. Normlessness meant that people didn’t have the right to know right from wrong, that good things have no longer existence. Meaninglessness indicates the situation of not making sense of something. The next two aspects are more important in this. That are social isolation and self - estrangement. Social isolation is a situation of a person who gets neglected by all, avoided by all. In this particular stage, everyone started to feel like they are alone, no one cares about them and so on. Self - estrangement is a stage of a person who is trying to elope from his own life and thoughts, that person can never give a value to his attributions.

In order to the course of working and living in a capitalist world or system as described by Karl Marx, sociologist realises about other causes of alienation. Economical instability and the social detachment lead to create a feeling of or sense of normlessness that creates social alienation. It also leads to moving from one region

to other, or from our comfort area to a different region with all new norms, practices and social relations. In such a way, it causes social alienation. Sociologists, however, have also recognised that demographic changes within a population can also be a reason for social isolation for a person who tries to find themselves no longer in the majority in terms of colour, religion, castes and world views. Social alienation or so results from the experience of living at the lower position or social hierarchies of class, colour, language. Those people, who live in poverty and under some other issues such as lack of money, experience social isolation because they are economically unable to participate and perform in society in a way that is considered as normal.

Alienation occurs when main person withdraws or becomes isolated from his or her environment or from other people. People who show symptoms of alienation will often reject loved ones or society. They may also show feelings of estrangement including their own emotions. In some cases alienation also takes place in families. It may be due to the familial issues, separation of families, economical situation and also the lifestyle. In many modern families, the members cannot keep an attachment between others. Their lifestyle, their busy schedules and their priorities kept them alienated from the family. In such cases the separation between parents and otherwise the suppression of a child from his family also create an alienated situation. These kind of alienation known as parental alienation. It means one parent make an allegation that the one parent never likes the child. This allegation put the family relationship in a suffering spot. But in such cases, like a parent became forceful to kept his child away from his family because of issues like economical problems in the family. But all this kind of alienations may cause a loneliness, hopeless, helplessness and estranged feeling in the mind of that child or that person.

In the alienation process, social alienation or sociological alienation has an important position. Because sociological alienation has to do refer with the objective condition of society and subjective condition of an individual. In past days literature has been to treat alienation as a social condition, and then literature moves to treat it as psychologically. An issue arising among those who consider a alienation as a subjective condition of an individual is the choice of the type of object from the individual who is alienated.

Alienation occurs when a person withdraws or become isolated from their on environment and surroundings. The who show symptoms of alienation will reject their loved ones and Society. They always keep a distance and estrangement from their own emotions too. This behaviour makes the individual an unhealthy one, both mentally and physically. They always try to be alone. They create a comfort zone there by their own and always be a part of that creative world. Eventually that alienated person leaves his full relations and commitments with the society and social platforms. Then they become introvert personalities.

According to the most famous German philosopher, Friedrich Hegel, alienation is a part of self creativity and self realisation of human being. In Hegel's concept, firstly our consciousness gets alienated from itself that cannot understand that's own real nature. For Hegel, absolute knowledge of consciousness is only possible through self alienation. Here the concept of alienation plays an important role in making consciousness and shaping it. Consciousness is not simply known itself by certainty. Consciousness has to develop its self understanding by itself. In his concept of alienation, Hegel compares dialectics of self consciousness which is not self realized with the known dialectic of the lord and the Bondsman. It means Lord is compared to consciousness and Bondsman to dependent consciousness.

Feuerbach a German philosopher, anthropologist argues that religion is a form of alienation which prevents people from gaining realisation of their own species being. He mainly discusses about religious alienation. Feuerbach wrote about the study of concepts of religions, religious beliefs in the essence of human nature, and concluded from his studies of religion that humanity is alienated from its own essence by the development in divine beings.

According to S.L Halleck, alienation is a state of withdrawing or separation of a person or a person's affections from an object or position of former attachment. Alienation estrangement is an avoidance from the values of one's family and their society. It is the state of being an outsider or the feeling of being isolated as from society. In psychiatry, alienation is a state in which a person's feelings are inhibited so that eventually both the self and the external world seem unreal. It is a turning away process that an individual takes himself away from his real world and places it in a separate surrounding where he can feel loneliness, powerlessness, hopelessness and helplessness too.

The idea of alienation, recognizes a distinct kind of psychological and social ill namely, one involving a problematic separation between a self and another correctly belonging together. It appears to play a largely diagnostic role. Thus, the idea or concept of alienation typically catches a part of these problematic separations or differences as being of particular importance. The Hegelian, Marxist and Seeman's findings, therefore, clarifies the very basic idea of alienation.

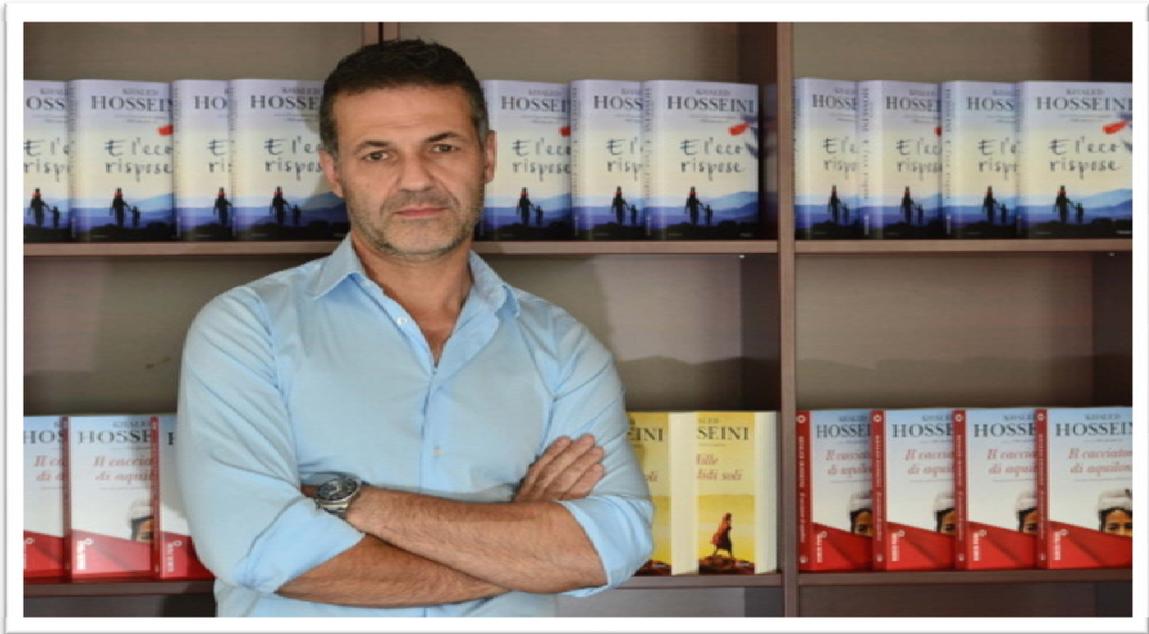
## Chapter Two

### *And the Mountains Echoed: Hosseini's Epitome*

Khaled Hosseini, one of the well known and best selling authors around the world, was born in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. At his early age, his family moved to France. He took his bachelor's degree in 1988 and earned a medical degree in 1993. In 2001, Hosseini started writing his first novel while practicing medicine. His debut made a complete turning in his career. Hosseini was honoured with many awards for his works. Some of them are Exclusive Books Boeke Prize(2004), British Book Awards(2008), Book Sense Book of the Year Awards(2008), California Book Award Silver Medal(2007), Good readers Choice Award(2013).

Hosseini published his debut, *The Kite Runner* in 2003. After the great success of the work, he left his career of doctor to write full time. Hosseini's first novel *The Kite Runner* is a story of a young boy who is struggling to create a good fellowship with his father and coping with memories of some haunting experiences in childhood. The novel is set in Afghanistan. In 2007 December *The Kite Runner* was adapted into a film with the same name. His second novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* was released in 2007. It is also set in Afghanistan. This novel follows the story of two women whose lives become entangled. *And the Mountains Echoed* is his third novel published on May 21, 2013. When the novel was released, Hosseini stated that,

“I am forever drawn to family as a recurring central theme of my writing. My earlier novels were at heart tales of fatherhood and motherhood. My new novel is multigenerational family story as well, this time revolving around brothers and sisters and the ways in which they love, wound, betray, honour, and sacrifice for each other.”



The novel *And the Mountains Echoed* (2003) is quite different from Hosseini's other novels and the novel is written as similar as a collection of short stories. This novel changes the usual method of Hosseini's writing that gives more importance to a particular character. The novel is divided into nine chapters of which each chapter narrates the story from different perspectives of different characters and each session shows an interconnection with the other. The plot revolves around the relationship between two siblings, a ten year old Abdullah and his three year old sister Pari, the decision of their father to sell Pari to a couple living in Kabul who has no children and the reunion of the siblings after sixty years. This story focuses on non – romantic love among the family members. Hosseini picked the title of this novel from a line from the famous English poet William Blake's "The Nurse's Song" and "And all the hills echoed". This novel was translated into more than 40 languages and got a wide range of appreciations across the world. Khaled Hosseini chose a different style to tell the story in a fragmented and fluid' form.

The novel *And the Mountains Echoed* begins with a story in which a father

tells his children about a farmer who works so hard for his family. The farmer's name was Baba Ayub. Baba Ayub and his wife have five children. Once an evil Div demanded them to abandon their one child to save other four. Ayub and his wife did not have any other option but to obey the evil's words. This was a very difficult situation for them and they selected a child randomly, who was their favourite child. But the farmer sacrificed his son to protect others. But the bonding between the farmer and his son was very strong that he decides to go to the evil's place and finish him. After reaching there, the farmer met his son who did not remember anything about his family. The evil was then, so impressed with Baba Ayub because the farmer was the first person who showed courage to go to the evil's place. Afterwards, the evil made him realise that his son was very happy at the new place. When the farmer started to leave from there without his son, the Div erased the farmer's memory so that he could live without his son easily. Later, Abdullah and Pari fell into sleep while listening to the story and knowing that the next day they also have to say goodbye to each other. Their father Saboor found a job in Kabul and decided to take Pari along with him and leave Abdullah at their place to take care of his stepmother Parwana and stepbrother Iqbar. But Abdullah was not ready to stay there. So, he decides to join his father and sister in the name of a promise that he will never let a drop of tear to fall from his eyes. After arriving Kabul, they meet Wahdati family, the employer of their step uncle Nabi. Later, Nila Wahdati shows her great interest to adopt Pari. Slowly Nabi falls in love with Nila, wife of his employer Suleiman Wahdati. After knowing about the void of Nila's life, Nabi decides to fill it and then he comes with the plan of selling his brother-in-law's daughter Pari to Nila. While the family enjoys their life, suddenly Suleiman becomes paralysed and then Nila decides to leave for Paris along with Pari. In the last days of his life, Suleiman writes a letter to Dr. Markose asking to

find Pari and tell her about her reality. Yet another time and space, the leap of the story takes us to Paris, where Pari is a grown woman. Now Nila accuses Pari for not being like her and not doing up to her expectations. Then Pari suspects if she is an adopted child and decides to find out the truth. Her husband Eric was very supportive to her. But the sudden death of Eric makes Pari lonely; by then, her daughter Isabella becomes very close to her.

In the last part of the novel, one sees Abdullah who is married and settled in America with his daughter named Pari. She has no siblings so she always feels lonely in her life and thinks of Pari, the separated sister of her father in her dream and talks to her. In the end, Pari gets all the letters from Dr. Markos and contacts her niece. After that Pari Wahdati goes to United States to meet her biological family, her brother, and his daughter. Later she arrives at America. But Abdullah's mental health becomes unstable at that time and he fails to recognize his long lost sister, when she comes to meet him after a very long gap almost around sixty years. Later, the older Pari goes near Pari and convinces her to follow and listen to her mind, her dreams. At the end of the novel, Pari Wahdati slowly falls into sleep. Meanwhile, her niece imagines her father and his sister sleeping as children in the village under the shade of a tree.

The complete story is very strongly bound with emotions. Love, loneliness, separation, care and many other feelings are described throughout the novel. The writer uses the story of the farmer Baba Ayub to describe the character of Saboor as a person who separates his own child from her closed ones. Every time Pari feels a connection with her separated brother and that questions her life. But she never understands why she always felt so. This shows the eternal connection of blood relations. *And the Mountains Echoed* mainly focuses on a particular family and its

members. Not only one family but some other families are also included. The writer says “ in some cases the adopted family become more ‘ family ’ than blood relatives. But the reuniting of Abdullah’s daughter Pari and Pari Wahdati holds the entire story together.

“Representation of love in Khaled Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed*” is an article which focuses on the diverse meaning of the word ‘love’ in the novel, *And the Mountains Echoed*. The word love has a versatile meaning in different context in literature and society. The word has a power which can create or mar the life of one. The paper shows that Khaled Hosseini has beautifully strung the meaning of love in his three novels which touches our heart to the core.

The novel depicts how power and love are presented in the lives of the characters of *And the Mountains Echoed*, Baba Ayub, Abdullah, Pari Wahdati, Nila Wahdati, Markos, Pari Abdullah and Nabi. It mainly focuses on two major things. One is, what kind of love is presented in Khaled Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed* and the other, how power is placed in the novel. To explain these problems, the novel raises the ideas of different kinds of love that occurs between the characters of the novel, and reveals the representation of different kinds of love that take place between Baba Ayub and his son Qais, Abdullah and Pari and the friendship between Pari Wahdati and Pari Abdullah. The relation between these two siblings are very touching. Because, they are very closely attached to each other. After the death of their mother, Abdullah substituted that position in Pari’s Life. He cared her like a mother. On the other hand, Saboor their father sacrifices his child and gives her to a wealthy couple only for her well- being as he knew that he can’t give her such a happy and wealthy life.

Another article titled “The search for Personal Identity in Khaled Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed* (2013) : A Psychological Approach ” , tries to approach the characters in a psychological way. The reason for the writer to choose this topic is that the novel is based on a true story. Yet another reason is that of the characterization between Pari and her step uncle Nabi who is responsible for the separation of Abdullah and Pari.

The study report “An Eco-Critical study of Khaled Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed* ” attempts to study Khaled Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed* from an eco–critical perspective. The novel is about the relationship between the brother and sister who live in a village in Afghanistan. While dealing with this relationship and their tragic parting in childhood and again meeting after many years when they are old, Hosseini focuses on the natural ecology of Afghanistan and environmental disaster due to different wars that took place in Afghanistan that led to overall ecocide.

After the separation of the siblings, one never sees Abdullah until the last part of the novel. The reader comes to know about him again at his late sixties when he is suffering from his illness and also his daughter Pari. The name of his daughter represents the amount of love a brother keeps in his heart for his lost sister. Pari gets separated at her early years, so she easily get attached with the new family. But the old memories always haunts her. Like the story of the novel, the story of the farmer, which was told by Saboor to his children is also a very emotional one. The line “A finger had to be cut to save the hand ” represents or shows the sacrifices that the two fathers did in their lives. At the same time, the novel shows also the lack of love and care among the characters. For instance, Saboor sacrifices his own daughter Pari by

cutting her close bond with her brother Abdullah, Parwana leaves her sister after an accident and Nila Wahdati leaves her husband when he becomes paralysed.

Through this novel, *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini indirectly speaks about the phenomenon of alienation and estrangement. In this particular novel, many of the characters get alienated from their own surroundings and their own ones including the central character Pari. This kind of separation shows the actual depth of their bonding, love, and care for each other. After being separated from their own families and being a part of a secondary family is not as same as the situation of a person living in his or her own surroundings or comfort zones. In the final part of the novel, Pari realises that she is not her parents' child but was adopted. Even before that, for many times, she had suspected whether she was a part of the Wahdati family.

The book is written in the form of a third one's perspective. In addition, the narrative style used by Hosseini is very brilliant. He presents the most difficult emotions and ideas through a simple and humble way of writing. Poverty and similar issues are the topics that are largely discussed in one's society. But nobody really knows how poverty and other similar problems affect a family and results in the separation of the family. Khaled Hosseini successfully presents that problem through his work *And the Mountains Echoed* by introducing two father characters in this novel - Baba Ayub and Saboor. These issues are common in today's generation, yet everybody neglects it. In this case the ideology of the author deserves more and more appreciation as he brings out the issues of a common family in an unusual context.

## Chapter Three

### ***And The Mountains Echoed: A Study of Alienation and Estrangement***

*And the Mountains Echoed* is a well-known novel written by famous Afghan American writer Khaled Hosseini. The main idea of this novel is the relationship between two siblings who were separated during their childhood and get united in their old age. The story begins in a country side of Afghanistan named Shadbagh which is in a terrible state. The novel tells about a father named Saboor, a poor labourer and gives his one child to a rich childless couple Sulaiman Wahdati and his wife, a poet Nila Wahdati, for saving the rest of his family from poverty. Khaled Hosseini's works always show the real life of labourers of the Afghanistan which is based on the dialogue, "cut the finger and save the rest of hand". (Hosseini, 12).

Khaled Hosseini, the writer was born in Afghanistan and left Afghanistan in his childhood and settled in United States after staying Paris for some years. His long absence from his mother land makes him feel alienated. Through writing about his motherland, writer tries to rediscover himself. The writer shows the feeling of estrangement through the impact of immigration and dislocation.

The story of Saboor with his children Pari and Abdullah is spread over nine chapters of the novel. When a reader tries to look through the lives of Pari and her brother Abdullah, he or she can find different elements of alienation and estrangement in their tragic life. For a look, Pari's step mother Nila who adopts her from Saboor. She is half and half French. Her father is a fanatical person, hidden like an

unconventional woman. Nila's carelessness forced her father to imprison her inside of the house. This is the first instance where the character Nila experiences alienation.

“the front Gates opened and black - haired young women emerged. She wore sunglasses and a short-sleeved tangerine – coloured dress that fell short of the knees. Her legs were bare, and so were her feet. I did not know whether she had noticed me sitting in the car, and, if she had, she offered no indication. She rested the heel of one foot against the wall behind her and when she did, the hem of the dress pulled up slightly and thus revealed a bit of the thigh, beneath. I felt a burning spread down from my cheeks to my neck”(Hosseini,79-80).

Moreover, Nila gets married to Suleiman Wahdati, Aries man in Kabul, who already has an affair with his driver Nabi, uncle of Pari. As her husband is in different to all her concept of life, she is broken hearted because she is a victim of the Patriarchal roles of her husband and her father. She feels alienated in her own family and surroundings as she fails to adjust herself with Islamic culture and Afghan traditions and finally she elopes to Paris with her adopted daughter Pari.

Nila starts her new life in Paris, but which remains meaningless and purposeless for several years. Eventually she gets fed up with the loneliness of her life. From there Nila reveals to Pari that she is not her biological mother. After knowing this, Pari is shocked as she has lost her own identity and leaves Nila forever. After losing her three boyfriends, Nila develops suicidal tendencies. Later, Pari searches for her real family with the help of her husband Eric. After receiving a letter from the doctor, Pari knows about her biological family. Indeed that letter was sent by

her uncle Nabi and he tells Markose to let Pari know about her family and her brother Abdullah who lives in America.

The novel *And the Mountains Echoed* is a boundary between selflessness, loneliness and the relaxation of finding individual happiness. It is evidently clear in many contexts and characters in the novel. This novel challenges the permanent concept about a family. Here, blood relation and marital relation do not seem to be the powerful base of life. In this novel, each character feels or goes through alienation and estrangement in some aspects.

Alienation is a most common phenomenon in the post - modernist world. Alienation, estrangement and identity crisis are basic characteristics of modern society. Dislocation plays a major role in making a sense of unhomeliness. It leads to experiencing alienation and estrangement. The situation of alienation and estrangement is the feeling of being an outsider from their own world. Hosseini says that, "if culture is a house, then language was the key to the front door, to all the rooms inside. Without it, he said, you ended up wayward, without a proper home or a legitimate identity" ( Hosseini, 362).

Estrangement is a state where an individual finds it difficult to recognize their actual belongings and surroundings. It occurs because of the lack of self-awareness and confidence. Home is considered as the place of where one gets his emotional needs fulfilled. If somebody feels alienated while living away from home, it means emotional isolation. He always tries to find meaning of life. When a person is dislocated, it is very natural for him to feel alienated. A person's root and family give a meaning to his life.

The novel *And the Mountains Echoed* gives us a powerful image of what is like to grow up rootless. There is a journey of struggles within the lives of characters of the novel. This is a multi-generational novel. It begins in Afghanistan from where the author's life began. He represents his experiences of living Afghanistan, Paris and United States in the novel. It gives the writer a unique perspective to make a story. As Edward Said puts in his ideas:

“I think that if one is an intellectual, one has to exile oneself from what has been given to you, what is customary, and to see it from a point of view that looks at it as if it were something that is provisional and foreign to oneself. That allows for independence-commitment but Independence and a certain kind of detachment”(13).

The novel is also a portrayal of Identity crisis and alienation. The story brings up the social, cultural and economic factors for the migration of characters. But there is something which connected them with the novel *And the Mountains Echoed* deals with the problems of internally with their roots. The novel also shows the image that in order to be alienated, it is necessary to leave the motherland. The story of two siblings Abdullah and Pari is the base of the novel. Through this bond, Khaled Hosseini have to change how a person feels when he is taken away from his own roots and surroundings. The main characters in the novel are Abdullah and Pari. The entire story reflects their conditions after they are separated from their roots. Pari is sold to a rich couple when she was a child. The first reason of displacement of a character as seen in the novel is poverty and economical crisis. Saboor, a poor father who loves his daughter very much is forced to take away his daughter from his family due to the financial crisis of him. Saboor couldn't protect Pari from the upcoming disaster of

cold brutal winter. The idea of the story is well illustrated in the first chapter of the novel in the form of a fairy tale and which is told by Saboor to his children Abdullah and Pari on their way to Kabul. Sometimes persons get their needs and wishes fulfilled by going away or keeping away themselves from their own world.

“Your son does not remember you, the div continued. This is his life now, can you see for yourself his happiness. He is provided here with the finest food and clothes, with friendship and affection. He received tutoring in the arts and languages and in the Sciences, and in the ways of wisdom and charity. He wants for nothing. Someday, when he is a man, he may choose to leave, and he shall be free to do so. I suspect he will touch many lives with his kindness and bring happiness to those trapped in sorrow”. (11-12)

Pari grows up with a new culture which is not her. She lived in Kabul and then in Paris detaching her from her own surroundings. Although she lives a luxurious life, a sense of estrangement is always with her. As said by the writer, “sometimes it was vague, like a message sent across shadowy byways and vast distances, a weak signal on a radio dial, remote, warbled. Other times it felt so clear, this absence, so intimately close it made her heart lurch. (Hosseini, 189)

She was confused about her own appearance. As put in the writer’s words, “only that in my life something has been missing always. Something good. Something.... Ah, I don’t know what to say. That is all”. (Hosseini, 358). Pari tries to find out her origin in Afghanistan. The state of Identity crisis always keeps Pari suffering until she receives the letter from Dr Marcos, and she comes to know where she is from. She comes to know about her real identity through that letter and later

gets familiar with her mother land, her real parents and most importantly her brother Abdullah. It is this time when Pari is completely aware of her identity.

The writer shows the difficult problems by which an individual is forced to leave his surroundings, roots or his motherland in order to secure a good life for himself and his family. The plot structure of the novel is well constructed, and story is told in many perspectives. The novel tries to show a conflict a person faces when living in different culture. Most of the characters in the novel have their root in Afghanistan. They have to leave their roots because of various reasons. Pari is given to a rich family in Kabul in order to give her a happy and better life. It makes clear that human needs come in the way of their desire. After losing Pari, Abdullah does not feel any connection with his motherland and leaves Afghanistan. Home is considered as something which connects our emotions to our identity. When Pari is taken away from Abdullah he loses everything - "There was nothing left for him here. He had no home here". (Hosseini, 49). In the middle of this novel, one can see Abdullah in United States where he runs an Afghan restaurant. There is a loneliness in Abdulla's life and he suffers it throughout his life. His daughter Pari who has the same name of his sister, observes her father's condition. "His life, riddled with gaps. Every day a mystifying story, a puzzle to struggle through". (Hosseini, 356)

Most of the times, people find it difficult to find their own way of life during the time they live in their homeland. It means "to feel not at home even in your own home because you are not at home in yourself" (Tyson, 421). Nila Wahdati is an amazing poet in the novel, born in Afghanistan. But no one can recognize any kind of Afghan tradition and cultural values in her life and personality. Her personality and life are very different from that of a typical traditional Afghan woman. She refuses to

consider herself as an Afghan woman instead of accepting all the social and cultural rules of the patriarchal system of Afghan society, which is in under the control of men. She does not like even her adopted daughter Pari to grow up in Afghanistan by obeying all the so called systemic rules.

“I did not want her turned, against both her will and nature, into one of those diligent, sad women who are bent on a lifelong course of quite servitude, forever in fear of showing, saying, or doing the wrong thing. Women who are admired by some in the west here in France, for instance turned into heroines for their hard lives, admired from a distance by those who couldn’t bear even one day of walking in their shoes. Women who see their desires doused and their dreams renounced, and yet, and this is the worst of it. As though they lead enviable lives”.(182-183)

Nila’s mother’s culture is more reflected in her personality than Afghan values. Nila’s mother is a French woman who met her father in Kabul and got married. Hence, Nila is half Afghan and half French. She never gives a bus ticket value for Afghan tradition as she considers Afghan root in her troublesome half. The way of live she wanted to live is what is impossible in Afghanistan. Therefore, she moves to Paris. She always wants to keep herself as well as her daughter away from the patriarchal kind of life. She also exposes her disgust about her life and alienated estranged situation of her in the interview with Monsieur Boustouler. These, loneliness and alienation never allows her to find a way of life, and eventually she committs suicide.

In terms of motherland, Khaled Hosseini's characters never get back what they lost once. Many people leave their natives and move to other countries because of the devastating condition of life. This novel gives the memories of how childhood becomes a set of disruptive and wavering images. As a post - modernist writer, Hosseini depicts the true and real life of Afghanistan, Paris and United States through this novel. He also portrays the idea that of how individuals suffer from meaninglessness and absurdity in their life through his work *And the Mountains Echoed*.

## Conclusion

This thesis was aimed at analysing the novel *And the Mountains Echoed* from alienation perspective. Alienation theory is often used to describe the reasons and roles of the alienation phenomenon in social being. The concept of alienation was coined by Karl Marx in a political perspective. This project tried to portrait the life issues that was faced by each character in the novel. Estrangement, alienation, identity crisis and up rootedness are basically common characteristics of modern contemporary fiction. It is obvious that displacement and dislocation play a key role in bringing about a sense of unhomeliness leading to the feelings of alienation and estrangement. The sense of alienation and estrangement is the feeling of being an outsider who doesn't share his own culture and language in a different nation. The current study aims to represent the impact of displacement on people and in what way people feel alienated outside their homeland. Based on the application chapter, the thesis also reflected the notions of those people who feel alienated even in their homeland. The purpose of this research paper was to demonstrate how the author Khaled Hosseini tries to reflect the feeling of estrangement through his third novel *And the Mountains Echoed*.

Alienation is one of the most controversial concepts in history of literature. It has as many definitions as the number of social sciences. Most of the definitions agree that alienation is a social-psychological state of human beings in which the person feels alienated or estranged from society, culture, things and even himself. Khalid Hosseini treated the phenomenon in his work, *And the Mountains Echoed*, very well and it is one of the main themes of the novel. Hosseini illustrates how this feeling of alienation would affect the lives of the characters. His novel is mainly about separation and it is the source of alienation of the characters. The separation of

Abdullah and Pari is the heart and core of the separations and it influences most of the characters in a way. The characters in the novel like Abdullah, Saboor, Baba Ayub, Nila, and Mr. Wahdati, in a way, experience a form of alienation. Their experience of alienation results in changing their behaviour and their lives forever. To feel alienated or experience this feeling is not always required to be in exile. Sometimes like Abdullah, one can be at home and can yet find no real and meaningful connection with one's home or surrounding. Thus, the carried out shows how the concept of alienation and estrangement is applicable in the novel *And the Mountains Echoed*.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**A FEMINISTIC APPROACH ON ANITA NAIR NOVELS:  
*THE BETTER MAN AND MISTRESS***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**POOJA KRISHNAN T**

**Register No: DB18AEGR035**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Project Supervisor: Mr. Sarath Krishnan**

**March 2021**

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “A Feministic Approach on Anita Nair Novels: *The Better Man and Mistress*” is a bonafide work of Pooja Krishnan T, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Pooja Krishnan T, hereby declare that the project work entitled “A Feministic Approach on Anita Nair Novels: *The Better Man* and *Mistress*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Sarath Krishnan of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Pooja Krishnan T

08-06-2021

DB18AEGR035

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Pooja Krishnan T

## Table of contents

Sl. No.		Page No
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Chapter One: Feminism: An Overview	3
3.	Chapter Two: Feminism in India	13
4.	Chapter Three: Feministic Persepctive of Anita Nair's <i>The Better Man and Mistress</i>	25
5.	Conclusion:	38
	Works Cited	40

## INTRODUCTION

Feminism as a concerted movement began in the late nineteenth century and grew in the early twentieth century with the demand for universal suffrage and equal rights for women. Men were considered as the heads of families and they used this power to subjugate women. Historically, the term patriarchy was used to refer to this autocratic rule by the male heads of society. Feminist movements aim to stop this inequality towards women and try to achieve a position for women in the society. The rejection of patriarchal standards was followed by a valorisation of women power.

Feminism doesn't merely mean women rights, rather it means that men and women both deserve to be treated equally. Since ancient times, women have been under-rated and deemed to be inferior to men. They have always undergone suppression of many kinds and never treated equal to their male-counterparts. The feminist movements broke the slumber and united women of different background to fight for their rights.

The main objective of this thesis is to analyse how women are denied a primary position in the society. The research focuses on the condition of women in the Indian society with a specific reference to Anita Nair novels, *The Better Man* and *Mistress*. In a country like India with its deep rooted tradition and culture, women play a pivotal role in the development of the society. The thesis analyse how far this role have been recognised and accepted by the society. It examines how women have been oppressed by patriarchal rules since ages.

The project is divided into three chapters. First chapter deals with the rise of feminist movement all over the world and the contribution of feminist literary criticism in bringing out the picture of inequalities faced by women and also in making women conscious of the need to raise voice against these injustices. It focus on how women have been denied their rights since ages and how beneficial was the movements to gain these denied rights and positions.

The second chapter looks at the historical background of the rise of feminism and women's movement and doing gender in India. Women in India have been subjected and imprisoned intellectually, financially, physically, emotionally and socially for generations. Though attempts have been made by women to escape from patriarchal society, they still are not completely liberated. Also the chapter focus on the prominent female writers from India, who through their works, have contributed in breaking the stereotypes regarding women.

The third chapter examines how Anita Nair provides perfect examples of victimized women in a patriarchal system. It focus on the status of the modern women in Indian society by taking into consideration the novels *The Better Man* and *Mistress*. The chapter tries to analyse how the woman characters in these novels agitate against their predicaments, how they come out of their traditional roles and how much they have succeeded in finding a voice in the society.

Anita Nair has signalled the arrival of a sensitive writer whose works have the power to delineate the deeper layers of the women's personality. Nair is a staunch supporter of the feminist movements. She has done a great job of empowering women by vocalizing their issues and suggesting their redressal through her works.

## CHAPTER ONE

### FEMINISM: AN OVERVIEW

Feminism is a social movement that purposes the equal rights and opportunities for women in Indian society. It is a range of movements and ideologies that share a common goal: to define, establish and achieve equal education, political, economic, cultural, personal and social rights for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests.

Feminism has altered predominant perspectives in a wide range of areas within Western society, ranging from culture to law. Feminist activities have campaigned for women's legal rights (rights of contract, property rights, voting rights); for women's right to bodily integrity and autonomy, for abortion rights, and for reproductive rights including access to contraception and equality prenatal care); for protection of women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape; for workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay; against misogyny; and against other form of gender-specific discrimination against women.

The word feminism has been derived from the Latin word 'femina' which means 'woman' and was first used with regard to the issues of equality by Women's Right Movement. Feminism term was replaced to womanism in the year of 1890s, it began to be used with reference to the movement for sexual equality and women's rights. Although the terms 'feminism' and 'feminist' did not gain widespread use until the 1970s' they were already being used in the public parlance much earlier. Today, feminists are working for the emancipation of women. The universal idea of feminism believes that all men and women are equal and deserve

equality in all opportunities, treatment, respect, economic and social rights. Overall, feminists are the people who try to admit that there is a social inequality based on gender want to end it.

Feminism is one of the basic movements for human liberty. A feminist role in society is to actively recognize the need for, and work towards creating equality for all women. Feminism is purely a movement which intends to enlighten people with a goal of improving gender equality and strengthening women's status in society. Feminist also claim that many cultural beliefs in contemporary society benefit men and ultimately disadvantage women. Therefore their fundamental aim is to reverse this disadvantaged role women play in society. Feminism spans 'all ideologies, activities and policies whose goal is to remove discrimination against women and to break down the male domination of the society'.

The popular belief is that women and girls are meant to take care of the home while men and boys are meant to go out and provide for the family. Feminism allows equal opportunities for both sexes. It is about allowing both boys and girls the freedom to do what they want and making sure that people are not held back by gender roles and expectations whether it be at home, at school, in the workplace or in parliament. Themes explored in feminism include discrimination, objectification, oppression, patriarchy, stereotyping, art history and belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. Feminism means taking action to advance our vision: a world where every woman and man, girl and boy has equal opportunities.

Any basic definition of feminism can start with the assertion that at the center of feminism is the concerns for women's subordinate status in society and with the discrimination encountered by women because of their sex. Furthermore, feminists call for changes in the

social, economic, political or cultural order to reduce and eventually overcome this discrimination against women and creation of an equitable society in which gender justice is achieved. This has been achieved throughout the world through movements and the establishment of institutions.

Feminism is an ideology which seeks not only to understand the world but to change it to the advantage of women. Simone de Beauvoir's phrase 'the second sex' with reference to woman cut ice. She opines that woman's idea of herself as inferior to man and dependent on him springs from her realization that "the world is masculine on the whole' those who fashioned it, ruled it and still dominate it today are men". Though the biological distinction between male and female is an accepted fact, the notion that woman is inferior to man is no longer acceptable to women in general and feminists in particular.

The definition of the term 'feminism' varies from person to person. Chaman Nahal in his article; *Feminism in English Fiction*, defines it:

A mode of existence in which the woman is free of the dependence syndrome. There is a dependence syndrome, whether it is the husband or the father or the community or whether it is a religious group of ethnic group. When women free themselves of the dependence syndrome and lead a normal life, my idea of feminism materializes.

Simone de Beauvoir wrote that "the first we see a woman take up her pen in defense of her sex" was Christine de Pizan who wrote *Epistole au Dieu d'Amour* (Epistole To The God of Love) in the 15th ce. Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa and Modesta di Pozzo di Forzi worked in the 16<sup>th</sup>

century. Marie Le Jars de Gournay, Anne Bradstreet and Francois Poullain de la Barre wrote during th 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Feminism originated in Europe and gradually emerged to become a worldwide cultural movement. The history of western feminist movement or feminism and the efforts to overturn gender inequality have been divided into three major periods which the feminist scholars term as the Three Waves.

The first wave refers mainly to women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth century (mainly concerned with women's right to vote). The second wave refers to the ideas and actions associated with the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s(which campaigned for legal and social rights for women). The third wave refers to a continuation of, and a reaction to the perceived failures of, second wave feminism, beginning in the 1990s

The first wave refers to the *Suffrage Movement* in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It took place between 1860 and 1930 and this movement played a significant role in uniting the women of different backgrounds. It refers to an extended period of feminist activity during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States. Women writers like Mary Wollstonecraft (*A Vindication Of The Rights Of Women*, 1792) highlighted the inequalities between the sexes. Activists like Susan B. Antony and Victoria Woodhull contributed to women's suffrage movement. Originally it focused on the promotion of equal contract and property rights for women and the opposition to chattel marriage and ownership of married women (and their children) by their husbands. Women campaigned for suffrage and fought for their rights. They realized that they would have to fight for equality and justice and

should not rely on political parties. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, activism focused primarily on gaining political power, particularly the right of women's suffrage.

In Britain, the Suffragettes and, possibly more effectively, the suffragists campaigned for the women's vote. In 1918, the Representation of the People Act 1918 was passed granting the vote to women over the age of 30 who owned houses. In 1928 this was extended to all women over twenty-one. In the United States, leaders of this movement included Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, who each campaigned for the abolition of slavery prior to championing women's right to vote; all were strongly influenced by Quaker thought. American first-wave feminism involved a wide range of women. Some such as Francis Willard, belonged to conservative Christian groups such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Others, such as Matilda Joselyn Gage, were more radical, and expressed themselves within the National Woman Suffrage Association or individually. American first wave feminism is considered to have ended with the passage of the nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution (1919), granting women the right to vote in all states. The term first wave feminism was coined retrospectively after the second wave feminism began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement that focused as much on fighting social and cultural inequalities as political inequalities.

The second wave of Feminism started during the 1960s when Women's Liberation Movement grew out as the wide-spread radical protests by students, workers, blacks and women especially in USA and France. Writers like Simone De Beauvoir and Elaine Showalter established the ground work feminist theories along with the American civil rights and antiwar movements. The second wave feminism saw cultural and political inequalities as inextricably linked. The movement encouraged women to understand aspects of their own personal lives as

deeply politicized and reflective of a sexist structure of power. If first wave feminism focused upon absolute rights such as suffrage, second wave feminism was largely concerned with other issues of equality, such as the end of discrimination. The second wave slogan, “The Personal is Political,” identified women’s cultural and political inequalities as inextricably linked and encouraged women to understand how their personal lives reflected sexist power structures. Betty Friedan was a key player in second wave-feminism. In 1963, her book *The Feminine Mystique* criticized the idea that women could find fulfillment only through childrearing and homemaking.

Third wave feminism began in the early 1990s, arising as a response to perceived failures of the second wave and also as a response to the backlash against initiatives and movements created by the second wave. Third wave feminism seeks to challenge or avoid what it deems the second wave’s essentialist definitions of femininity, which (according to them) over-emphasize the experiences of upper middle-class white women.

A post-structuralist interpretation of gender and sexuality is central to much of the third wave ideology. Third wave feminists often focus on “micro-politics” and challenge the second wave’s paradigm as to what is, or is not, good for females. The third wave sees women’s lives as intersectional, demonstrating how race, ethnicity, gender and nationality are all significant factors when discussing feminism. It examines issues related to women’s lives on international basis.

Post feminism describes a range of viewpoints reacting to feminism. While not being “antifeminist”, post feminists believe that women have achieved second wave goals while being critical of third wave feminist goals. The term was first used in the 1980s to describe a backlash

against second wave feminism. It is now a label for a wide range of theories that takes critical approaches to previous feminist discourses and includes challenges to the second wave's ideas. Other post feminists say that feminism is no longer relevant to today's society.

Liberal feminism asserts the equality of men and women through political and legal reforms. Liberal feminists stress on the importance of an individual, and believe that every woman can assert her place in society and gain the rights she deserves. Some very important objectives of liberal feminism are abortion rights, equal pay for male and female employees, educational rights, child care and health care etc.

Radical feminism considers the male controlled capitalist hierarchy, which it describes as sexist, as the defining feature of women's oppression. Radical feminist believe that women can free themselves only when they have done away with what they consider an inherently oppressive and dominating patriarchal system. Radical feminist feels that there is a male based authority and power structure and that it is responsible for oppression and inequality, and that as long as the system and its values are in place, society will not be able to be reformed in any significant way. Cultural feminism developed from radical feminism, although they hold many opposing views. It is an ideology of a female nature or female essence that attempts to revalidate what cultural feminists consider undervalued female attributes.

Socialist and Marxist feminism are important in feminism. This type of feminism believes that the oppressed status of women can be attributed to the unequal treatment at both the work place and in the house. Financial and personal exploitation, the institution of marriage, childbirth and childcare, prostitution and domestic work, according to socialist feminist are tool

for degrading women, and the work that causes reforms in the society as a whole, and on an individual or community level.

Eco feminism links ecology with feminism. Ecofeminists see the domination of women as stemming from the same ideologies that bring about the domination of the environment. Patriarchal systems, where men own and control the land, are seen as responsible for the oppression of women and destruction of the natural environment. Ecofeminism argues that there is a connection between women and nature that comes from their shared history of oppression by a patriarchal Western society.

Postcolonial feminists argue that oppression relating to the colonial experience, particularly racial, class, and ethnic oppression has marginalized women in postcolonial societies. They challenge the assumption that gender oppression is the primary form of patriarchy. Post colonial feminists object to portrayals of women of non-Western societies as passive and voiceless victims and the Western women as modern, educated and empowered.

Feminist theory is a major branch within sociology that shifts its assumptions, analytic lens, and topical focus away from the male viewpoint and experience toward that of women. In doing so, feminist theory shines a light on social problems, trends and issues that are otherwise overlooked or misidentified by the historically dominant male perspective within social theory.

Feminist theory is the extension of feminism into theoretical, fictional or philosophical discourse. It attempts to describe and explain how gender system works, as well as a consideration of normative or ethical issues, such as whether a society's gender arrangements are fair. Feminist theories are varied and diverse. All analyze women's experiences of gender subordination, the roots of women's oppression, how gender inequality is perpetuated, and offer

differing remedies for gender inequality. It is a set of ideas originating with the belief that women are not subordinate to men or only valuable in relationship to men (servant, caretaker, mother) and that the disciplines, systems, and structures in place in our world today may be changed for the better if infused with a feminist point of view. Feminist theory sets an agenda for action, the aim of which is justice and equality for women everywhere and, of course, also for the men and children to whom they are inextricably linked.

Feminist criticism is a form of literary criticism that is based on feminist theories. Broadly it is understood to be concerned with the politics of feminism and it uses feminist principles to critique the male dominated literature. It examines gender politics in works and traces the subtle construction of masculinity and femininity, and their relative status, positioning and marginalizations within works. Feminist criticism concern itself with stereotypical representations of genders. It also may trace the history of relatively unknown or undervalued women writers, potentially earning them their rightful place within the literary canon and helps create a climate in which women's creativity may be fully realized and appreciated.

Feminist literary criticism is a product of the feminist movement in the 1960s. Feminist criticism of the 1960s and 1970s concerned itself with the representation of women in literature as an expression of the social norms about women and their social role and as a means of socialization. It focused on the images of women in books by male writers to expose the patriarchal ideology and how women characters are portrayed. They try to show how male writings emphasize masculine dominance and superiority. In the 1980s, it switched its focus from attacking male representation of the women to discovering forgotten and neglected works by women.

Feminist literary criticism primarily respond to the way women is presented in literature. It has two basic premises: one, 'woman' presented in literature by male writers from their own viewpoint and two, 'woman' presented in the writings of female writers from their point of view. The first premise gives rise to a kind of feminist criticism known as phallocentrism and the second premise lead us to another kind of feminist criticism known as gynocriticism.

Feminist writers refuse to accept the 'images of women' as portrayed by male writers. They are of the view that women characters are portrayed by men in literature are lacking in authenticity. In other words, men have portrayed women as they find them not as 'women' would have portrayed themselves. This kind of attitude prompted Carlo Christ to say that "Women have not experienced their own experience."

Feminist criticism's roots are in social, political, economic and psychological oppression. By seeking to view women in a new perspective and discover women's contributions to literary history, feminist criticism aims to interpret the old texts and establish the importance of women's writing to save it from being lost or ignored in the male dominated world. It also seeks to establish female perspectives as being of equal importance relative to male perspectives.

## CHAPTER TWO

### FEMINISM IN INDIA

Feminism in India is a set of movements aimed at defining, establishing and defending equal political, economic and social rights and equal opportunities for Indian women. Women's movement in India have their genesis in deeply rooted backward traditions like sati, child marriage, or the ill-treatment of widows in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to issues of rape, dowry, domestic violence, unequal pay at work, sexual harassment at work, an unequal division of labour and low representation of women in politics in the more recent times. Like their feminist counterparts all over the world, feminists in India seek gender equality: the right to work for equal wages, the right to equal access to health and education, and equal political rights. Indian feminists also have fought against culture specific issues within India's patriarchal society, such as inheritance laws.

Although the new Constitution did guarantee women equal rights, Indian women continue to remain oppressed and struggle over everything from survival to resources. There exists in India a strong legal environment and a movement to protect women's rights. In the past fifty years, the number of women's organizations has also increased. However, the social status of the majority of Indian women remains unchanged. While women have made considerable progress in some areas such as education and employment, they continue to be subjected to the influence of the existing patriarchal attitudes in Indian society.

Right from the ancient days, India has a male-dominant culture. The Indian society trusts that men have the power and social authority in the society. A particular element of the Indian society is that men guard maleness and consider women not masculine which isn't

fundamentally human. Women are minimized through social establishments and religious customs. Indian women are covered with many thick, slack layers of prejudice, convention, ignorance and reticence in literature as well as in life. Feminist developments have been going after for evacuation of this underestimation.

Women of the past from mythologies such as Sita from Ramayana, Kunti and Draupadi from Mahabharata, to the women of the modern era are all engulfed by posterity. But times are changing in India, where women enjoy the dual role of a homemaker and a working woman. They are traditional as wives, sisters, daughters balancing the cultural expectation at the same time not losing their individual self. Today, women shine in various fields as business, entrepreneurs, professionals, scientists, politicians, actors etc and also end up as housemaids and helpers, but whatever be their job, they are financially independent and secure thus redefining their roles in an ever changing versatile scenario.

The history of feminism in India can be divided into three phases. The first phase beginning in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, initiated when male European colonists began to speak against the social evils of sati. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, hailed as the father of Indian renaissance made remarkable transformations in the social ideas in the history of India. During the second phase, from 1915 to Indian independence, Gandhi incorporated women's movement into the Quit India movement and independent women's organizations began to emerge. Finally the third phase focused on fair treatment of women at home after marriage, in the work force and right to political parity.

The women's question arose in modern India as part of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century middle class social reform movements. These issues varied across region, religion and class. Issues like

education and equal voting rights demanded in this movement became the tool for the next generation of women's movement. From education and awareness emerged the issues of skewed power structures in institutions like law, marriage and workplace. A certain percentage of women have successfully reached their destination and remaining are on their way to the destination of 'self-discovery'. Changes in society due to technological advancement and globalization have exposed different areas of patriarchy which are being considered by the ongoing women's movements like pinjra tod and #Me Too

Post independence feminists began to redefine the extent to which women were allowed to engage in the workplace. Feminist's aim was to abolish the free service of women who were essentially being used as cheap labour or capital. In the early twenty first century, the focus of the Indian feminist movement has gone beyond treating women as useful members of society and a right to parity, but also having the power to decide the course of their personal lives and the right of self determination. Unlike the Western feminist movement, India's movement was initiated by men and later joined by women. By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century women gained greater autonomy through the formation of independent women organizations, the Indian constitution then granted equality, freedom from discrimination based on gender or religion and guaranteed religious freedoms. Also seven year plans were developed to provide health, education, employment and welfare to women.

Feminism is one of the most powerful movement that swept the literary world in the recent decades. Female writers in India have questioned the societal norms and dismantled patriarchal binds through their writing. Their writing has not just limited to the domestic space but has also included sharp political critiques. These writers boldly wrote about sexuality, abuse,

have rewritten mythology from female perspective and carved out their identities in space that were traditionally dominated by males.

It is quite obvious that the progressive men writers have taken up the issues of women in quite big ways. They feel with and are pained at the ill treatment of women in the society. However, as much as they are men, they cannot get a first person account of the feelings and aspirations of women characters. Their portrayal of womanhood is based on their sympathetic observation of the situation of women in society. They are sincere in their convictions about women being equal to men. Still they are unable to instill in their women characters – the inner voice of real women. Hence, they generally image women in a romantic idealized sympathetic light. Their portrayal of womanhood may be quite sincere, but some inner spirit may appear to be lacking. The missed up ‘inner voice’ or spirit came with the vengeance with the coming of women writers, whose portrayal of womanhood was very much a first hand experience and they filled the women of their poems and novels with the inner yearning and spirit of their own.

In the ancient times, the Indian women writers dealt with the life and experiences of those women, who were confined to the four walls of the house. The works of these female writers was held in very low esteem due to the patriarchal notions prevalent in the Indian society. The works of the male writers was accorded more priority and acceptance since they dealt with varied issues. All this lead to the deterioration of Indian women writing in the eighteenth century and consequently, a decline in the production of women’s literature. The active participation of several women in the reformist movement of India against the British colonizers in the nineteenth century once again gave an impetus to the women’s literature, who basically wrote about the country’s freedom struggle. Thus, in due course of time, feminist ideologies started affecting the literature of India. The writings of women, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, began to be regarded

as great tools for feministic and modernistic treatments. A phenomenal success has, thus, been witnessed in the women writings in Indian English literature in the last couple of years.

Women writers in India are moving forward with strong and sure strides matching the pace of the world. They are recognized for their originality and individuality. These writers are able to portray sensitively a world that has in it women, and with content rich in substance. Their women are real flesh and blood protagonists who are awesome with their relationship to their surroundings, their societies, their families, their mental makeup and themselves. And for the women writers narrative fiction became a canvas to challenge the hegemonic practices of a gender biased society.

Feminism in Indian English novels is not at all a new-fangled concept and over the years many new writers who have broken into the literary circuit have successfully created a reach base. The Indian woman caught in the flux of tradition and modernity bearing the burden of the past and the aspirations of the future is the crux of feminism in Indian literature. The feminist writing in India starts to change a mask of Indian literature specifically in the writings of Indian women novelists like Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Mrinal Pande, Kiran Desai, Shobha De, Anita Nair etc. The stride change in the image of Indian woman comes to see in their writings.

One of the important development in modern India fiction is the escalation of women centered approach which attempts to interpret and project experience from the female point of view. According to Patricia Meyer Specks; "There seems to be something that we call a women's point of view on outlook sufficiently distinct to be recognizable through the countries." They refuse to be puppets in the hands of men. They have proved their worth in literature both

quantitatively and qualitatively. According to feminism, there is a lot of difference between men and women in the way they experience the world and thus have different perceptions. Thus, feminism in Indian fiction has not evolved abruptly, but the phenomenon has been gradual and steady.

Feminism in India goes for characterizing, setting up and shielding equal political and social rights just as equal open doors for Indian women. Feminism in Indian fiction in English is a magnificent and over-the-top idea dealt with quietly under confined conditions. Indian women essayists have frequently brought assortment of topics up in a style that generally poetry and novels are fit for advertising. Indian journalists have frequently raised their voice against social inequality that obliged women's freedom and executed institutional withdrawal of women. Kamala Das investigates the women's predicament enduring in their day to day life. Shashi Deshpande manages repentant state of Parsi women. R.K. Narayan is worried about house spouse of working class families. Mulk Raj Anand caricaturizes the socio-religious pietism common in different strata of society. Anita Desai fundamentally manages human states of enduring women. Kamala Markandeya picks the subject of east-west experiences. Salman Rushdie is stressed over sexual maltreatment of youngsters. Shobha De displays an idea of new women who absolutely scorn the conventional lifestyle. Along these lines, Indian essayists in English are acutely mindful of women related issues and they argue for sexual orientation equality in their own particular manner.

In the post independence time of India, there rise a gathering of present day women writers, who are not traditional, not affected by sources like stories, fantasies, legends and folktales. They are knowledgeable, strong and persuading. They comprehend the importance of male control. These authors articulate feminine experience and another individual vision. They

make their own literature by practicing applicable issues in their compositions, making it a solid vehicle to convey their feministic musings and convictions. They attempt to reveal those components of 'self' which had been covered up under the social and male centric legends of selfhood. They depict their encounters and genuine circumstances through characters explicitly made for this reason.

Indian feminist novelists have made their permanent place in the field of English fiction and highlight the gender discrimination in their novels. They fight for equal rights. In their writings, they have attempted their best to liberate the female mentality from the age-long control of male domination. Today whatever political, cultural, social and individual wakefulness we see in women, is somewhat the result of these fiction writers who signalled a new consciousness in the realm of traditional thinking.

The feminist writers have tried to explore female subjectivity so as to establish an identity. They are chiefly preoccupied in portraying the inner life and subtle interpersonal relationships. Their works reveal the realization of the modern women that they are neither helpless nor dependent. They consider themselves at par with men. In addition to this, they explore the feminine subjectivity and apply the themes that ranges from childhood to complete womanhood.

The main concern of writers such as Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Anita Nair etc are the issues and problems of women in a male chauvinistic society. For example, Anita Desai's novels such as *Voices in the City* and *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* portray the intricacies involved in the relationship between man and woman. She makes up an attempt to investigate the emotional aspects of the chief protagonists. The fiction of

Shobha De takes into account the lives of urban upper class women; marriage for them, is a means of physical gratification, a source of money and social status instead of psychological and emotional fulfillment. Thus the women of De lose their morality while searching for their identity.

Arundhati Roy is an obvious example of the bold and blunt presentation of the prevailing social evils, prejudices, rivalry, hypocrisy, subjugation of women, and finally their revolt against the customs and orthodox mentality of males. Her novel *The God of Small Things* portrays the truthful picture of the plight of Indian women, their great suffering, cares and anxieties, their humble submission, persecution and undeserved humiliation in male dominating society. It shows the women's marathon struggle for seeking the sense of identity in a totally averse and envious society.

Shashi Deshpande has objectively presented a new female face who has subjective experience and a geocentric vision. Her main concern is with the issues pertaining to the middle class Indian women. Her feminism is truly Indian as it takes into account the predicament of Indian women, who are placed in odd situations. Her novel, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, is about the female protagonist, Sarita, who becomes tired of her tensed, bitter and loveless relationship with her husband and her parents. And finally, she makes a quest for her own identity as an individual women.

Among the Indian women novelists, Kamala Markandaya painted woman as the centre of concern in her novels. A women's search for identity is a recurrent theme in her fictions. She explores the emotional reactions and spiritual responses of women and their predicament with sympathetic understanding. The writings of Kamala Das are an exploration of the plight of

women in India and the world. She protests against the subjugation of the females and wants to emancipate them from the stereotypes of their colonized status. Her works basically focus on women and the disclosure of female experiences, whether it is distress arising out of an unhappy marriage or humiliation of a desireless surrender in sex or revulsion at the male domination.

Meena Kandaswamy's novel *When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife* very strongly shows the gender bias attitude of the society where the husband exercises sexual superiority, by getting it on demand and through any means possible. Meena has given the real picture of Indian women of 21<sup>st</sup> century and the misleading facts about love marriage and marital rape. Her novel is a powerful analysis of modern marriage through the art of fiction.

Jhumpa Lahiri, a Pulitzer prize winning novelist, is one of the most widely recognized contemporary writers of world literature. An Indian-American by birth her stories usually discuss sensitive dilemmas faced by Indians, particularly touching upon the diasporic reality of migrant Indians. Sometimes, also hidden in the plot are stories of women confronting difficult choices in life. Her work in Italian called *In Other Words* gives a platform to a female voice that has been crushed by the burden of obligations to others.

Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, which won her the Man Booker Prize in 2006, examines deeply the various faces of womanhood through the many female characters hailing from various socio-economic background. It portrays the subaltern position of women in Indian society. In the story, Kiran Desai illustrates the reality of female oppression through the character of Bela Patel.

Anita Nair is an Indian bestselling author of fiction and poetry. Nair delves deep into human psyche and allows the reader to enjoy a wonderful journey by presenting absorbing

stories that have colorful and unique characters. She evokes experiences that are drawn from day-to-day life and her approach often enables the readers to suspect the character to be one of their neighbor's or of a friend.

The novels of Anita Nair represents the contemporary Indian middle-class struggles to attain an autonomous selfhood. Her meditative and psychosomatic settings make her par excellence in revealing the subconscious and unconscious world of the psyche of her women characters. Her novels concentrate on the problems and dilemmas of Indian women and stresses on equal rights of women. Anita Nair provides perfect examples of victimized women in a particular system. Her novels present modern Indian women's search for revival of relationships that are central to women. Anita Nair novels expresses the need of emancipation and education of Indian women and hence its reformist objectives is fore-grounded in her novels.

Anita Nair was born on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1966 in Kerala. She went to Chennai for early education then returned to Kerala to obtain a graduate degree in English language and literature. She started her writing journey when she was working in an advertising agency as a creative head. She published a collection of short stories that made her famous and helped her to receive a fellowship from Virginia centre. That incident changed her life and she turned to be a full-time novelist. Today she is a well known novelist in India as well as abroad.

Anita Nair is a bold and straightforward writer. She refuses to be labelled as a feminist writer. She makes an attempt to show the quality of strength in a woman. Her styles ultimately differ from other feminist writers. She traces the real position of women in the families as well as in the society. Her novels reveal the effects of social conditioning on women. The female characters in Anita Nair's novels come from different religions, reflecting thus the diversity of

Indian culture, which would be difficult or impossible to generalize. She has taken up issues of gender discrimination and social conditioning of women, husband-wife relationship and the suppression of women and social exploitation of women within and outside the marital frame.

Arguably her best novel *Ladies Coupe* portrays the conditions of women in a male dominated society. It deals with the stories of six women who travelled together in ladies compartment. The novel depicts the concept of female defiance against patriarchy. The six women in the novel are affected by patriarchy in different ways and the novel explores their search for self-discovery. *The Better Man* by her, published in 2000, is indeed a better novel that tells the story of a common man and his problems. It also takes the reader to a village side of the country. The novel recalls the values that are inherited in the village atmosphere that is almost forgotten in the contemporary Indian English fiction. The novel divulges the truth of Indian ladies who are yet denied their rights in affection and marriage. In the novel *Mistress*, published in 2005, she portrays the husband and wife relationship in the patriarchal society. In the novel, she has brought to the fore the issue of marital rape and domestic sexual violence.

Anita Nair's fourth novel *Lessons in Forgetting* (2010) is discussed to redefine the role and the quest of women to move on life. Her writing reveals a story about real people, about second chances and fresh beginning. It deals with love, dependency and betrayal. Her latest novel *Eating Wasps* is about a writer and her ambitions and contradictions. Anita Nair writes in an emphatic but gentle manner with her narrative sharp and precisely focused on the delivery of message and conveying of emotions to the readers.

Anita Nair is a master artist of the twenty-first century who is much more vociferous in voicing her fears and concerns regarding the future of women in uncongenial surroundings. Her

female protagonists are sensitive, self-conscious, brilliant and creative. They are desirous to revolt against the stereotyped roles assigned to them in society. Anita Nair has signaled the arrival of a sensitive writer who could perceive deeper mysteries in people's personalities and take the reader on a wonderful journey of discovery.

Most often, feminism is misconstrued as a "women's movement" as it originates from the word "feminine". But feminism is not just a women's movement, it is a "movement for all humans", that is concerned with the liberation of both, men and women. However, it is a fact that women have been the prime victims of years of patriarchy and toxic masculinity. Feminism is an attempt to get rid of this notion of dominance and subordination, to bring both genders on the same level.

It is the women's movement in India that has been the force behind women's advancement from subordination to gender equality and finally to women's empowerment. Though a lot still needs to be achieved, the women's movement has brought women's issues center stage and made them more visible, contributing immensely to women's struggle for equality. Feminism is a struggle for equality of women, a struggle against all forms of patriarchal aggression. Literary feminism is concerned with the politics of women's authorship and the representation of women's condition with literature. The feminist and feminist writers have been successful in achieving the legal rights for women, yet much has to be done at the social level. Feminist writers today proudly hold their cause of 'womanhood' through their writings. The Indian literature field is bold to represent feminism in the hands of well known writers, who have transformed women's outlook and actions.

## CHAPETR THREE

### FEMINISTIC PERSEPCTIVE OF ANITA NAIR'S

#### *THE BETTER MAN AND MISTRESS*

Most Anita Nair novels deal with the women characters, their efforts to get emancipated from the predominantly patriarchal family life in India. She projects the Indian feminism through women characters in her novel. She chooses her female characters from the downtrodden, middle-class and corporate society. In most of her novels, the women characters struggle incessantly to free themselves from the clutches of discrimination, inequality and gender bias. Anita Nair's *Mistress* and *The Better Man* projects women subjugation and their suppression in the contemporary Indian society and explores the depth of marital relationships.

Anita Nair's *Mistress* (2005) roams around the contradicting and complimentary life situations of travel writer Christopher Stewart, a Kathakali dancer whom he meets in Kerala named Koman and the niece of Koman, Radha, who happened to be locked up in the traditional house wife's role. The locale of the novel is the banks of the river Nila in Kerala, where the prestigious dance form, Kathakali, thrives. Koman and Radha receive Chris at the railway station. From their first meeting, both Radha and her uncle are deeply impressed by this young man with his cello and his inquisitiveness about the dance form. Two stories are unfolded in the novel simultaneously: one featuring Shyam and his wife Radha who is in love with the charming travel writer Chris. Other story is told by Koman where he narrates his love story devoted to the service of his demanding mistress- Kathakali. The whole work is another peep into the beauty of Kathakali with its nine sections divided according to the nine rasas and the story thus proceeds from sringaaram to shaantam. Simone De Beauvoir in her famous book *The Second Sex* analyzes

the social identification of women as the 'Other'. The title of the novel 'Mistress' itself states the dubious status of woman who is opted out from the prime position.

In *Mistress*, the concept of free women go beyond the limit of economic or social freedom and relates to a women's mental and emotional attitude and wellbeing. It deals with infatuation and obsession across the gulfs of religion, marriage, legitimacy and conventions. The novel also deals with the concept of pre-marital and post-marital sex. There are five different female protagonists in the episodes in Anita Nair's *Mistress*, who appear to take their life in their own hands and try to live it on their own terms. They have their own individuality and they are strong enough to follow the dictates of their heart. Still they suffer oppressions of patriarchal society.

Koman is the protagonist of the novel *Mistress*. Sethu, father of Koman, is a Hindu orphan trained as a health inspector before he moves to Nazareth, a small town. He starts work under Dr Samuel. The doctor takes him wherever he goes on medical rounds. In Arabipatnam village Sethu sees Saadiya, daughter of Haji Najib Msdoof. Saadiya, like all other women in Muslim families, is subjected to a ghettoed life. She is supposed to cover her face and cannot wander about beyond the lane of her house. The family of Saadiya is very orthodox and conservative, women were not allowed to see any strangers except their parents, brothers and husbands. Saadiya flouts the patriarchal rule by wandering beyond the limits and even baring her burkha revealing her face to Sethu:

"Zuleika did what was expected of her. She told Ummamma that she found me in the common alley coming from the road. Ummamma did what was expected of her. She threw up her hand and beat her heaving bosom. What have you done Saadiya? When I tell your father, he

will be furious. And you? Who else saw her there? Tell me the truth, your lazy cow. Where were you when she decided to put the honour of the family in jeopardy".(Mistress,p.129)

When Saadiya's parents come to know about her love for Sethu, a hindu boy, she is expelled of the house. The family shows no interest to fulfill her dreams and was not even ready to hear her. This shows the condition of women in Indian patriarchal households, where the wishes or opinions of women were considered of no value. But Saadiya here is a strong character that she decides to leave her home to live a life which is dreamt of.

At the outset of their life, Saadiya was very happy with Sethu. When she become pregnant she decides to raise her child under Islamic principles but Sethu wants his son to be ritualized as per Hindu customs. This give rise to a fight between them and Sethu asked her to leave the child and go to her parents. It makes her very upset and she mourned on her decision of marrying Sethu. Daily disagreements with Sethu lead to the dejection and force saadiya to commit suicide. Here Sethu doesnot stand by Saadiya who left everyone for him. She is completely dejected. In the novel Saadiya is a victim of the dominant nature of patriarchal society. Both in her home and with Sethu she doesnot experience freedom to take her own decisions. In both situations she is expected to obey the male words, one of her father and the other her husband. Her position is expected to be always secondary to them. Even though she shows her defiance to this subjugation by leaving her house and deciding to live with Sethu, there too she faces same kind of experiences. Her suicide of course is a fight back against the patriarchal system and also it shows how much a woman suffers under male dominated society that they even end up lives when they become hopeless and helpless.

Meanwhile Koman falls in love in Angela, a student learning Kathakali under aashan. They start living together. Slowly perception of Angela changes and wants him to move to the West to get international recognition, fame and fortune. Koman's ego gets a boost. He shows disagreement for being financially dependent on Angela. Naturally male ego is hurt and Koman decides to move out of Angela's house. The incident shows how much freedom patriarchy assures a man to leave a woman in accordance with his wishes and thoughts. He is not blamed by the society. But the same action by a woman would have caused much greater problems and she would have been judged bad by the society. When Koman leaves, Angela managed not to lose grip out of her life, because she was emotionally and intellectually balanced. She is of course a representative of strong female voice against male dominance.

Later in the novel Koman proposes Lalitha, his longtime mistress. But she refuses to marry him because of her fear of the society. It is known to her that Koman's family would never accept her as his mistress. She knows that even after marriage she will not get respect, so she does not accept his proposal. Lalitha depicts the dominance of man in a male dominated society. The novel depicts how women become helpless even when taking a decision about their own future and also show the role of society in deciding the future of a woman.

In *Mistress*, Anita Nair portrays the husband and wife relationship in a patriarchal society. In those days marriage is an ultimate goal for all Indian women. Radha in *Mistress* suffers this traditional marriage life. She was forcefully married to Shyam by her father's compulsion. Before she got married with Shyam she had a pre-marital affair. In the Indian society a woman is not supposed to express her sufferings or her complaints against the husband openly. Shyam was using her only as a sex object, and never was thought of her individual aspirations. Radha was not happy with traditional life. She was completely dominated by her husband and his elder sister

Rani Oppol. On certain extent she can't even tolerate Shyam's dominant character because he even protest against her involvement with his business. On the other case of dominant nature is to put her end to all her plans. So Radha retaliates with:

“I hope that is not going to undermine your standing in society. Is there anything I can do that won't? I wanted to teach in one of the primary schools and you said it was too much work for too little money. When I wanted to start a tuition class, you said the same. Then I wants to start a crèche and you said you didn't want the house filled with bawling babies. So I thought I would find something else to do which didn't involve making money, but even that isn't right. Don't I have to an opinion? I am your wife. Your wife, don't you hear me? But you treat me as if I am a kept woman. A bloody mistress to fulfill your sexual needs and with no rights”.(Mistress, p.73)

Shyam is a domineering husband. He does not allow Radha to interfere in his business matter, because, like an arch patriarch, he would like his wife to busy herself in home and the hearth, and not question him about what he does or seek freedom to do anything on her own. Radha does not get love or respect from Shyam, as he treats her only as a patner in bed, a mistress, and not as a life patner. On those days women were not even given education nor they were given chances to take a job for an earning. So they become financially dependent on their husband. Here Radha is ready to break those laws and was trying to have an earning for herself. She tries to go for various jobs but Shyam always stops her. The novel portrays the helplessness of women in such situations. Still the character Radha is an inspiration for many women of those times for she at least tries for a job and raise voice against the injustice shown by her husband Shyam. They lead an unhappy life because of the behavior of Shyam. All he want is a dutiful wife, a common need of every patriarchal household.

In traditional Indian family and society a wife gains full acceptance only when she becomes the mother of a son. Unfortunate is the woman who remains childless and the wife suffering from childless are taunted by the family members of her husband. They are harassed or forced to observe rituals. They create a feeling of guiltiness which finishes their contentment and leads to grief. In *Mistress*, Radha is childless. When she gets ready to attend a 'seemantham' the celebration of a pregnancy coming close to full term Shyam's sister Rani says:

"I don't think you should come with us. You distinguish how people are, they think a married woman who hasn't had children for so long is a Maachi (a bad omen or inauspicious). They won't like it. It is inauspicious to have a barren women at such functions, the evil eye,etc ( *Mistress* p.114)

Radha feels a cold within on hearing these heartless comments. These comments are unacceptable to her. She begins to introspect why and how she can be evil eye to other. This is a common injustice by Indian households that they just blame a woman when a couple is childless. She is considered the whole reason for their fate and even the husband is asked to marry another women. Here the wife's situations or feelings is given no importance and is always considered the cause of all problems. So Radha here is completely unhappy with her married life. Radha is presented as a new woman, who defies the traditional notions of typical Indian femininity. She is not a domestic kind of women, but an urban, educated, high middle class women, who is very conscious of her own identity.

Meanwhile the travel writer Christopher comes to India to write about the story of her uncle Koman, a Kathakali dancer. Since Radha was not attracted to Shyam, she drew her attention over Chris. Chris, she thinks, understands her and appreciates her in opinions. This

shows that Radha needed someone who could help her find her own strength and independence. She thinks that her affair with Chris would help her find meaning of her life. For this she breaks social conventions of married life. Radha, here, is a strong character who tries to liberate herself from the restrictions of marital life. In her, Nair has created a bold, modern woman, who would fulfill her desires by flouting marital bondage and get physical gratification. Anita Nair has tried to present in Radha a rebellious woman seeking freedom, but in this attempt Radha does not fully succeed. Her affair with Chris is a kind of protest, but even in this relationship she cannot find a space for herself. To the end of the novel Radha has to find an answer whether a woman can stay single. She has at least her child now to bring up and stay alone. The title *Mistress* signifies Radha's transition from being a mistress of Chris to being a mistress of herself. Radha appears to reject the traditional notion of femininity. She is a new woman in the sense that she is against subversion and domesticity. Here Radha's individuality overpowers her female insecurities constructed by society.

Thus in Anita Nair's *Mistress*, the female protagonists like Saadiya, Radha, Angela and even Lalitha are shown as to be the victims of patriarchy and at the same time they are also the rebels against patriarchal domination. They appear to challenge the old-norms of the patriarchal conventions and moral dictum, which is only against women. These female protagonists have a conviction of what that need in life.

Anita Nair's first novel *The Better Man*, narrates the story of Mukundan, who after retirement from government service, has come back to his native place Kaikurussi in Kerala. The novel records his journey through reminiscences, repentances and revelations. He takes back his old house where all his childhood memories lay and makes Bhasi, an outcast painter, to help him with the renewal, which starts questions on his evolution to become a betterman like his father.

Painter Bhasi is the narrator of the story. Anita Nair's character portrayal, expressions and plot make the novel rich and earthy. The novel also stresses on one's connection to his land and heritages and the attachment with continues for a life time. The major female characters in the novel, their controlled and broken life, their yet achieved boldness and actualization are narrated along with uncertain and confused life of Mukundan.

Gender apartheid is enforced on Paru kuttu in the novel *The Better Man*. The novel unveils the reality of Indian women who are still deprived of their rights in love and marriage. Social and sexual discrimination and inequalities are the major causes of male domination. Women are oppressed and exploited by men in the Indian patriarchal society. Indian women are not allowed to assert themselves independently. Women are economically and emotionally dependent on men. Being a submissive innocent spouse, Paru kuttu leads a miserable life in the hands of her authoritative husband. She is a dumb animal in the house. She has no voice in the house. Achuthan Nair does not like his wife coming forward and talking against him. She is even unable to save his child, Mukundan, from the bullying nature of her husband. Whenever Mukundan commits a mistake, Achuthan Nair shouts at his wife for turning his son into a worthless creature:

“He must have got this vagrant streak from your family. Didn't you have an uncle who went away to some palace in Tamilnadu to study music? No one in my family has ever had any pretensions of artistic ability. And let me tell you how glad I am about that. We are a family of capable and hardworking men. Not namby-pamby creatures rattling away lines of useless poetry or drawing pretty pictures or strutting around towns and villages bleating. What is the use of it all” (BM, P.16)

Paru kutty is unable to convince her husband and so pacifies her son. She is forced to remain silent even when her husband talk bad about her family. A patriarchal society expect this silence from every women. And Paru kutty is a victim of this subjugation. Born in a patriarchal society, Paru kutty has learned to maintain the harmony in relationships. So she supports her husband. This is a common behavior of women in every patriarchal household for women are being thought to do so from early childhood. According to them this is ideal for a woman as well as wife.

Being a house wife, Mukundan's mother is unable to escape from the tyrannical rule of her husband. When Mukundan gets a job and leaves Kaikurussi, he is relieved from his torturous father. Before leaving, Mukundan's mother begs him to take her with him:

“His mother no longer tried to hide how terrified she was of his father. When he was a boy, she had tried to shield him from Achuthan Nair's cruelty. She had tried to make him believe that tyranny was simply another expression of love and concern. Not any more. Now when she spoke of her husband, it was with a bitterness that made Mukundan, as much as he detested his father, cringe. (BM, p.31)

Being a dependent woman, she asks her son to take her away. She is very much afraid of her husband and leads a humiliated life. But Mukundan too does not have the courage to confront his father. He returns only after the death of his mother.

Paru kutty was always a helpless submissive servant in the house. Her main duty is to serve her husband at the correct time. She is a representative of the subjugated group of women who never had a voice or opinion of their own, instead considered their husband's voice and

opinion as their own and worked hard to full those male needs forgetting the fact that they too had an identity.

When Achuthan Nair returns from his bath, Paru kutty is expected to be ready with dinner:

“The rice had to have steam rising from it. The curry had to be piping hot, the pappadums crisp and glistening with oil, and the water in the glass moderately warm. Only when Achuthan Nair has dined was the rest of the family allowed to eat”.(BM, p.73)

In a country like India, tradition binds the lives of individuals. A male centered society expects women always to be the puppets in the hand of males. She is supposed just to fulfill the needs of males. Paru kutty experiences estrangement and alienation when Achuthn Nair abandons his wife at the age of forty nine to live with his concubine, Ammini. Paru kutty is too frightened to stand up to him to enquire about his illegal relationship with Ammini. Achuthan Nair goes to the extent of bringing Ammini to his house. Paru kutty is unable to bear this and raise voice against Achuthan Nair:

“I’m willing to live with the shame of your taking a mistress. But I’m not going to let you flaunt how little I mean to you. I am your wife and I insist you treat me with the respect due to me”. (BM, p.74)

The only bold action taken by the submissive Paru kutty in her life is not permitting her husband to bring Ammini to the big house. Paru kutty realizes that she has lost her right at home but is stubborn in not allowing Ammini to enter her house till her death. Here we see a new Paru kutty who is not voiceless but a strong voice against her husband, who have been ruling over her for years. She even publically declares a battle against him by ordering to keep paddy coming

from his field outside her stile. Finally one day Parukutty falls down from the staircase and dies. Throughout her life she was a submissive wife and was of course a victim of male dominance. Still it is significant to note that she has raised voice against her dominant husband at least once.

Valsala in *The Better Man* is the wife of Prabhakaran, an aged school master. Valsala is not satisfied with him. So she falls in love with Sridharan. She does not bother about society. She realizes her inner mind and becomes the mistress of him. This incident shows the feminist point of Valsala in the form of morality. She is aware of the fact that every woman needs the energizer of love, freedom, equality and sex. She put forth the new issues of woman's sexuality and gender. She justifies herself as,

“I am just forty years old. I don't want to be pushed into old age before it time. I want to live. I want passion. I want to know ecstasy, she told herself, night after night” (BM, p.130)

Valsala emerges as a “New Woman”. She breaks the traditional Indian society. So, she is sexually satisfied with her affair with her neighbor, Sridharan and does not feel guilty of it. Valsala tries to achieve an identity in life but against the traditional manner. Valsala resorts to freedom not only psychologically but sexually too. When she resolves her inner conflicts, she is able to conquer self identity.

Meenakshi, Mukundan's childhood friend is also a victim of the patriarchal society. When Mukundan and Meenakshi become too old to spend time together, they are separated by their parents. She had to face a lot of restrictions from her family and society. She is trained to become accustomed to a submissive life:

“As for Meenakshi, she was forbidden to go wandering around the fields and cashew groves once used in Mukundan's company. ‘Put aside your books and fancy talk. It is

time you learned to cook,'her mother nagged. She frowned whenever she saw them huddled together and invented excuses to separate Meenakshi from Mukundan. When Mukundan came looking for her, she would whisper into Meenakshi's ear that it didn't matter whether the leaf fell on the thorn or the thorn fell on the leaf, it was the leaf that was hurt for life. So sprang a distance between them, which they furtively tried to bridge. And because their meetings were so infrequent, they began to function as two separate beings" (BM, p.54)

This is a common phenomena that is faced by every woman in a patriarchal world. At some point of her age she is suddenly restricted from all the freedoms enjoyed until then. She is forced to be submissive and lead a life suppressed by her father and later by her husband.

Later she fell in love with a Kathakali artist, Balan, and had a son in him. Once he went to Europe with a Kathakali troupe and never came back. Even though abandoned by her artist husband, she confidently leads her life, bringing up her son, and later even helping her ailing husband. She is a strong female character in the novel. Even when she is abandoned by her husband and was left with no way to take her life forward, she boldly took decisions to be independent and earned a living of her own. She gave no room for sympathy by her relatives and society instead set a model of strong female character.

Another victim of male dominance in the novel is Anjana. She was grown up in a beautiful manner. When she got married to Ravindran at the age of twenty seven, she has lost all her independence. Whenever she is ready for a conversation, Ravindran feels irritated and leave the place. Anjana is portrayed as a victim of domestic violence. Ravindran has bruised her body and soul and sucked her youth and self respect. The pain inflicted to her transforms her into a

new woman. Nair gives her extraordinary strength to fight against the brutality. The power comes naturally and effortlessly as Nair describes:

“Anjana pushed back a strand of her hair with the curve of her elbow and took a deep breath. The aluminum vessel was heaped with an army of shrimps replete with their full suits of shelled armour, long lance like tentacles, and thin streaks of evil within”.(BM, P.222)

Anjana frees herself from the shackles of servitude and starts a life of her own. She divorces her husband, and gives meaning to her life deciding to marry Mukundan. She holds on to her self-esteem even at the verge of losing Mukundan. Anjana does not dwell within the walls of her house. Instead she goes for a job and gains economic independence. Anjana is a symbol of emerging voice of womanhood. Her character Anjana contradicts with Mukundan’s mother Parukutty who does not find the courage to oppose her husband.

Anita Nair succeeds in bringing out the lives of two women born during two different times facing similar problems in life. She weaves together the past and the present and effectively explicates the differences.

Both the novels express the need of emancipation and education of Indian women and hence its reformist objective is fore-grounded in her novel. The novelist tries to encourage a common woman to fight against injustice, inequality and pursue their goal. She has portrayed women’s suffering and desire through the novels *Mistress* and *The Better Man*. Through these novels she has depicted the place of women, the highhandedness of men, the celebration of lawlessness, the fragmentation of domestic relations and the violence against a woman in a patriarchal world.

## CONCLUSION

Anita Nair's famous novels *The Better Man* and *Mistress* undeniably portrays the subjugation women face in the society and also the efforts of Indian women to break the shackles of patriarchy. The woman characters in the novels tries to get emancipated from the predominantly patriarchal family life in India. Both the novels focus on the issues of self realization. Nair in her novels talks about how woman suffers from patriarchal system which has tried in many ways to repress, humiliate and abuse women.

In the novel *Mistress*, through the characters of Radha and Saadiya, Nair tries to bring out the aspects of patriarchal domination. They are the victims of male domination in a family. They represent the condition of most women in Indian households. In the novel, they were even denied rights to choose their life partners, their choice were rejected by the families. Radha was even forcibly married to a man whom she does not even like. Shyam, her husband, asserts his right over her as a husband to have sex with her. She doesn't have any other freedom in the house. In Saadiya's case too patriarchy ruthlessly controls her life disallowing a freedom of choice to her. Most other women characters in the novel too are victims of the male domination

In the novel *The Better Man* too, Nair portrays the silent life of women in Indian households. Paru kutty, mother of the Mukundan, is the most perfect for the subjugated lives of Indian women. Through out the novel she is portrayed as a very silent character who suffers all the harms and injustices done by her husband. Except once, she never raises her voice to say a no to these ruling attitudes. Other women characters like Anjana, Valasa, Meenakshi are all denied rights in the novels. None of them are given freedom to have a word even on the crucial

decisions regarding their lives. They are always expected to silently accept the rules and decisions made by the males in their family.

In both the novels, the woman characters are not just portrayed as silent ones, but they are also shown to be the rebels against patriarchal domination. They appear to challenge the age old norms of patriarchal conventions. The female protagonists have a conviction of what they need in life. Saadiya rebels against her family and choose to live with a man whom she loves. Radha finally decides to bring up her child without depending on Chris and Shyam. Paru kuttty raised voice against Achuthan Nair in bringing Ammini to their house. Both Anjana and Meenakshi shows the courage to move forward in their lives without depending on their husbands and families.

These women are dynamic personalities, the new women, who are aware of their self, their individual. Nair, through the characters, reveal women's capacity to maintain her own rights and find an own space in family and society. So both the novels of Anita Nair *The Better Man* and *Mistress* can be considered as good examples in examining the condition of women in Indian society and it also focus to the need to raise voice against such injustices. The novels have clearly given role models of strong female voice through the female characters. Nair's protagonists are sensitive, self-conscious, brilliant and creative. Her protagonists revolt against the stereotype roles given to women by the society. The present study signals the emergence of a new woman, a strong and independent woman.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**A QUEER READING ON *THE PREGNANT KING***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**SREELAKSHMI PRASANAN**

**Register No: DB18AEGR036**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

June 2021

**Kannur University**

## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “A Queer Reading on *The Pregnant King*” is a bonafide work of Sreelakshmi Prasannan, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Sreelakshmi Prasannan, hereby declare that the project work entitled “A Queer Reading on *The Pregnant King*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Soniya Sherin Sebastian of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

SREELAKSHMI PRASANNAN

08-06-2021

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## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter One	4
Queer Theory: an Overview	
Chapter Two	17
A Review on Devdutt Pattanaik's <i>The Pregnant King</i>	
Chapter Three	25
A Queer Reading on <i>The Pregnant King</i>	
Conclusion	33
Works Consulted	34

## Introduction

In our society, we have been conditioned to see other humans as either male or female and heterosexual. As a result, we have been taught that sexual relationships are normal only when they exist between two people of the opposite sex.

*The Pregnant King* is a novel written by Devdutt Pattanaik. *The Pregnant King* is about Yuvanashva, the king of Vallabhi, who could not produce a child from any of his three wives. One day, accidentally impregnates him by drinking a child endowing magic potion meant for his wives. After which, his entire life becomes a predicament of what to call himself –the father, mother, or a king.

Queer theory actively subverts the conditioning system. In fact some people feel that gay and lesbian people are too assimilated into the heteronormative social construct. While historically a derogatory label, queer theory has reclaimed the word to knowledge the wide spectrum of human sexuality and gender identity.

One of the key concepts in queer theory is the idea of “heteronormativity”, which pertains to the institution, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent but also privileged “.

Heteronormativity is a worldview that promotes heterosexuality as the normal and preferred sexual orientation, and or reinforced in society through the institutions of marriage, taxes, employment, and adoption rights, among many others.

Heteronormativity is a form of power and control that applies pressure to both straight and gay individuals, through institutional arrangements and accepted social norms.

This project is an attempt to analyze how, the much discussed and controversial concepts of transgender and queer relationships of today, have been dealt and looked

upon with a more tolerant attitude in Devdutt Pattanaik's novel *The Pregnant King*. Pattanaik's work renders a retelling of the blurring of the lines between parental duties and malleability of dharma to fit a given situation. Exploring upon the theme of the transgender, author hopes to make us realize that in the rush to deem situations black or white, the vast expanse of grey needs to be acknowledged and dealt with as well. This further incorporates the American philosopher Judith Butler's concept of the "Performativity of gender" into the novel. According to her, gender is cultural rather than natural. Butler redefines gender as an action humans are compelled to perform by society rather than a state of being or a bodily condition. She adds that gender can be imitated because it is always and already a performance.

Pattanaik's novel describes a number of such characters including Shikandi, Somvat and Arjuna .thus, explicitly pointing out the traces of transgender in the epic, the Mahabharata. Yuvanashva, the protagonist is lost between the obscure line that separates a man from a woman and a father from a mother, trying to make sense of the transgender identity.

Hence his psyche is torn apart by the rational paternal role that society demands from him and the emotional maternal feelings with which his heart pulsates, finally leading to renunciation of life itself. Hence reading the work through Butler's lenses make it clear how obviously and dexterously have the author knitted up Butler's theory of the performativity of gender along the pages of his influential novel.

This thesis is divided into three chapters including an introduction chapter and a conclusion chapter introduces the relevance of the topic it explains the main objective of the thesis and gives background information about the same it also introduces writer Devdutt Pattanaik and his work *The Pregnant King* based on which the thesis is carried

out . The first chapter aims at providing an overall view related to the study to be used as contextualized reference. It traces the concept of Queer theory. The second chapter introduces Devdutt Pattanaik and his book *The Pregnant King* respectively based on which the thesis is carried out. The third chapter gives an intertextual approach to the selected work. The final chapter is a conclusion chapter in which a conclusion is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out in the third chapter.

## Chapter 1

### Queer Theory: an Overview

Queer theory subverts traditional institution of society that is based on the heteronormative model of human sexuality, and acknowledges that board spectrum of sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity. In other words, Queer Theory gives us the option of believing that Sesame Street's Bert and Ernie are a married couple rather than two platonic friends sharing an apartment. So, Queer Theory subverts heteronormative power and messaging by offering positive representations of Queer characters in media like television and cinema.

The concept of gender, as opposed to sex wasn't introduced until the 1970's. Robert Stoller, a psychologist who worked on individuals both with ambiguous genitalia, was the first to point out a distinction between sex and gender. He pointed out four concepts: sex, gender, and gender identity and gender role. Following Stoller, feminist scholar Ann Oakley suggested that gender is not a direct product of biological sex. She defined it as the anatomical and physiological characteristics which signify maleness and femaleness and gender as socially constructed masculinity and femininity. Both masculinity and femininity are not defined by biology but by cultural, social, psychological attributes which are acquired through becoming a man or a woman in a particular society at a particular time.

Queer Theory is a term that emerged in the late 1980s for a body of criticism on issues of gender, sexuality, and subjectivity that came out of gay and lesbian scholarship in such fields as literary criticism, politics, sociology, and history. Queer theory rejects essentialism in favor of social construction; it breaks down binary

oppositions such as “gay” or “straight”; while it follows those postmodernists who declared the death of the self, it simultaneously attempts to rehabilitate a subjectivity that allows for sexual and political agency. Some of the most significant authors associated with queer theory include Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Butler, Michael Warner, and Wayne Koestenbaum (Encyclopedia of Postmodernism, in Credo Reference).

“Gender” refers to the socially constructed roles, responsibilities, identities and expectation assigned to men and women. It contrasts with the fundamental biological and psychological differences between male and female, which are known as secondary sex characteristics. Gender roles differ between culture and communities and over time. The general tendency is to consider the gender in binary terms: man/women; masculine/feminine. Expectations of men and women are limited by these binaries and they are communicated through sex role stereotyping. The stereotypes limit gender roles and appropriate behavior to a certain range of rigid roles which are assigned to women and men on the basis of this gender.

The history of gender studies look at different perspectives of gender. This discipline examines the ways in which historical, cultural and social events shape the role of gender in different in different societies. The field of gender studies, while focusing on differences between men women, also looks at sexual differences of gender categorization. The revolution of the universal suffrage of the twentieth century and the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s promoted a revision from the

feminist to “actively interrogate” the usual and accepted versions of history as it was known at that time. It was the vision of many feminist scholars to question original assumptions regarding women’s and men’s attributes, to actually measure them and to report observed difference between men and women. Initially, these programs were essentially feminist designed to recognize contributions made by women as well as by men. Soon, men began to look at masculinity just as women look at femininity and developed an area of study called “men’s studies”.

It was in late 1980s and 1990s that scholars recognized a need for study in the field of sexuality. This was due to the increasing interest in lesbian and gay rights and scholarships found that most individual will associate sexuality and gender together rather than study them as two separate entities.

Gender studies is a field of inter disciplinary study devoted to gender identity and women’s studies , concerning women, feminism, gender and eventually become gay, lesbian, bisexual studies. That is, it has subsequently included the investigation of all gender and sexual categories and identities

Women’s studies came into being as a school of literacy and cultural study in the 1970s and it questions why women had played a subordinate role to men in human history. Feminist politics and women’s studies put a spotlight on the inequalities between women and men in almost all societies. It was not until the 1980s, that the field of masculinity studies emerged in the academy. Men’s studies focused on the construction of masculinity and used feminist theory to analyze the way in which gender and power operate in the lives of men and develop masculinity theory. This new field of study started to highlight the ways in which gender inequalities affect not only women but also men.

Gender studies also include gay and lesbian studies, and also the study of sexuality in general. Gay and lesbian studies programs are all called gay, lesbians, bisexual and transgender studies program. Gay and lesbian studies theorist became interested in finding out the hidden tradition of homosexual write and began to study the gender dynamics of canonical literature. The unearthing of a counter tradition of homosexual writing led to certain difficulties even though there have been many gay writers from Sappho to Tennessee Williams, if it is to be noted that few of them wrote openly about their lives and experiences

Gay critics question the very notion of gender identity and logic of gender categorization. They especially cast doubt on the idea that there is necessary relation between gender, philosophy and sexuality. It's not compulsory that biological realities should go hand in hand with their sexual choices. One's sex as a man or women is determined by anatomy, but gender as a masculine or feminine is based on their choice and not based on biological traits. There is no guarantee that what one is biologically will line up with particular sexual practices or psychological dispositions. So the heterosexual masculinity or femininity must therefore been seen as a political rather than a biological fact.

Gender theory achieved a wide readership and acquired much of its theoretical rigour through the work of a group of French feminist theorists that included Simon de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Helen Cixous and Julia Kristeva who while Bulgarian rather than French, make her mark by writing in French. French feminist thought is based on the assumption that the western philosophical tradition represses the experience of women in the structure of its ideas. As an important consequence of this systematic

intellectual repression and exclusion, women's lives and bodies in historical societies are subjected on repression as well.

Regarding gender Simon de Beauvoir said: "One is not born a woman, rather becomes one." (Beauvoir, 295) This view proposes that in gender studies, the term "gender" should be used to refer to the social and cultural construction of masculinities and femininity and not to the state of being male or female in its entirety. Gender can also be broken into three categories, gender identity, gender expression and biological sex. These three categories are another way of breaking down gender into the different social, biological and cultural constructions.

Since the late 1980s, theories of Gender and Sexuality have redefined how we think about culture and society. They have raised new questions about the construction of the gendered and sexualized subject and put forward radical new ideas about Performance and Performativity as the means by which the body becomes a Signifying System within social formations. At the foundation of most theories of Gender and sexuality is a thoroughgoing critique of the Subject and Subjectivity. As a social and political category, the subject cut across all disciplinary and theoretical boundaries. Being a subject can mean many things – a citizen of a particular community, an Autonomous being in possession of a sense of personal wholeness and unity, the subject of an oppressive ruler or of a discourse. Being a subject and possessing subjectivity are not the birthrights of all human beings, however; they are specialized attribute, more or less unique to Western or Westernized cultures. This notion of the modern subject begins in the Enlightenment, with the reflections of John Locke, who regarded personal identity as unique, sovereign, and autonomous. Subjectivity, the consciousness of one's historical and social agency, was the prerogative of the Western

individuals who defined himself in opposition to other, to that which was not a subject and did not possess subjectivity. The classic philosophical expression of this relationship of the subject to what is not the subject is Hegel's dialectic of the master and slave. As is so often the case in Enlightenment thought, the potential for subversion and Ambivalence is contained in what appears to be a universal concept. For Hegel's dialectic also suggests possibility of the disenfranchised slave or no subject acquiring subjectivity by overpowering the master. By the end of the nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche could speak of the "subject as multiplicity", (Man and World 18, 121-146) and by the 1920s, Freud would call into question most of our preconceived notions about of selfhood and sexual identity.

Closely linked to the concept of subject is the concept of Identity, which is typically used to cover the process by which a subject becomes a particular kind of subject. Rather than a fixed quality or Essence, identity is understood by theorists of Gender and Sexuality as an ongoing process of construction, performance, appropriation, or mimicry. This perspective, strongly influenced by Michel Foucault's theories of sexuality, came to be known as Social Constructionism, the idea that subjectivity and identity are not natural categories or essential features of human existence, unique and invisible aspects of one's being; they are rather the material effects of discourses and images that surround us. The crucial questions raised by theories of Gender and Sexuality have to do with agency and determination: Who or what determines the construction of gender and sexuality? How is social Agency acquired and maintained by these constructions? Is one constructed solely by social ideologies and institutions? Or do individuals have the freedom to act reflexively, to engage in what Anthony Giddens call "projects of the self"? (The Blackwell Guide to Literary theory, 103). For Foucault, sexuality has played a fundamental role in

developing modern modes of social organization and regulation. In his landmark study, *History of Sexuality*, (1976) Foucault argues that sexuality, far from being proscribed or repressed in nineteenth century, became part of a discourse that sought to identify and regulate all forms of sexual behavior. “Instead of massive censorship” he claimed “what was involved a regulated and polymorphous incitement to discourse” (34). Religious confession, Psychoanalysis, sexology, literature- all was instrumental in this incitement, which simultaneously made sexuality a public matter and a target of social administration. “ Under the authority of a language that had been carefully expurgated so that it was no longer directly named, sex was taken charge of tracked down as it were by a discourse that aimed to allow it no obscurity, no respite” (20).

Queer theory seeks, among other things, to describe or map out the ways homosexual or homoerotic desire manifests itself in literary and cultural texts. It is strongly reliant on psychoanalytic categories and concepts, but seeks to overcome the heterosexual limits to psychoanalytic theory. Teresa de Laurites, who was one of the first to use the term queer theory, has since rejected it because of its appropriation by mainstream media. Certainly popular television shows like ‘Queer Eye for Straight Guy’ have made the word “queer,” which had been appropriated by the gay and lesbian movement as a symbol of political empowerment , into a sanitized label for homosexuals with no political agenda. Others feel that queer theory privileges gay male experience at the expense of lesbian and bisexual experience. To some degree, the male bias is due to the strong influence of gay male theorists. It is also due to the enormous influence of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s *Between Men*, (1985) which, along with Foucault’s *History of Sexuality*, provided the theoretical scaffolding for academic queer theory. One of her most powerful formulations, the concept of homosociality, has come to enjoy rather widespread use across academic disciplines. Homosocial Desire is

grounded in Rene Girard's theory of "triangular desire" and in Gayle Rubin's theory of the "sex/gender system", specifically her critique of Levi-Strauss's analysis of kinship system in which women function as gifts in economic exchanges between men.

According to Sedgwick, homosocial desire between men is expressed in a triangular structure with woman standing as a putative object of at least one of them: "the ultimate function of women is to be conduits of homosocial desire" (99). These relationships need not be sexual; in fact they are far more potent whenever the sexual element is sublimated in the Mimicry of a heterosexual identity that effectively disguises homosexual "deviancy". Homosocial structures frequently elicit homophobia as an institutionalized check on repressed homosexual desire, but they more often lead to "changes in men's experience of living within the shifting terms of compulsory heterosexuality" (134). Her chapter on Henry James in her *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990) illustrates the divide between homosocial networking, which confirms the heterosexual status quo, and "homosexual panic" which reacts violently against any manifestation of eroticism or "genitalized" behavior that might emerge out of such networks.

Queer theory has come to encompass a substantial body of work in lesbian studies. Monique Wittig's *Lesbian Body* attacks the tradition of anatomy based on the orderly and ordered male body and offers instead the lesbian body as a model of the desiring subject. Like other feminists who challenge the authority of Patriarchal discourse, Wittig openly confronts the problem of the subject position she occupies as a theorist and writer; she disrupts the texture of her writing and thus repeats at the level of her discourse the disorderly nature of the lesbian body itself. Adrienne Rich, in her much-anthologized essay, *Compulsory Heterosexuality and the Lesbian Existence*, attacks "heterocentricity" as a covert mode of socialization that seeks willfully to

repress the “enormous potential counterforce” (39) of lesbian experience. Because heterosexuality is the compulsory cultural norm, the oppression of women-their sexual slavery- is more difficult to name. Rich revalues the so called perversity of lesbian desires, more frightening even than male homosexuality, and posits a “lesbian continuum” free of invidious binary sexual typologies. Lesbian Feminism is not concerned with hating men but rather with celebrating the life choice of women who love women. It is not that heterosexuality is in and of itself oppressive, it is that “the absence of choice remains the great unacknowledged reality” (67). Acknowledging this reality and creating and preserving choice is what motivates the successor of Rich and Wittig. Thus Teresa de Lauretis, in *The Practice of Love: Lesbian Sexuality and Perverse Desire* (1994), challenges psychoanalytical theories of normative sexuality that would limit such choices, and Lynda Hart, *Fatal Women: Lesbian Sexuality and the Mark of Aggression* (1994), attacks the pathologization and appropriation of lesbian sexuality by the “male Imaginary” and defends women who respond criminally to men who attempts to foreclose lesbian desire. In both cases free choice is celebrated, for without it there can be no chance for free subjects to combat the fortified position of social and cultural power.

In many parts of the world individuals face discrimination and abuse because of their perceived sexual orientation and gender identity. To some extent, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons have been able to attain assimilation in the main stream of society and culture in some countries but not in others. Over the past years the treatment of sexual minorities has received increasing attention in academic writing and cinema.

Homosexuality seems to be alien to Indian society and is considered to be a source of moral corruption. Homosexual love and its representation are not new in India. Critics such as Ruth Vanitha, Salim Kidwai who have written extensively on the history of tradition of same-sex love argue that “many believe that the idea and practice of same sex love were imported into India by foreigners. But through an analysis of the ancient texts it can be observed that Indian tradition and Mythology celebrate queerness. Thus the actual problem lies in the attitude of the present society. So homosexuality is not an imported culture by foreigners but something that already existed in the Indian culture.

In the text *Indian Mythology: Tales Symbols and Rituals from the heart of the subcontinent*, Devdutt Pattanaik argues that according to the myths in intuit and artic region, the first couple was two males. A group of Northern tribes believe that spirits express both male and female qualities. In Sanskrit and Tamil there are lots of words which refer to queer people. So the attempt of Devdutt Pattanaik is to prove that queerness and homosexuality have a long history in Indian culture itself and it's not something imported from a foreign culture. The present society is unlikely to accept these facts and consider such practices or such group of people as deviant. The marginalization of such people is prevalent in the contemporary Indian society. The most ancient sculptural art of khajuraho caves and the architecture of some of the Hindu temple in Orissa bear a burning testimony to homosexuality.

Hindu mythology reveals that patriarchy, the idea that men are superior to Women was invented. It makes constant references to queerness, the idea that questions the notions of maleness and femaleness. There are also many words in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Tamil that suggests familiarity with queer thought and behavior (Pattanaik, 12).

The word “lesbianism” is derived from the Greek word “Lesbos” a Greek island in the Aegean Sea which was the native place of Sappho, the seventh century BC lyric poetess who addressed her love poems to women. In *Kamasutra*, the famous classic of Hindu erotica, there is a universal phenomenon where women find sexual fulfillment among themselves. Reason being a woman can work up another woman better than a man; whereas, a man performs and after doing it he becomes indifferent to his female partner or show lack of care for her. Indian women are controlled during their pre and post marital stages of life. They are either under the clutches of their parents or their husbands. Influenced by colonial thinking, the non-heteronormative sexual identities came to be objected and outlawed in India.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) rights in France have been seen as traditionally liberal. Although same-sex sexual activity was a capital crime that often resulted in the death penalty during the Ancien Régime, all sodomy laws were repealed in 1791 during the French Revolution. However, a lesser known indecent exposure law that often-targeted homosexuals was introduced in 1960 before being repealed twenty years later. The age of consent for same-sex sexual activity was altered more than once before being equalized in 1982 under the then-President of France François Mitterrand. After granting same sex couples domestic partnership benefits known as the civil solidarity pact, France became the thirteenth country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage in 2013. Laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity have been enacted in 1985. Transgender individuals are allowed to change their legal gender since 2009 and France became the first country in the world to declassify transgenderism as a mental illness. France has frequently been named one of the gay friendly countries in the world. Recent polls have

indicated that 77% of the French viewed that homosexuality should be accepted by society, one of the highest in the world.

France, a country based on the pillars of libretto, fraternity and egalite, relishes its image as sexually-liberated, free society. Yet it also has deep current of conservatism. In fact, according to the World Value Survey, of all the western European countries, France is the least tolerant homosexuals. France decriminalized sodomy in 1791. This meant that the kind of gay movements that evolved in other countries, most notably Germany, against anti-sodomy laws probably influenced France. After losing the fight to prevent LGBTs in France from being able to marry, the organization still lingers, as do the questions about how at home France's LGBT community feels despite recent advances. The legalization of marriage was a formidable step forward in the fight against homophobia. It allows LGBT people to feel better in French society.

Queer connotes a new meaning and political commitments. Since the widespread emergence of biological and social notions linked to sexuality and gender, queer has been used to challenge the pervasive inequalities that stem from this recent historical shift in constructions of heterosexuality and homosexuality. Although queer has opened space for resistance, transnational research and debates have also challenged it. Despite these challenges, queer remains concept, form of activism, and theorizing that continues to push and disrupts established boundaries and binaries.

Queer theory is both theory and political action. Definitions is impossible, but queer theory can be summarized as exploring the oppressive power of dominant norms, particularly those relating to sexuality, and the immiseration they cause to those who cannot, or do not wish to, live according to those norms. In analyzing the power of 'the

normal', queer theory contributes to a politics and ethics of difference. It challenges dominant norms, especially those of sexuality.

Some of the core theorists in the development of queer theory include Michael Foucault, Gayle Rubin, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Judith Butler. Michael Foucault's work on sexuality said that it was a discursive production rather than an essential part of a human, which came from his larger idea of power not being repressive and negative as productive and generative. In other words, power acts to make sexuality seem like a hidden truth that must be dug out and be made specific. Foucault refuses to accept that sexuality can be clearly defined, and instead focuses on the expansive production of sexuality within governments of power and knowledge.

## Chapter 2

### A Review on Devdutt Pattanaik's *The Pregnant King*

Devdutt Pattanaik is an Indian mythologist, speaker, illustrator and author, known for his writing on sacred lore, legends, folklore, fables and parables. His work focuses largely on the area of myth, religion, mythology and management.

Devdutt Pattanaik writes on relevance of mythology in modern times, especially in areas of management, governance and leadership. He is author of 41 books and over 1000 columns, with bestseller such as *My Gita*, *Jaya*, *Sita*, *Business Sutra* and the *7 Secret Series*. He was a speaker at TEDIndia 2009 and spoke on *Myths that Mystify*, *East versus West*.

Devdutt Pattanaik is an Indian author known for fictional work and interpretations of ancient Indian scriptures. He opines that “no society can exist without myth as it creates notions of right and wrong, good and bad, heaven and hell, right and duties.” To him mythology “tells a people how they should see the world ... Different people will have their own mythology, reframing old ones or creating new ones.” His desire is “to get Saraswati out of the closet. Saraswati belongs everywhere, she has to flow everywhere” and his body of work aimed “to make knowledge accessible.”

In *Shiva to Shankara: Giving Forms to the Formless*, Pattanaik explores the layers of meanings embedded in Shiva's linga and transformation of Shiva, the hermit, into Shankara, the householder by the Goddess. *Culture: 50 Insight from Mythology contextualizes* mythology and proposes that myths are alive, dynamic, shaped by perception and the times one lives in.

Devdutt distinguished between mythological fiction and mythology. He notes that mythological fiction is very popular as it is fantasy rooted in familiar Traditional

tales. Mythology itself is about figuring out world views of cultures, essentially how people think in a particular cultural ethos. “Most writers I know focus on Mythological fiction. Study of mythology still remains rather academic,” Pattanaik told IANS in an interview.

Focusing on Natyashastra, a Sanskrit Hindu text on the performing arts written by Bharata Muni, Devdutt has answered questions on the origins of the text and why it was referred to as the Panchama Veda. “By dancing, Hindu Gods differentiated Hindu faith, they drew attention to time, space, rhythm, vibration and body,” explains Pattanaik.

Pattanaik has been frank about the LGBTQ revolution in India. Pattanaik realized that he was a gay in 10<sup>th</sup> standard and came out to his parents when he was 30. After the 2018 decriminalization of homosexuality in India, Pattanaik came out as gay in a television interview. He has written about the presence, and at several instances, the celebration, of the queer within the Indian mythos. Elucidating that karmic faith can be used to affirm the dignity of queer people, he speaks of how when one discovers love and appreciation for the world as it is, not the way one wants it to be, one develops wisdom.

Devdutt Pattanaik’s first work of fiction. *The Pregnant King* introduces kings who lived during this Great War depicted in the Hindu mythology. The central character in the book, King Yuvanashva, the ruler of Vallabhi, and his family fight their own battle of Dharma. Similar to the *Mahabharata*, this battle also seems to center around the themes of individual existence, ambition, and gender roles.

The narrative engages the reader with the story of the King’s mother Shilavathi an intelligent, strong, and ambitious queen- who is widowed two months before her

first son is born. Her marriage to the king destined to die is a calculated move by her father who understands her intellect and capabilities. Taught all about Dharma by her father, and to hunt and appreciate nature by her husband, Shilavathi takes the rein of Vallabhi in her hands until her son comes of age.

*The Pregnant King* is about Yuvanashva, the king of Vallabhi, who could not produce a child from any of his three wives. One day, he accidentally impregnates himself by drinking a child endowing magic potion meant for his wives. After which, his entire life becomes a predicament of what to call himself- the father, mother, or king.

The plot is woven around the events of Mahabharata. It begins with a discussion between Yuvanashva and his mother, Shilavathi. Yuvanashva wants to fight for Pandavas in the battle of Kurukshetra while Shilavati dissuades him calming that he cannot go before fulfilling his responsibility of producing a son.

In this book, Pattanaik also explores the social and political landscapes of that time and how important it was for the kings and queens to abide by the dharma, the law of the land which guides individual's behaviors in society. These man-made rules were treated as sacred gospels, to be followed without deviation. This rigidity created a dilemma about how to express and acknowledge the truth that contradicts dharma.

Along with dharma, another intruding aspect he has explored in the book is sexuality. He presents sex in an objective way, limiting the act of making love to bodily attractions. His characters do not use sex to express their love or emotions; for them it is more a requisite to continue their lineage. But more than this, Pattanaik explores a rather difficult emotion connected to sexuality –a person's discomfort in accepting gender based restrictions imposed by the society. What happens if one desires to

experience life regardless of his gender? Should a capable woman be denied the throne because of her sex? Could society accept man, who emotionally feels more like women? How does society respond to such deviations from the normal? Are they accepted, acknowledged or punished?

Shilavati is a princess who exhibits all characters of being an able ruler. Her parents acknowledge her potential but know that a girl could not own the throne. So they get Shilavati married to Prasenjit, the sole heir of Vallabhi who is prophesied to die in the two years. As the king's widow, Shilavati gets the authority on throne, but Vallabhi never accepts her as the queen and waits for her son Yuvanashava to claim the throne.

As Yuvanashava grows, the kingdom awaits him to produce an heir. But none of his three marriages yield him a child, making people question his virility. With the intension of provoking him a man and upholder of dharma, Yuvanashava requests two siddhis to create a child endowing magic potion. While the magic potion is being prepared, a pandemonium erupts in the kingdom and amidst confusion, Yuvanashava, instead of his wives, consumes the magic potion.

Yuvanashava realizes his mistake after many months, when his body shows the signs of pregnancy. The family first tries to kill the child but then accepts it. Shilavati and three queens decide to keep his son, Mandhata, inside queen's chambers and distance him from Yuvanashva.

After birth, Yuvanashva starts feeling a profound stirring of maternal emotions within him. His body would carve for his son's touch and he would nurse him. Whenever young prince would cry, the king would sing lullaby from his chambers, loud enough for Mandhata to hear him.

Yuvanashva would try being a mother to his child in the secrecy of his palace but could never muster the courage to break this news to the people. He shares his desire for Mandhata to call him 'mother' with his mother and queens who urge him to curb this yearning for the sake of his reputation. As Yuvanashva tries to suppress his motherly love, he also painfully distances himself from his child. Society and dharma tells him to act like a father and a king, while his heart tells him that he is the mother of his child, the birth giver. The irony of the story is that the king who tries to be the epitome of manhood and upholder of Dharma longed till his last breath to be called 'mother' by his son.

Pattanaik has tried to demonstrate Yuvanashva's predicament by sharing examples of many other mythological characters, which experienced both man and womanhood in their bodies. Many of these were part of Mahabharata and other popular folklore, such as Arjun- who cursed to become a eunuch for a year, Nar and Narayana- who produced a nymph from their thighs, Ila- Ileshwara-a God on full moon days and Goddess on a new moon nights, Shikhandi- a man who was born woman and changes his gender on his wedding night, etc. All of them had experienced dual sexuality at some point of time in their lives.

This story is much about Yuvanashva as much it is about his mother Shilavati and three wives, Simantani, Poulami and Keshini. Pattanaik subtly expresses the pain of a wife when she could not give a child to her husband. He also brings out her envy and disappointment when the husband decides to bring another wife. Yuvanashva's wives in the story accept his failure as their collective failure. Other than Poulami, his second wife, no other wife blames or accuses him for not being able to produce a child or ridicule him to literally produce one, later.

Pattanaik has woven this story on a landscape. He had used several popular anecdotes to demonstrate the natural behavior of his characters. He has mentioned several popular symbols of those times and explained story behind them. All this information has made the plot very credible and realistic. The events in the book smoothly create a context. The story covers multiple aspects of the erstwhile Indian society-the division of a household's responsibility in four different ashrams, compulsion to follow dharma, worshipping Goddess but not respecting women of the house, the manipulations done to attain power, belief in ancestors and spirits, the populist attitude of monarchy, etc.

At the core, however, are the sentiment of his character-their responses, behavior, agonies and joys. The characters are deeply connected to each other, with their lives entwined and their emotions influencing one another's life. Shilavati wanted to prove her worth as a queen, she stayed on the throne for so long that eventually Yuvanashva had to show her that she is a mere regent not the ruler. However Yuvanashva could never forgive himself for this act. His inability to give a child to any of his wives further burdened his conscience. His guilty surfaced even though his wives did not express the same. He wanted to be a great king, but his heart always longing to be called a mother by his son. He could never feel the same love for his second son, out of his second wife, as he felt for Mandhata. Simantini and Keshini tried convincing him to create children with them after he bore his son, but Yuvanashva could never again feel 'right' with himself in terms of his sexuality and duties.

*The Pregnant King* is an engaging piece of fiction and would hugely interest the readers of Indian mythology. Most of the story lines are about the events happening before his impregnation. The description of the society and

history helped in setting the context, but the pregnant king as a character does not grow to the promise, the book's title and cover make. The end comes too quickly after Yuvanashva give birth. His postpartum life is about his struggle to accept himself as his son's mother. The author covers the span of 16 years quickly, fast forwarding the king's plight and dramatically making him renounce the world.

The king yearns to be called mother, the most tender and the most loving of emotion he has ever felt, to hold the child that is part of his own body and to nurse him and love him. His mother and his three queens forbid this though; fearing societal rebuff and rejection, deeply concerned about maintaining the "dignity" of the crown and for the crown and for the greater of the people of the kingdom who depends on the king for peaceful stable lives.

The child thus grows up, away from his father, away from his one true "mother". The strict dharmashastra, which lays the ground rules for living well in an established and stable society discourage individual satisfaction and encourage what is good for the larger well-being of the society that one lives in. This story is about an individual's strife trying hard to live a seemingly sane life while making a compromise with their inner most desires.

The book not only tells the core tales of the king and the child he gives birth to, but narrates beautiful many surrounding tales, legends, revolving the king's life, and the life of his parents and grand-parents and his ancestors. "He wept for his family, his mothers, his brother and for his grandmother, the venerable Shilavati, and for all the pain and suffering that we endure to maintain a façade of order. He wept for his father, the pregnant king, for the imperfection of the human condition, and for and for our

stubborn refusal to make room for all those in between.” The book thus ends, throwing a bright, glaring light on so many such imperfections in the society that it is now.

Among the many hundreds of characters who inhabit the Mahabharata, perhaps the world’s greatest epic and certainly one of the oldest, is Yuvanashva, a childless king, who accidentally drinks a magic potion meant to make his queens pregnant and gives birth to a son. This extraordinary novel is his story. It is also the story of his mother Shilavati, who cannot be king because she is a woman; of young Somvat, who surrenders his genitals to become a wife; of Shikhandi, a daughter brought up as a son, who fathers a child with a borrowed penis; of Arjuna, the great warrior with many wives, who is forced to masquerade as a woman after being castrated by a nymph; of Ileshwara, a god on full-moon days and a goddess on new-moon nights; and of Adinatha, the teacher of teachers, worshipped as a hermit by some and as an enchantress by others.

## Chapter 3

### A Queer Reading on *The Pregnant King*

Devdutt's book *The Pregnant King* traces the story of a childless king who becomes pregnant through a potion by chance. Gender divide role reversals, the concept of dharma are some of the poignant points that the production traces through the story. The *Pregnant King* offers a unique re-telling of selective episodes of Mahabharata with fictional tweak to produce a counter discourse to the heteronormative notions of gender and sexuality, which reduces human beings to mere social performers of the pre-defined set of rules and expectations. Pattanaik in author's note mentions, "The story of *The Pregnant King* is recounted twice in the Mahabharata once by the sage Lomasha during the exile of the Pandavas. And the second time by the poet Vyasa during the war with Kauravas This book is a deliberate distortion of tales in the epics. History has been folded, geography crumpled... my intention is not to recreate reality but to represent thought process." (Pattanaik, 2008, pp. vi -vii). This novel shows how the dialogic voices within the novel bring forth a more subjective and fluid understanding of human bodies through its re-engagement with Mahabharata.

Through its various characters, the novel depicts how manavas struggle all their lives negotiating between sex and gender, duty and desire, and personal and social truths. Pattanaik takes the readers on a mythological journey to reveal myriad possibilities of human forms, subjectivities, and imaginations; to show the "confining nature of words"; to remind that "the human way is not the only way in this world"; to reinstate that truth is polymorphous, "it all depends on one's point of view"; and to present a wisdom that must look beyond the flesh to understand human existence. The characters of Yuvanashva, Shikandi, Sumedha and Somavat, the unnamed prince,

Nabhaka, Prasenjith, Uttara and Uttari , Nara and Narayana, Aruni , Ila ,Arjuna and Krishna in the novel portray the fluid nature of human body and desire and demand a wider perspective to accommodate multiple human subjectatives.

The novel problematizes sex and gender dichotomy from the very beginning through the characters of Shilavati, Nabhaka, and Prasanjit. Pattanaik highlights how gender is not an essentialized truth of body, but a social construct; and how a whole web of knowledge has been constructed around the human body over the time to be taken as its final truth and destiny. Shilavati the eldest daughter of Ahuka, the king of Avanti showed signs of intelligence and desire to rule since childhood. Everyone including her father believed, she was “given a man’s head and a woman’s body.” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 27) Shilavati soon realized that how she would never be allowed to learn dharama formally and rule as a king because of her gender. As a girl she was destined to be a wife, a mother, but never a ruler. She was supposed to do confine her talents to the women quarters and not for the maha-sabha. Her wedding to Prasanjit, prince of Vallabhi, brought a change in the course of her destiny. Prasanjit’s pre-mature death provided her that golden opportunity to rule Vallabhi, with her father-in-law already moved in the next phase of his life and her son was yet to be born. But Shilavati was not accepted as king by four varnas, but as a regent, a custodian of the throne for the yet to be born prince. Shilavati gained immense popularity and respect during her reign, but only as a substitute till the prince was ready to take over the throne as king. She was aware that she is tied to her body forever and the social norms would not see a king in woman’s body. But her desire for power was so strong that she would do all that is possible in order to remain as a ruler. She was not in any hurry to pass on the responsibility of the throne to Yuvanashva even after he was married. Shilavati appeared selfish to Mandhata, Vipula, Yuvanashva’s wives and others, but her agony,

conflict, desire, capability, and intelligence were ignored for it was not for a woman to be the king. After her death, even Yama records about her only “as the dutiful daughter of Ahuka, loving sister of Nabhaka, obedient wife of Prasanjith and doting mother of Yuvanashva,” but nothing about “her long and glorious reign” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 321).

On other hand, Nabhaka, the younger brother of Shilavati, was destined to be king since he was a male child. However, Nabhaka did not have any interest in becoming a king. He wanted to “be a poet, play the flute and make music on the banks of Saraswati” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 25). But his angry father told him “making music is for shudras....you must be king because I, your father, I’m king. All men are bound to their lineage”(Pattanaik, 2008, p. 25). Perplexed by his conflict of duty and desire, Nabhaka felt “pain of his dreams crushed on the altar of dharma,” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 27); and he asks, “If my whole has been decided for me, then why did Prajapathi give me a heart? Why did he make me dream? Why does he bring music into my heart? When would I live my own life?” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 26). There was no convincing answer to such questions other than blaming it on one’s dharama, determined at birth through lineage and body. Nabhaka wanted to pursue music and arts, but was forced to learn dharmashastra and other forms of art meant for a crown prince.

Shilavati’s son Yuvanashva, the central character of the novel presents the further complexity and fluidity of human body and desires. Yuvanashva, born as a man, has created a life inside him as well as outside of him; he is both a father and mother and he is the king of Vallabhi and an aberration. Tricked by the ghost of Sumedha and Somavati, Yuvanashva unknowingly drinks the magical potion created by Yaja and Upayaja, the two siddhas, meant to impregnate his three queens, Simantini , Pulomi,

and Keshini as a result he happens to conceive the child and gives birth to Mandhata from one of his thighs. Yuvanashva experiences motherhood after creating a life from his own body. He now wishes to nurse his child and be called his mother but would not be allowed so by the royal family. After giving birth to Mandhata, he is unable to make sense of the rigid knowledge constructed around the human body in form of two genders, man and woman. He fails to understand how should he be perceived now, a man or a woman, a mother, or a father? Being a man, he cannot be a mother and being a mother, he cannot be a man. Yuvanashva was forced to live a dual life, one as he knew himself, a man who is a mother, and other as the world knew him, as a son, husband, king, a man. His mother, wives, friends, no one ever accepted him for his present reality. Throughout Yuvanashva is incessantly tormented to know the truth of his body, to validate his personal experience, and to disapprove the social knowledge as final truth.

Within this context, the author weaves into the novel various references through the characters of Shikandi, Arjuna, and Krishna from the Mahabharata and the stories of Nara and Narayan, Aruni, and Bangasvana through the bards of Vallabhi to present mythological truth of bodies.

The novel presents another possibility of gender and sexuality through the characters of Sumedha and Somavati. These two Brahmin boys from Tarini-pur were burnt alive on the orders of Yuvanashva for transgressing the boundaries of dharma by marrying each other. Sumedha and Somvat appear as married couple in the yagna, organized in Vallabhi to bless the queens of Yuvanashva with sons, to receive a cow as gift. Their plan turned awry when queens recognized Somvat as a man dressed in a sari, pretending to be the bride of Sumedha. Both the boys were beaten and thrown in the

prison for bringing such a disgrace to the yagna. By the trick of Sthunakarna, the Yaksha, Somvat was turned into Somvati; an action that would restore the lost manhood of Yaksha and also save the boy's life. Though unbelievable, Sumedha and Somavati were happy, as their love would now not threaten the social order. The change in Sumedha's body did not matter to both of them; their soul was still the same. They pronounced each other as husband and wife, a newly married couple, the soul mates. But Yuvanashva, the king, did not accept them as man and wife, since Somvat was born as a man. He asked them to give up their relationship and follow their dharma of being Brahmins and sons. Vipula asked them on behalf of the king. Sumedha and Somvat both chose their feelings for each other and announced, "We will not live a lie because it is convenient to your dharma." The boys were burnt alive to death, which they accepted with fortitude. Both of them did not protest even once before submitting their bodies to fire, "as if life outside the flames was even more painful. "Sumedha and Somvati could not cross the Vaitarni since Yama would not allow them to go the other world as a man and wife, and they would not go with any other identity. Thus, the boys returned as ghosts-Brahma-Rakshasas- to Yuvanashva declaring him as their creator. They tricked the king to drink the magical potion and become pregnant. Neither for the boys nor for Yuvanashva, the personal truth was accommodated.

Another possibility of human body and subjectivity is highlighted through the bard's narration about the shrine of Bahugami. Bahugami was married to a handsome prince, but their marriage was never consummated even after many years. Determined to know truth of the matter, Bahugami one night finds out "her husband dressed in a sari, complete with the sixteen love-charms of a married woman." Feeling disgusted with the sight of her husband in woman's robe, she threatens him to tell the truth of his body. The panic stricken prince in a painful voice tells her, "My body is that of a man.

But my heart is not. I think like a woman. I feel like a woman. That is the way it is. I have tried to change my mind. Spoken to Rishis and Yogis and Siddhas. But none have helped me.” The plight of prince also came from the fact that his family did not accept his reality. He says, “You think my father does not know? You think my mother does not know? They know. They all do. They all know that I feel like a woman and that I only pretend to be a man... They do not, they cannot, understand the truth about me.” Feeling duped, Bahugami killed herself after cutting the genitals of the prince and cursing him. Bahugami turned into the goddess and the prince became her priestess. Since then, “the priestesses of this goddess were men who lived their lives as women. They castrated themselves, offered their genitals to the goddess, wore women’s clothes and adopted women’s mannerisms.” Concerned for the king, Simantini asked the chief priestess of Bahugami temple whether Yuvanashva is also a woman in man’s body. The old priestess replied, “... he is not one of us. We desire no women. Our flesh is that of a man but our hearts are that of a woman. Your husband’s heart is that of a man but his flesh seems to have turned into a woman’s” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 214).

The novel takes liberty with the time-period and makes Pandavas and Turuvasus as contemporaries to bring out multiple references of gender fluidity from Mahabharata. The character of Shikhandi, Arjuna, and Krishna are highlighted to portray myriad possibilities of human subjectivities. Born as a girl, Shikhandi was declared and raised as a son by Drupada, the impatient King of Panchala, who desperately wanted a son in order to take revenge from Kurus and Bhishma. Having a female body, Shikhandi learned all the skills expected of a warrior and prince. Draupda was so blind in his ambition that he gets Shikhandi married to Hiranyavarni, the daughter of the king of Dasharna. It was only at her wedding night that Shikhandi faced the stark truth of her body. Hiranyavarni did not accept Shikhandi as her husband as she

saw his woman body. Before a warring situation could occur between the kings of Panchala and Dasharna; Sthunakarna, the Yaksha, came to the rescue of Shikhandi and lends him his manhood to be returned later. Though she was now turned to a man and had proved the newly acquired manhood, no one really accepted Shikhandi as a man. Even Draupada, who raised her as a man, refuses to accept her or him as a man enough to go to battlefield. Therefore, he creates two more children Draupdai and Dhristradhyumna to fulfill his revenge. Hiranyavarni also could not accept Shikhandi as man for she says, “My truth remains my truth” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 270).

In the battlefield of Kurukshetra, when Bhishma proved an unfathomable force for the Pandavas, Krishna calls Shikhandi to kill him. Only Shikhandi could kill Bhishma, not by the merit of his or her strength and capability, but because Bhishma would never raise arms on a woman. Thus, Shikhandi says, “I have become a man of convenience with a weapon called womanhood.” Shikhandi accepts this opportunity to prove his manhood, only to be received as a woman by Bhishma and others in the battle. The ambiguity of Shikhandi’s gender continued to be discussed even after his or her death. Before going for the war, Shikhandi, on Hiranyavarni’s request and persuasion, made love to her. A beautiful girl Amba was born out of this union “ten moons after the battle of Kurukshetra...” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 264). But Amba was considered as an aberration by the society as others would say her father was not a man, and that she is an offspring of two women. No prince participated in Amba’s gandharva, as no one deemed her fit to be a queen. Mandhata says, “Shikhandi’s daughter embodies an aberration, a disruption of order. She has therefore been rejected by all the kings of Ill-vrita” (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 290). It was only after Yuvanashava

confronted Mandhata to accept the truth of his own birth, and later coaxed by his grandmother Shilavati to take over the throne, he marries Amba.

The novel also mentions about the two sages, Nara and Narayan, who created a beautiful woman, Uruvashi, from their thighs to teach Indra a lesson. But nobody knows whether the sages felt or desired motherhood, whether Uru-vashi called them father or mother? Similarly, Aruni, the dawn-god, who disguised himself as a woman to see the dance of Apsaras in Indra's palace, was chased by Indra who then made love to him/her resulting into Aruni's pregnancy. When Surya witnessed Aruni's feminine form, he also felt strong attraction towards her resulting into another lovemaking and pregnancy. Aruni gave birth to two sons, and later gave them away "to the childless Riksha, King of Kishkinda, lord of the monkeys" (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 217). When enquired why Aruni gave away his children to monkeys, Bard replies to the annoyance of Yuvanashva, "Maybe children born of a man are fit only to be raised as monkeys" (Pattanaik, 2008, p. 218).

However, Yuvanashava's truth was different from Somvat, the unnamed prince, Shikhandi, Arjuna, Krishna and others, as he experienced motherhood in a man's body. He had given birth to a child from his own body, had fed milk to the baby from his bosom, and had a strong yearning to be called mother by his son. He was both a man and a mother.

Devdutt Pattanaik's *The Pregnant King* problematizes the essentialized notions of human body and desire and unsettles the socio-culturally constructed truth and mix about human existence it addresses on gender and sexuality in queer studies and other disciplines.

## Conclusion

Devdutt Pattanaik's *The Pregnant King* exposures that the queer narratives in Indian folklores which describe about the gays and lesbians and hijras of Indian society it accepts Queer behavior, be it cross dressing of homosexual intercourse, be it cross dressing or homosexual intercourse, as perfectly natural, it leaves its social acceptance or rejection to culture, which is an artificial dynamic and artificial construct. The short story collection lights the suppressed voices of suppressed personalities in the Grand Narrative of Indian mythology, the analyses of these stories in which individuals of this age are resisted the hegemonic notion of gender and class.

Devdutt Pattanaik blurs all the distinction between what constitutes male and female, masculine and feminine, there by upholding the subtleties of terms like gender and sexuality. The real impulses behind Yuvanashvas act of transgressing and re-constituting those gender values that he once maintained are perceived in his naming the crown ruler Mandhata. The association here is with maternal instead of paternal, articulating Yuvanashva's non-heteronormative existence. Pattanaik, however, does not stop with Yuvanashva's story. The fact that many stories like this have been decided for retelling bespeaks the changing view of sex and sexuality in the contemporary age. The novelist re-narrates the past but from a distinct angle that it demolishes authority, stereotypes, icons and sexist values.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKADAVU**

**MAN VERSUS NATURE: AN ECOCRITICAL READING**  
**OF**  
***HULLABALOO IN THE GUAVA ORCHARD***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**AKASH MATHEW**

**Register No: DB18AEGR038**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Mr. Jince Joseph

June 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Man Versus Nature: An Ecocritical Reading of *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*” is a bonafide work of Akash Mathew, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Mr. Jince Joseph

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Akash Mathew, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Man Versus Nature: An Ecocritical Reading of *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Jince Joseph of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

08 June 2021

Akash Mathew

DB18AEGR038

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## Table of Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	
Ecocriticism: The Treatment of Environment in Literature	3
Chapter Two:	
The Fictional World of Kiran Desai	13
Chapter Three:	
Ecocriticism in <i>Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard</i>	24
Conclusion	38
Works Cited	40

## Introduction

Nature is the cradle of human beings and man is a part of nature dependent on it for each and everything. As literature is the reflection of life, writers normally provide description of nature and its components, but *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is all about the unity of man with nature and love towards nature. In the novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* written by Kiran Desai, Sampath, the Protagonist is fed up with the town life and leaves the place to become one with nature. The project presents the ecocritical study of the novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*.

The first chapter of the project is an analysis on the origin, development of the salient features of ecocriticism and how it evolved as a literary theory and gain currency. As one can see, ecological concerns and issues are widely discussed in the contemporary world and its reflections can be found in Literature as well. A discussion of the theory and practitioners of ecocriticism is so essential in understanding the particular study undertaken.

The second chapter focuses on how Kiran Desai as a writer views various global problems such as environmental problems and environmental movements. The object of this study does not permit me to analyze all the works of Kiran Desai however, understanding the writer and issues the writer wants to foreground through one's works are of greater significance while reading the particular work in an ecocritical perspective.

The third chapter critically analyzes the ecological elements in the novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*. His work tries to prove that the events, situations, and the philosophy of life the writer wants to foreground force us to believe that

environmental problems are so serious concern in the modern world; that this is not a story of an isolated case of one Sampath, instead he represents the growing awareness among the present generation the need to save the environment.

## Chapter One

### Ecocriticism: The Treatment of Environment in Literature

Ecocriticism, a holistic approach to literature that seeks to examine the relationship between man and his environment, maintains that literature cannot be approached in a way that sets man and nature in opposition to each other. Instead, it must be approached in a way that examines man as a part of an ecosystem; he is neither master nor slave to it, but simply one part of an intricate system. Representation of the natural environment is as old as recorded literature, and is prominent in the account of the Greek of Eden in the third century BC and later imitated by the Roman poet Virgil- an idealized depiction of rural life, viewed as survival of the simplicity, peace, and harmony that had been lost by complex and urban society.

Cheryll Glotfelty defines, Ecocriticism as the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment, we call it as 'green studies' also. Both terms are used to denote a critical approach which began in USA in the late 1980s, and in the UK in the early 1990s, and since it is still an 'emergent movement, it is worth briefly setting out its institutional history to date. In the USA the acknowledged founder of ecocriticism is Cheryll Glotfelty. American ecocriticism was already a burgeoning academic movement by the early 1990s, beginning to establish its professional infrastructure of designated journals and an official corporate body Since ecocriticism in the USA seems to be the strongest in the universities of the west that is away from the largest cities, and from the major academic power centres of the East and West coast.

More recently, in an article that extends ecocriticism to Shakespearean studies, Estok argues that ecocriticism is more than simply the study of Nature or natural things in literature; rather, it is any theory that is committed to effecting change by analyzing

the function-thematic, artistic, social, historical, ideological, theoretical, or otherwise-of the natural environment, or aspects of it, represented in documents (literary or other) that contribute to material practices in material words. This echoes the functional approach of the cultural ecology branch of ecocriticism which analyses the analogies between ecosystem and imaginative texts and posits that such texts potentially have an ecological function in the cultural system.

As Michael P. Cohen has observed that if you want to be an ecocritic, be prepared to explain what you do and be criticized, if not satirized. Certainly, Cohen adds his voice to such critique, noting that one of the problems of ecocriticism has been what he calls its 'praise-song school' of criticism. All Eco critics share an environmentalist motivation of some sort, but whereas the majority are 'nature endorsing', some are 'nature sceptical'. In part this entails a shared sense of the ways in which 'nature' has been used to legitimize gender, sexual and racial norms (so homosexuality has been seen as 'unnatural') but it also involves scepticism about the uses to which 'ecological' language is put in ecocriticism; it can also involve a critique of the ways cultural norms of nature and the environment contribute to environmental degradation. Greg Gerrard has dubbed 'pastoral ecology' 'the notion that nature undisturbed is balanced and harmonious, while Dana Philips has criticised the literary quality and scientific accuracy of nature writing in "The Truth of Ecology". Similarly, there has been a call to recognize the place of the Environmental Justice movement in redefining Eco critical discourse.

In response to the question of what ecocriticism is or should be, Camilo Gomides has offered an operational definition that is both broad and discriminating: "The field of enquiry that analyses and promotes works of art which raise moral questions about human interactions with nature, while also motivating audiences to live

within a limit that will be binding over generations. He tests it in a film adaptation about Amazonian deforestation. Implementing the Gomides definition, Joseph Henry Vogel makes the case that ecocriticism constitutes an Economic school of Thought as it engages audiences to debate issues of resource allocation that have no technical solution. Ashton Nichols has recently argued that the historical dangers of a romantic version of nature now need to be replaced by "urban natural roosting," a view that sees urban life and the natural world as closely linked and argues for humans to live more lightly on the planet, the way virtually all other species do.

Ecocritics investigate such things as the underlying ecological values, what, precisely, is meant by the word nature, and whether the examination of "place" should be a distinctive category, much like class, gender or race. Ecocritics examine human perception of wilderness, and how it has changed throughout history and whether or not current environmental issues are accurately represented or even mentioned in popular culture and modern literature. Scholars in ecocriticism engage in questions regarding anthropocentrism, and mainstream assumption that the natural world be seen primarily as a resource for human beings as well as critical approaches to changing ideas in "the material and cultural bases of modern society. Other disciplines, such as history, economics, philosophy, ethics, and psychology, are also considered by Ecocritics to be possible contributors to ecocriticism.

While William Ruckert may have been the first person to use the term ecocriticism in his 1978 essay entitled "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism. Ecocriticism" as a movement owes much to Rachel Carson's well acclaimed environmental exposé *Silent Spring*. Drawing from this critical moment, Ruckert's intent was to focus on the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature. Ecologically minded individuals and scholars have been

publishing progressive works of eco-theory and criticism since the explosion of environmentalism in the late 1960s and 1970s. However, because there was no organized movement to study the ecological environmental side of literature, these important works were scattered and categorized under a litany of different subject headings: pastoralism, human ecology, regionalism, American Studies etc. British Marxist critic Raymond Williams, for example, wrote a seminal critique of pastoral literature in 1973, *The Country and the City*.

Another early ecocritical text, Joseph Meeker's *The Comedy of Survival* (1974), proposed a version of an argument that was later to dominate ecocriticism and environmental philosophy; that environmental crisis is caused primarily by a culture tradition in the West of separation of culture from nature, and elevation of the former to moral predominance. Such anthropocentrism is identified in the tragic conception of a hero whose moral struggles are more important than mere biological survival, whereas the science of animal ethology, Meeker, shows that a 'comic mode' of muddling through and making love not war has superior ecological value. Meeker's adoption of an eco-philosophical position with apparent scientific sanction as a measure of literary value tended to prevail over Williams's ideological and historical critique of the shifts in a literary genre's representation of nature.

The study of literature has long been preoccupied with historical approaches. However, in recent years critics are increasingly aware of the relation between literature and geography, and drawing insights from the mutual study of these two fields. Nature and literature have always shared a close relationship as is evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all culture of the world. Today the intimate relationship between the natural and social world is being analyzed and emphasized in all departments of knowledge and development. The literary critics

tries to study how this closer relationship between nature and society has been textualized by the writers in their works. In this context two terms have become very important today, 'Ecology and Eco criticism'. The two components of nature, organisms and their environment are not only much complex and dynamic but also interdependent, mutually reactive and inter related.

Ecology is relatively a new science which deals with the various principles which govern such relationship between organism and environment. Today, Ecology is defined as the way in which plants, animals, and people are related to each other and their environment. In this relationship they are so much inter dependent on each other that any disturbance in one disturbs the other. History has proved this every now and then that with every change in the civilization relationship of animals and human beings have also changed and the effect on the civilization of the changes in environment has been so drastic that sometimes it has wiped the whole civilization from the face of the Earth.

Therefore, concern for ecology is one of the most discussed issues today. It is the concern of every country to replenish the diminishing factors of ecology which threatens the human being the most. Literature well known for reflecting the contemporary issue could not have remained unaffected from this theme.

The world of literature throngs with works dealing with beauty and nature. However, the concern for ecology and the threat that the continuous misuse of our environment possesses on humanity have only recently caught the attention of the writers. It is this sense of concern and its reflection in literature that have given rise to a new branch of literary theory, namely ecocriticism. There have also been numerous debates on whether to include human culture in the physical world. Despite the broad scope of inquiry all ecological criticism shares the fundamental premise that human

culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Ecocultural is produced by human beings and is therefore separate from nature bypasses the fact that all human culture resides in the natural world. The human world owes our very existence to its processes. Therefore, our every action towards the natural world is eventually an action towards oneself and towards one's culture.

Ecocritics and theorists are concerned with the questions like if the nature is being represented in a piece of literature or if the physical setting has a role in the plot or if the values expressed in the work are consistent with the ecological wisdom or if in addition to race, class, gender and place should become a new critical category and in what ways and to what effect the environment crisis is sleeping into contemporary literature and popular culture. Literary scholars specialise in questions of value, meaning, tradition, point of view, tradition and language and it is in these areas that we are making a substantial contribution to environmental thinking. Ecocriticism has come to mean not only the application of ecology and ecological principles to the study of literature, but also the theoretical approach to the interrelation web of natural cultural and supernatural phenomena. It began to explore constructions of environment in literary texts and theoretical discourse. Most ecological work shares a common motivation, that is, the awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support system. This awareness brings in us a desire to contribute to environmental restoration, not only as a hobby but as a representative of literature.

Ecocritics encourage others to think seriously about the aesthetic and ethical dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis and about how language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications. ecocriticism is the central focus of this research. The considerable increase in the emergence of Eco conscious writers in

the post-modern era has paved a path for a new kind of critical approach called ecocriticism. It is a fairly recent but rapidly developing concept in the area of literary criticism. It has emerged as a modern ecological literary study and is now acknowledged as a vital critical approach.

Ecocriticism not only gives emphasis on the harmony of humanity and nature but also talks about the destruction caused to nature by the changes which take place in the modern world for most of which man is directly responsible. O. J. Joyce and Evangeline Manickam in an article, "From Ego-centered to Eco-centered Humanism: A Wilberian Perspective", in *The Atlantic Literary Review* opines that ecocriticism anticipates a response to the need for humanistic understanding with the natural world in an age of environmental destruction. The war ravaged twentieth Century catapulted attention to the environment and since then there has been no dearth of theories and movements. One's understanding of nature is at odds with another, and there is no definitive way to judge which one is better. Nature is, therefore, an idea that takes on different meanings in different cultural contexts.

Ecocriticism is a rapidly changing theoretical approach, which is different from the traditional approach to literature. Here the critic explores the local or global, the material or physical, or the historical or natural history in the context of a work of art. An ecocritical approach to literature is often interdisciplinary, citing knowledge of the natural sciences, and cultural and social studies. According to environmental studies to Glen Love ecocriticism focuses on the inter connections between the material world and human culture, specifically the cultural artifacts language and literature. Cultural anthropologists like Levi Strauss distinguish nature and culture by stating that which is universal and spontaneous and not dependent on any particular culture, or any determinate form, belongs to nature. Inversely that which depends upon a system of

norms regulating society and therefore is capable of varying from one social structure to another belongs to culture. This culture of nature may itself be considered a culture, for nature is not an abstraction or an idea as the post modernists would like us to believe, nor is its mere physical entity, but a living presence of which the human race constitutes a significant part.

Nature has always proved to be stronger than human. It has often shown its power by controlling manpower through natural calamities like famine, drought, flood, earthquake etc. Human's life and nature are so interlinked that it is not possible for human beings to separate themselves from its influence. Therefore, they have no choice but to accept both nature's bounty and adversity. This can be said to be reciprocal as nature too is the recipient of human's action. Our irresponsible actions cause irreparable damages to nature. This is how the chain of ecosystem works in which everything is related to each other and therefore affects each other.

In literature importance is given to the geographical background and it very much depends upon the lives of the people and their environment. The two major branches of Geography are Physical Geography and Cultural Geography. The latter can also be defined as Human Geography which is the study of many cultural aspects found throughout the world. It also deals with how culture relates to the different spaces and places. The interest of geographers in cultural problems developed early, but the cultural approach was deeply modernized during the last 20 years. The main cultural phenomena studied in cultural geography are the language of the people, their religion, their economic status, art, music and other cultural aspects. The study of these aspects helps to explain why people behave the way they do in the particular environment in which they live in. These aspects of culture are able to travel across the world due to globalization.

Nature is a place of existence where living organisms flourish, wither, and die; like nature, a person's interaction with the environment also reveals his or her own development on earth. To sum up, as a distinctive approach to the practice of literary criticism, ecocriticism gives increased attention to literary representatives of nature and is sensitive to interdependencies that ground the author, character or work in the natural system. This approach shifts critical focus from social relations toward natural relationships and views the individual as a member of ecosystem. It values highly the literary sense of place not as setting but as an essential expression of bonding with or alienation from a specific natural context. From the beginning the writers have shown interest towards nature, culture and landscape. An ecocritical approach views man's relationship with nature by his interaction with nature because it supports the idea that nature, as a literary subject, surrounds all parts of life. Therefore, ecocriticism is a necessary part of literary scholarship because literature cannot separate characters from nature that they domesticate either destructively or productively.

The flourishing of human life and culture is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease present human interference with a non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economy, technological, and ideological structure. Ecocriticism's relationship to the natural science has always been extraordinarily ambivalent. Eco critics like environmentalist more generally rely on the insights of biologists, ecologists and chemists as the basis for their claims about the state of the nature, and research finding from the natural science provide much of the social legitimating for efforts on behalf of conservation. But some ecocritical also says science and technology as root causes of ecological crisis, both in reducing nature to a mere object to be studied and

manipulated by a detached inflict damage on nature.

For most eco critics, ecology has played a more indirect role. Considered more synthetic than other sciences, ecology, especially in ecocriticism's first phase of development, has often understood to provide an account of the natural functioning of eco systems as stable, harmonious, and homeostatic if not destructed by humans. Societies that understand adapts themselves to this state of nature, it was thought, are or become freer, fairer, and more sustainable. Literary works that portrayed such harmonious interrelation between individuals, social communities, and their natural surroundings such as the poetry of A.R Ammons, Wendell Berry, Robinson Jeffers W.S Mervin and Gary Snyder as well as a great deal of Native American literature were singled out for praise in that they seemed to present models of sustainable living. Such perceptions of ecology as well as they seemed to present models of sustainable living. Such perceptions of ecology as well as of the literary text that allegedly exemplified them came under attack in the early 2000s for misconstruing, in the critics view, both the dynamic evolution of ecosystem over time and the aesthetic texture of literary works that makes them something other than realist documentation of nature. Feminists and queer theorists for example, targeted heteronormative assumptions in certain kinds of scientific explanations of animal behavior and others highlighted the value judgements underlying such apparently neutral terms as biodiversity.

In ecocriticism, the prominence of science diminished considerably as a consequence of these critiques that suggested ecological science could not in any simple manner be translated into social models and cultural values. That large-scale integrations of the natural sciences and literary studies have remained unsuccessful, however, does not mean that the two failed to engage with each other in more limited and specific ways. The dialogue between science and storytelling is particularly

obvious in the representation of such issues as chemical contamination and radioactive fallout. Scientists and science writers from Rachel Carson to Sandra Steingraber have mobilised narrative as way of making the impact of environmental toxins intelligible.

Conversely, writers and film makers such as Ishimura Michiko, Don DeLillo, Vladimir Guarded, Christawolf, Cherrie Moraga, Antonetta and Ruth Ozeki integrate scientific facts, figures, and documents into their stories, plays and films about environmental contamination and its consequences for humans and the natural world. Eco critics have investigated this rhetoric of toxic and radioactive pollution in great detail, as it raises complex questions about what makes an environmental crisis come to seem "real" to the reader what cultural assumptions about risk informs such accounts, and what conceptions of the human body and its porous boundaries with the environment these accounts articulate many other fields of scientific inquiry such as botany ornithology, genetics and conservation biology are addressed, often in minute detail, in environmentally oriented verbal and visual works. Indeed, partly because of this interest in blending scientific findings with aesthetic textures, environmentalism has found particularly rich expression in the genres of non fiction prose and, in film, the nature documentary in the other fields of cultural production that have not been as prominent of the genres that emerged from the new social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Compared with the novels, poems plays and feature film that have made the feminists, gay, civil rights, and anticolonial made the feminists, gay, civil rights and anti- colonial movements such towering presences in literature and the arts, the hallmark of environmentalism has been a kind of prose and film that sits at the intersection of narrative and science, blending the Endeavour to convey a scientific perspective on environmental crisis with the impulse to tell large and small and small-scale stories about humans' interaction with nature.

## Chapter Two

### The Fictional World of Kiran Desai

Lush and intensely imagined novel, it is very much a novel rooted in Indian culture, but the satirical stands, endowed with a lavish gift.

- Salman Rushdie

*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* written by Kiran Desai, she is the daughter of well-known Indian author Anita Desai. She is the winner of the 2006 Booker Prize. She was born on the third of September in the year 1971 in Chandigarh. She spent the early years of her life in Pune and Mumbai. She studied in the Cathedral and John Cannon School.

When she was around nine years old, her family shifted to Delhi by the time, she turned fourteen, the family moved to England. A year later, they shifted to the United States. Kiran Desai completed her schooling in Massachusetts. She did her graduation from Hollins University and Columbia University. Thereafter, she took a break of two years to write her first book *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*.

Her maiden novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* published in the year 1998. It was an amazing piece of work, for which Kiran Desai received many accolades. Her second book *Inheritance of Loss* was also well acclaimed. She also received the 2006 Man Booker Prize and 2006 National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award for it.

As might be expected from the rich input of her cultural background, Kiran Desai, daughter of the author Anita Desai, she is a born storyteller. Her first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998), is a pack, fresh look at life in the sleepy provincial town of Shashkot in India. The central character of the novel, Sampath Chawla, a failed postal clerk and pathological dreamer, escapes from his work and his oppressive family to live in a guava tree. Here he spends his life snoozing, musing and

eating the ever more exotic meals cooked for him by his sociopathic mother. He begins to amaze his fellow towns people by revealing intimate details about them gleaned from a bit of lazy letter opening whilst still working at the post office and by spouting a series of truisms worthy of a Shakespearean fool, or Forrest Gump. Before long he becomes known as a local guru and attracts such a strong flow of visitors that opening hours have to be established in the orchard to allow him to rest.

Soon, commercialism, a recurrent theme in Desai's work, takes over: Sampath's fast thinking, entrepreneurial father Mr. Chawla, who at first despaired at his son's inanity, now sees his chance to make the family's fortune. He sets up his picturesque family in a compound around the guava tree that is soon lined with colorful advertisements for tailors, fizzy drinks, talcum powder, and insect repellent. Visitors bring gifts that Mr. Chawla can sell, the family bank account begins to grow and he looks at investment plans. All goes well until the arrival in the town of a terrorist. The tale continues, with a growing sense of impending doom, as the family and the various officials of the town try to resolve the monkey problem. Like many important works of literature, the book can be read on several levels as an inventive, fast moving, delicious tale full of rich descriptions and marvelous comic cartoon like personalities, but also as a deeper study of the pathos of familial misunderstanding, the ridiculousness of hero worship, the unpredictability of commercialism and the ineptness of officialdom.

Desai's next novel *The inheritance of Loss* (2006). The story revolves around the inhabitants of a town in the north eastern Himalayas, an embittered old judge, his granddaughter Sai, his cook's son Biju as he struggles to realize the American dream as an immigrant in New York. *The Inheritance of Loss* is much more ambitious than *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* in its spatial breadth and emotional depth.

The prose passage from Kiran Desai's *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*

describes the Chawla family going to an orchard tree, attempting to persuade Sampath to get from it. The passage develops and explores ideas about foolishness, individuality, embarrassment and social norm. Throughout the passage, figurative language vividly reproduces the setting of the scene, sensory imageries convey the conflict among the characters, structure dramatizes the emotion and the narration drives the actions while pushing the story's development. The overall effects of Desai's manipulation of the passage are to show that lots of conflicts will arise when one attempts to challenge traditional social normality and authority.

Throughout the novel the author makes effective use of figurative language to intensify the dynamic of the conflict. For example, "...like a vast movement of the spheres" (Desai, 57). Here the use of simile stresses on the mother's sudden and complete change of stand point. Another example of simile occurs is "...like a hand runs over an animal's dark fur to expose a silvery underside" (40). Here simile compares wind running over the foliage to hands running over animal's fur. This depicts the beauty of the nature and the sense of comfort and belongingness that Sampath feels. Beside simile, hyperbole is used throughout the passage as well. For example, hyperbole is used in the sentence, "try to move a mountain before you try to move me" (36). The effect of hyperbole in this sentence is to dramatize the conflict between Sampath and his family. It also conveys the enormous authority parents have over their children under traditional social values. Similarly, hyperbole is used in the sentence "you are the number one most strange mother in the world" (55). Here hyperbole depicts the father's sudden astonishment and embarrassment when he sees Kulfi shows sympathy instead of standing on his side.

Within the context of passage, the use of sensory imagery enables the reader to experience the nature and the conflict the characters are going through. "The fruit

acquiring the tang of the wilderness" (20). The author's use of visual imagery here visually describes the site as old and abandoned. This sharply contrasts with university research forest mentioned later in the sentence, which is cultivated and regionalized. This juxtaposition further simulates the conflict and individuality in the story. Another example for visual imagery occurs in "...his legs dangling beneath him" (27). Here visual imagery vividly portrays Sampath's enjoyment of being alone in the nature despite huge social pressure on him. The effect of this is one can visualize the mental process and dilemmas within the mother's mind and ultimately how it leads a sudden change in her attitude. "Look at your thin yellow face!" (45). Here the use of visual imagery depicts the family's perceived illness that Sampath has. However, instead of Sampath feeling uncomfortable, it is actually the family who are feeling embarrassed, the author writes "rubber slippers slapping against their heels" (16). The author's use of alliteration emulates the sound created when they are running. The continuous repeat of 's' sound enables the reader to image how desperate the family is. The overall effect of the structure used in this passage is to drive the action in the story and to dramatize emotion.

As the story develops, the paragraphs start to break up to short and fragmented ones. This emulates the conflict development within the context of the story. The punctuations also help achieve similar effects still, he was silent. The author's use of comma stresses the stillness and pauses in the conversation, making the rest of the words stronger and more powerful.

Within the context of the novel, third person and present tense are used. Third person preserves the neutrality of the passage while present tense allows reader to access the thoughts within the characters. The prose passage from *Hullabaloo* in the *Guava Orchard* describes Sampath who has climbed a tree and his reluctance to come

down despite persuasion from most of his family members. Through the use, figurative language, sensory imagery, structure and narration, the passage develops the theme that social conflicts often arise as a result of people trying to behave outrageously. As a result of the author's skilful use of literary techniques, the reader is likely to realize the fact that standing against traditional values and social norm requires courage and determination.

*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is a tale of a young man named Sampath Chawla who lives in the town of Shahkot, India. He is born on the night a severe drought ends when a ferocious monsoon sweeps over the region. Immediately following his birth, the Swedish Red Cross makes a food drop right front of Sampath's house. The people in the community of Shahkot are convinced that Sampath is destined to be an important man. Not only does he bring on the much-needed rain, he causes the Red Cross, flying over Shahkot, to drop food for the hungry people. Sampath's eccentric mother and demanding father are not so sure about their baby becoming a great man. To Kulfi, his mother, he is an odd-looking alien with a large brown birthmark on his face.

Twenty years later, Sampath has not yet lived up to the prediction of greatness. In fact, he is anything but great. His father tries to counsel him on how he can get a better job or at least a raise in salary at the Post Office where he works. Sampath pays no attention to his father's advice. At the Post Office. Sampath spends hours alone, steaming open letters written to and from neighbors and by so doing, he learns a great deal about their personal lives and their secrets.

Not surprisingly, Sampath is fired after disrobing and mooning those gathered for his boss' daughter's wedding, Kulfi feels sorry for Sampath, with whom she feels a great connection, and gives him a fresh guava. After he eats it, he immediately feels

energized and transformed. With no job and no prospects of one, his father is frantic and orders his son to immediately go job hunting, Sampath has other ideas and decides to run away. He bolts off the bus to an attractive orchard he sees in the distance. He climbs a beautiful guavatree and decides that he belongs there. After discovering where their son is the family tries to intervene and get Sampath to climb out of the tree and come home. Only Kulfi tells the others to let him be. Sampath announces he is staying in the tree. He becomes known as a great hermit who is wise and all knowing. The citizens are convinced of his supernatural abilities when he alludes to private matters in their lives information that he took, unbeknownst to them, from their own letters.

A great controversy develops about the monkeys who live in the guava tree with Sampath. The large monkeys attack people and often steal alcohol and get very drunk. The town officials are determined to rid the town of the monkeys but Sampath decides to save friends. How he saves them is both surprising and magical. When his father looks for him, he finds a large guava in his place with a brown mark on its skin. Sampath is able to save the monkeys and find a new home for himself; Sampath's dream to become part of the nature becomes a reality.

Kiran Desai's *Hullabaloo in a Guava Orchard* begins with a period of water scarcity during which the dreams of Kulli Chawla dreams of food and water surpluses sustain her through the final months of her pregnancy. In the beginning of the narration we read about the search to find explanations for the mysteriously prolonged drought affecting the village. The theories range around the globe, from volcanic ash in Tierra del Fuego to coastline currents in West Africa to shifting molecular structures of polar ice caps to an Iraqi attempt to steal India's longed-for monsoon in the novel. From this initial, international expansiveness, the novel settles into a localized cause for the hot, dry weather, a gesture that would seem to dismiss the wider context in which it began.

Seeking a solution to this gap between individuated human experience and weather, the novel implies causal or analogical links between Kulfi and the drought. The narrator imagines an improbable symbiosis between one person and a pervasive weather condition. She grew larger as it got worse and later "She seemed to be claiming all the earth's energy for herself, sapping it dry, leaving it withered, shovelled, and yellow"(3). As an enormous monsoon finally breaks the record longdrought in their backwater village of Shahkot, Kulfi goes into labour and gives birth to Sampath, the family's first-born son whose arrival in the village no one will ever forget. The rains immediately flood the streets and homes of Shahkot while a Red Cross plane loses one of its aid packages above the village dropping the case into a tree just outside of the Chawla's home.

Sampath was born at a moment of natural, localized, and material non-governmental surplus. This story stands as the structural miniature of the narrative's larger focus, which is the story of Sampath's retreat from the town into an overgrown guava orchard where he becomes unwittingly a local guru who gamers national fame and eventually enacts a metamorphosis that frees him from the strictures of his environment and the worship of the local residents. Resources, scarcity, and surplus are always in focus in the novel, from the lack of rain and abundance of powdered milk tins in the beginning to the clandestine engineering of sustained water and electricity to the orchard through its conclusion. Desai contextualizes subtly Sampath's flight to the orchard as contemporaneous with Coca-Cola's return to India in 1993. The beverage giant's presence in India was marketed as part of the country's move towards economic liberalization. Since then, environmental activists have drawn repeated attention to the extreme draining of water resources by Coke's bottling plants located in rural and semi-urban regions in the country.

Like *Kulfi* and then like *Sampath*, *Coca-Cola* symbolizes a new beginning for the village rains and a guru and like the multinational corporation, they also draw all local resources into themselves thus impoverishing the areas around them. The orchard space signifies allegorically the inevitable resource crisis imposed on nations in the global south by multinationals. Desai's novel remains focused on the local confines of an orchard outside a small town in Northern India, but reading the narrative as an allegory of globalization in the region expands its critical reach drawing it into the ongoing theorizations of world or global literatures.

Although born in India, Kiran Desai, daughter of novelist Anita Desai has spent much of her adolescent and adult life in the U.S. Members of the Indian press characterized her as an outsider to her 'home culture' who submitted to a Western desire for arranged marriages, spices, and exotic foods to make Indian fiction digestible. Although Desai considers her work a product of an expatriate's nostalgic longing, her 'home culture' critics read that nostalgia as a marketed exoticism of the kind that Graham Huggan and James English critique in their respective studies on the consumer industry of global literature. Desai's second novel, the Booker Prize winning *Inheritance of Loss* has garnered much and inspired substantial literary criticism consigning *Hullabaloo* to the shadows of its later-born, more worldly sibling. Unlike the comic, satirical, parochial, and eroticist *Hullabaloo*, *Inheritance* is materially and thematically a novel that exemplifies our contemporary naming of world literature. While *Inheritance* takes the global movements of bodies, commodities, and ideas as its primary narrative focus, *Hullabaloo* appears to occupy more local and less contemporary terrain. *Inheritance* belongs to the body of work produced by global Anglophone writers who address the key issues of migration, globalization, and human rights directly, but there is another strain of writing from these figures that takes on

these issues in indirect ways and thereby sheds greater light on the plight of local populations whose sufferers often lack the means to insert themselves into narratives of massive migration.

Sampath's transformation at the end of the novel and his close association with the monkeys imagine a post-human alternative liberating himself of human form and taking to the forest. The atheist spy's accidental fall at the end suggests another alternative: the gruesome possibility of cannibalism literalizing the metaphor of exploitative consumption.

So, the novel presents diametrically opposed possibilities and neither holds the human subject as an inviolable centre of the drama. Either consume each other or escape into a radically reoriented post human community and way of being in the world. Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard may seem to only develop a narrative around a brief Times of India item on a hermit who climbed a tree, but it also suggests and illustrates ways in which localized literature set in the Global South operates allegorically as global literature dramatizing the effects of multinational capital on rural and semi urban spaces.

The novel's critique of globalization also reveals a subtle engagement with post coloniality. Kulfi's minor efforts at resistance emerge alongside Sampath's more radical actions which reflect the varied environmentalism of the poor that has developed in response to Coca-Cola's presence in the Global South. Amanda Ciafone, famous critic, sees a link between the local global resonances drawn out of the Quit Coca-Cola movement and global literature: India's rural poor have also catalysed an impressive local, national, and transnational social movement, linking their struggles with others through Coca-Cola's world system of capital, commodities, and culture that resulted in the creation of multinational pressure on the multinational corporation and in the

footnote that follows this section she identifies mortise and Casanova as global literature and world system theorists who inspired her reading of Coca-Cola's functioning at the local and global levels.

The novel does not include a version of grassroots resistance to the growing capitalist endeavours of Mr. Chawla and Sampath's complicity with them. However, several characters dream of escape from the orchard imagining a new set of relations or a new community as an alternative to the increasingly capitalistic space of the orchard. Pinky thinks of eloping with the Hungry Hop Ice Cream hoy, which symbolizes a retreat into local, comestible products rather than the rarefied and hackneyed spirituality of guru wisdom.

Kulfi imagines herself as an all-powerful imperialist, drawing the most distant animals into her culinary experiments. Sampath himself transforms into a guava and is carried off by a band of monkeys who adopt him into their group. The commodifying and wealth accumulating forces which lure the monkeys, the atheist spy, and an ever more adventurous Kofi into their long-term settlement in the orchard are the very forces which catalyse the radical human transformation that imagines symbolically a post humanist alternative to the impoverishing and extractive practices of multinational capital. Thus, the spectre of difference that is carried within the homogenizing principles of Mr. Chawla's profit are post human possibilities of the gruesome and fabulous variety. While Sampath becomes a guava, the atheist spy falls into Kulfi's cooking pot opening up the possibility of cannibalistic consumption in the orchard. Just as one human finds an alternative community through a radical subject transformation, another human's fate literalizes the violence committed in the name of globalization's profits. Although this small novel ends with a look into a cooking pot in an orchard outside a small town in Northern India, its symbolic scape looks out onto a global

horizon.

This novel is based on Indian culture, which discusses several social environmental problems. We know that India has faced and now also facing many environmental problems such as Bhopal tragedy, issues of Coca-Cola, depletion of wild life and forest. Thus, environmental problems in India are increasing day by day, the greed of human beings is the cause for this destruction. Gandhi said, "nature contain all the elementsfor our need but not for our greed" (Desai, 36). Ecocriticism plays major role in these current phenomena of environmental crisis.

Ecocriticism safe guards the values and talks about the problem of nature.

*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* written by Kiran Desai in an ecocritical perceptive shows us how human beings are beings one with nature, as nature determines his origin and end this novel delivers a message that when human beings realizes the value of nature, we would realize that we are part of the mother nature.

## Chapter Three

### Ecocriticism in *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*

Nature is omnipotent and man being a part of nature is dependent on it for everything. As literature is a reflection of life, the literary writers reflect man and his life in the background of nature where the writers provide description of nature, the characters love and attitude towards the nature in their works. This portrayal of nature is employed in the novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* written by Kiran Desai where Sampath, the protagonist, is fed up with the hectic town life and leaves the place to be alone feeling oneness with nature. Thus the project is based on the ecocritical study of the novel. Ecocriticism in literature is the most comprehensive of man which evokes response from experts who create, appreciate and evaluate it ecocriticism questions human about interaction with nature while also motivating audience to live within a limit that will be binding over generations. Ecocriticism is also known as eco-poetics, green studies and environmental literary criticism. Ecocriticism investigate the underlying ecological values and examine human perceptions of wilderness and how it has changed throughout history. It highlights whether current environmental issues are accurately represented or at least mentioned in popular culture and modern literature.

Ecocriticism is very relevant in the present scenario. This novel discusses about many social and environmental issues in India. In this project the novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is read in the eco critical ground. Sampath is the protagonist of this novel who lives for nature and also protects lives of monkeys. Sampath, craving for another world after his failure at home and work is the central theme of the novel. He was lazy and lethargic bothering about nothing and wishes live to his life with his own whims and fancies. Though he was tormented at his home and also at his work place, Sampath has enjoyed his time alone with his devices which made his completely forget

his work at his post office and his sleepless night at home. Sampath was disturbed and was quite unlike others as he was fed up with his routine way of living. To him life was a never-ending flow of misery since he was able to fill only little as he wished. So he always wished to explore things of his own interest for instance in his chief daughter's wedding Sampath was allotted the duty to fill in the sorbet glasses. But he felt very boring to do the work. So, he wished to look around the house where he came into the room piled with wedding finery. On seeing his fineries Sampath's heart grew light with the fragrances of rose water, scent of musk, moth balls, marigolds and baby powder.

He held the fabrics close to his cheek and swathed lengths of pink, green and yellow around himself. He examined the jeweler box of cousin sister and wore a nose ring. As the room was dark, Sampath lit candle to view himself in his fineries and he metamorphosed him to a glorious bird where he felt far away lifted to another. Within this frame Sampath felt sudden sharp longing for imagined world which was deep within himself and last Sampath ventured out of his fineries. Encouraged by the atmosphere he felt floating some groundless state. He waded into the fountain spraying and splashing water on the ladies. As a result there was a whole lot of confusion amidst the crowd and Sampath started disrobing his clothes mistaking the cries of audience for admiration. Thereby he returned home jobless for his ill behavior. But Sampath did not want his job and the desperate way of living anymore. He wanted an open space and to be left alone, Sampath's oneness with nature inspired his thought to get freedom, Sampath made his way out of his town.

He climbed up a guava tree in an orchard where he could feel the freshness of greenery and the air thin around him. Sampath felt that silence had held between its branches and the moment he settled among the trees, the spirits that had carried him so far and so high had melted into nothing and he was amazed. The orchard matched the

imagination all his life. It filled his whole mind and he wondered if he could get enough of it. Sampath thought:

This was the way of riches and this was a king's life, he thought...and he ached to swallow it whole, in one glorious mouthful that could become part of him forever. Oh, if he could exchange his life for this luxury of stillness, to be able to stay with his face held towards the afternoon like a sun flower and to learn all there was to know in the orchard, each small insect crawling by, the smell of the earth thick beneath the grass; the bristling of leaves: his way easy through the foliage: his tongue around every name. (51)

So at last Sampath believed that has was in the right place. Here Sampath's love for nature is revealed in an exotic way. Unexpectedly Sampath on the guava tree became the hermit on his tree top hermitage. He was respected for his austerity and simple life and his words, nature and the atmosphere in the Orchard made him the Babe. But Sampath's father, Mr. Chawla, was commercializing hisson's popularity to make his family's fortune. The reputation of Sampath grew until the monkeys arrived to the orchard. When they arrived first, Sampath turned their dirty games back to them: hooting, howling and rolling his eyes and this made the monkeys get impressed identifying Sampath "as the nucleus if this bountiful community they had come upon" (124). But things went upside down when the monkeys developed an unquenchable interest for liquor which made them resurface their old bazaar habits. As a result, there arose a serious law and order problem in Shahkot of the religious degree where there were two groups. One suggested that the monkeys should be removed to save the Monkey Baba and the holy atmosphere of the place, the other group wished to save the sacred animal. Whereas Sampath thought that all the fun teasing and game would

disappear in his life if the monkeys were removed from the orchard. But a day was set to catch the monkeys and send them to a far-off place where it would not return and could not obtain any liquor.

Sampath realized that his life in the orchard was in danger and the atmosphere in the orchard had disintegrated as there were no more gentle evenings. He found no help from anybody and he had thought of that how much had changed since he first arrived to the orchard. The orchard had become more and more like the place he had left: noisy, messy and untidy. Ugly advertisements defaced the neighbouring trees and smelly garbage spilled down the hillside grew larger every week. Also, the cry and buzz of angry voices made him remember his town life which was creeping up upon him again. Sampath considered himself, his mother and the monkeys were a band together and he was not ready to let the company break. The narrator describes that they were getting rid of his favorite company in the orchard. Thus Sampath reflects the degradation of nature from its glorious path. He who once felt happy for his environment in the orchard, later regretted for its absurd transformation.

On the day set to trap the monkey, Sampath was asked to climb down the tree. But he realized that if he climbs down once, it would not be possible to climb up again. Ultimately Sampath realized that he was trapped and he wanted to escape. Earlier Sampath left his home for the orchard in search of peace and to be alone where he found oneness with nature, but he was followed by his family and later the crowd. Now he was unprepared to get down the tree and was not sure that he could find a better place than the orchard when he first arrived which inspired and suited all his imagination. So Sampath was found dead in his mother's cooking pot.

Everything was going on finely until the monkeys - the permanent inhabitants of the guava orchard - get addicted by liquors and in their stupor, they start ravaging the

town. This singlemost action runs throughout the text and it ends up almost surrealistically, with miraculous disappearance of Sampath from his dwelling cot. In an interview, Kiran Desai admits that the story of *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* was inspired by a realistic event. She started with a very small idea based a real story in The Times of India and heard about a character from many people, a man who was a very famous hermit in India who really did climb up a tree, who lived in a tree for many, many years until he died. So, Desia began to wonder that it was about someone like this who would do something as extreme as to spend his life in a tree. So, it started really with that character, and then the story built up around it.

The novel begins with Mr. Chawla reading a report in a newspaper about a prevalent draught in Shahkot. After reading the report, Mr. Chawla is engaged in sorting out the probable causes for the drought and problems have been located in the cumulus that has become overly heated. It is all a result of volcanic ash thrown up in the latest spurt of activity in Tierra del Fuego. And a little later he reported to whoever might be listening: The problem lies in the currents off the West African coastline and the unexplained molecular movement observed in the polar ice-caps. And, Iraq attempts to steal monsoon by deliberately creating low pressure over desert provinces and deflecting winds from India. And even Hungarian musician offers to draw rain clouds from Europe to India via the music of his flute. This sort of rumour, reporting several causes behind that utter dryness, is the specifically set backdrop against which the novel begins. The setting of the story is in a small town, Shahkot where the weather is intolerably hot.

Many people suggest offering a variety of probable solutions: Mr. Chawla himself submitted a proposal to the forestry department for the cutting and growing of vegetation in elaborate patterns; the army proposed the scattering and driving of clouds by jet planes flying in a special geometric formation; the police a frog wedding to be

performed by temple priests.

Varmaji of the university invented a giant fan which he hoped would attract the southern monsoon clouds by creating a wind tunnel moving north toward the Himalayas. In short, everyone is worried about the uncertainty of immediate monsoon. The unbearable heat and dry condition depress the local people. This detailed description of the dry and hot weather at the beginning of the novel is important because it is related to the year of birth of the chiefprotagonist Sampath by late September the heat and lack of rain combine to produce terriblecrisis. The condition degenerates to such an extent that relief camps are set up by the Red Cross Society in the west region of Shahkot. The ration shop fails to distribute adequate amount of rice and lentils, and the prices of essential commodities rise higher. The reasons given for such conditions are thus, both human and natural and the suggestions mentioned above are the products of human mind, hinged on the essential fantasy signifying a typical human penchant to believe in the farfetched ideas when trapped in natural catastrophes.

During this terrible crisis, Sampath is born as an auspicious sign to the Shahkotians. The connection between terrible condition of draught' and Kulfi growing bigger as it got worsthas the make-believe element in it. During the period of pregnancy, she is so enormously large as if to be claiming all the earth's energy for herself, sapping it dry, leaving it withered, shriveledand yellow'. Despite all cares and suggestions, Kulfi keeps on her practices. Her stomach larger, her dream of eating more extravagant. The house seemed to shrink. As she is fed up with the claustrophobic physical environment all around, she throws herself in the imaginaryworld of painting on the wall with a feeling bordering on hysteria. She is changed into a subject of oddity as termed by everyone. Obsessed with the idea of food, she keeps on reflecting in her past-time.

But Kulfi was not thinking of the baby in her belly like a little fish. She was thinking of fish themselves, of fish in many forms. Of fish big enough and good enough to feed the hunger that had overtaken her in the past months like a wave. She thought of fish curries and fish kebabs. Of pomfret, bekti, ruhi. Of shoals of whiskered shrimp. Of chewy mussels. She thought of food abundant in all its many incarnations. Of fenugreek and camel milk, yam and corn. Mangoes and coconuts and custard apples. Mushrooms sprouting like umbrellas in the monsoon season. Nuts, wrinkled in their shells, brown-skinned, milky-fleshed.

The whole description has an exotic and fantastic aroma in it. At one level it is an escape, and on the other it is a simulacrum of wish fulfillment. The two levels of reality: one which is there before her, and the other which she perceives are constantly intermingled in her unconscious, and at this point Sampath is born, his birth symbolizes the attainment of reality for Kulfi. These paranormal and freakish activities can be read as premonitions of something quite menacing for the baby. And this, no doubt, is an instance of a mystic deed:

All of a sudden a shadow fell across the sun and magically, as quickly as a winter's day tumbles into smoky evening and then night, the white-lit afternoon deepened into the color of old parchment as the sky darkened. Curtains billowed white out of every window. Bits of newspaper and old plastic bags turned cartwheels in the indigo streets. The air thinned and stirred in a breeze that brought goose bumps out upon her arms. Look!

Kulfi shouted. Here comes the rain! (9)

Kulfi is the first person to predict the coming of rain. She, in this way, can be compared to the Mother Nature; pure, slender, delicate and disheveled. Whereas, Kulfi can be delineated after much deliberation from the fruit stall. When Sampath fails to

get any government job, his father calls him 'a cross between potatoes and human being. For Sampath, the civilized world of mankind is too restrictive and lacks the pleasure of experimentation or doing something new. He feels bitter at heart and thinks that his surroundings are detrimental to his mental health. He realizes that he can live the life of blissful solidarity only by escaping from the civilized World of men. His search for a new direction in life is described through snake imagery:

Sampath thought of snakes that leave the withered rags of their old skins behind and disappear into grass, their presence unbetrays by even a buckle in the foliage: of insects that crack pods and clay shells that struggle from the warm blindness of silk and membrane to belost in enormous skies. He thought of how he was leaving the world, a world that made its endless revolutions toward nothing. (48)

On leaving the buildings far behind, he feels the freshness of greenery bloom within his tired frame. Soon he leaps from the window of the bus and runs towards an old orchard visible far up the slope. Finally he climbs up a guava tree and settles among the leaves. In the branches of the tree he experiences calm and contentment, as the writer comments, yes, he was in the right place at last. Trees can never be the abode of human beings, for it is open to all sorts of hardships unbearable to a human being. But to Sampath, such a life is a heap of immense joy, he feels himself much closer to Nature itself and decides to spend all his life in plenty of its bountifulness:

Concealed in the branches of the tree he had climbed, Sampath felt his breathing slow and a wave of peace and contentment overtook him. All about him the orchard was spangled with the sunshine of a November afternoon, webbed by the reflections of the shifting foliage and filled with a liquid intricacy of sun and shadow. The warmth nuzzled against

his cheek like the muzzle of an animal. Before his eyes, fitting and darting all about him, was a flock of parrots, a vivid jewel-green, had to cash in my orders and chattering and shrieking in the highest of spurs. This scene killed his whole mind and he wondered if he could ever get enough of it. This was the way of lies and this was a king's life, he thought. (51)

In a Faustian like manner he even wishes to exchange his life for this luxury of stillness, To be able to stay with his face held toward the afternoon like a sunflower and to learn all there was to know in this orchard: each small insect crawling by the smell of the earth thick beneath the grass the bristling of leaves; his way easy through the foliage: his tongue around every rune. This binary between nature and culture, between abundance and restriction between limitlessness and liminality conjures up the essence of the text. The character of Sampath thus undergoes a complete change. From an inactive, depressed young man, he is transformed into a Baba' or 'Hermit of exceptional wisdom. He does not pay heed to any one; neither to his family members appealing several times to come back, nor to the woman brought before him for a supposed marriage and “Sampath looked down at the veiled woman standing underneath his tree and felt hot and horrified, tiredness rolled over him like a wave and, closing his eyes, he fell into a deep slumber, lodged in a fork in the guava tree.” (89)

Mr. Chawla is very unhappy to see his son choose a place like guava orchard to live in. He often rebukes Sampath calling him a monkey and a stupid unreasonable fellow: We must formulate a plan. Only monkeys climb up a tree... But for someone to travel a long distance just to sit in a tree was preposterous. It is none other than his mother who understands his stance, for Kulfi, through her son, could see an early reflection of herself, as if her own self-mirroring out to get away from the rule bound

society. Resolutely, she announces, let him be. Sampath first surprises the people beneath his tree by exposing the secret of Mr. Singh about his jewellery, Mrs. Chopra about her problem in throat, and a bald-headed man.

However, people take it as something spiritual on his part. They regard him as a remarkable man with exceptional character: Clearly there was more to this post office clerk than to ordinary mortals, in his eyes they had detected a rare spirit. The local newspaper introduces him to the world by publishing the same: Fleeting duties at the Shahkot post office, a clerk has been reported to have settles in a large guava tree. According to popular speculation, he is one of that unusual spiritual nature, his child-like ways being coupled with unfathomable wisdom'. The responses of Sampath to people's queries bring out amply his astuteness and magnetism. His maxims like phrases not only astonish the simple people but also puzzle them. Nature itself, her husband Mr. Chawla is always in his civilised mood, prescribing dos and don'ts appropriate for her, though she is least interested in such petty recommendations:

You must sit down and rest after any exercise, he advised. You must stand up and exercise regularly and diligently. Don't eat raw fruit anymore. Don't sing songs and tire yourself out. Don't drink tea on an empty stomach. Keep yourself extra clean. Wash your hair; take a nap, put your legs up in the air and do bicycling exercises. (6)

The implicit connection between the natural rain and Ka is best understood when one finds Kulfi enjoying the rain in the following manner, stretched out farther still, and further until the rain took up all the spice inside her head. She rings into the rain. Soaking wet, enjoying herself against the warming of precipitation. The rain continues and the storm still raging, rain pouring through windows that would not stay closed and flooding in beneath the doors, Sampath was born. As his face, with a brown

birthmark upon one cheek, appeared to the cheers of his family there was a roaring overhead that almost split their eardrums, followed by a vast crash in the street outside. Sampath's birth and birthmark on his face are taken as an indication of a spiritual identity of a godly persona. Rain is the traditional symbol of fertility and rejuvenation; it has a religious connotation in Hindu society.

When seen from a cultural point of view, it may be said that Sampath's birth preceded by rain is a means of salvation for the famine cursed land. The birth of Sampath is taken to be a miracle, a super natural agency born to save the land and the people.

Attempting to include Kulfi in their high spirits, the neighbors assured her that her son was destined for greatness, that the world, large and mysterious beyond Shahkot, had taken notice of him. Even people in Sweden have remembered to send a birthday present. People named him Sampath and they said that good fortune, though he might not be very plump or very fair, he was triumphantly and indisputably male.

Sampath is basically an idler and this is evident when one notes his action of watching a fly vibrate, the monkey figure in this story is related to Indian mythology. The Baba (Sampath) loves monkeys - their company, their pranks and feels absolutely at home when they play around him. According to the Hindu mythology, monkeys are the incarnation of the Hindu god Hanuman, and therefore Sampath's love for the monkeys connects him to great god Hanuman. Sampath calls the monkeys by various affectionate names such as you badmahes and shows his special affection for them. The reason that he is called a 'Monkey Baba' is because of his deep affection for the monkeys in the orchard. The monkeys however, add a touch of ribaldry to the holy situation in the guava orchard. Things become complicated when one day the monkeys in the orchard find five bottles of rum in the bag of a man who had stopped to see Sampath

on his way to a wedding. The monkeys consume liquor and become uncontrollable beasts. They leap from one tree to another, and in doing so fill the ground with twiggy debris. Seeing this activity of the monkeys, one of the devotees the orchard mentions. It is not the monkey's fault. Always men are the degenerated ones. The police come to rescue the devotees from the menace of the monkeys little could be done in such a situation.

Sampath's father, who has been exploring his son's new role of a 'messiah in order to gain commercial profits, feels threatened by the destructive activities of the monkeys and approaches the District Collector and the other top officials to make it clear that was their responsibility to do something about this disruption to sanctity and peace Shahkot. The SP, DC and other top officials, a CMO, a lady from a Monkey Protection society, a bird watching Brigadier from a local army outpost, a spy from the Atheist Society and the members of Sampath's family all get entangled in this muddle. All of them suggest different plans to catch the monkeys engaged in ravaging and looting throughout the town. Some propose to convince Sampath to get down from the tree, because they believe that Sampath is the idol of the monkeys and if he leaves the orchard then the monkeys will not find any inspiration to continue the destructive work. But Sampath is resolute and his reply shows his deep attachment with nature that "I am not going to live anywhere but in this tree," (98) said Sampath. And the monkeys are not drunk right now. They are only playing. When his father had gone he realized his heart was thumping. He could not get the horrible.

It is obvious that in the novel, Kiran Desai voices out the environmental issues through her protagonist Sampath, who expresses his love for nature, his oneness with nature and towards the end his empathy for the degradation of nature in the orchard. The novel also highlights the irresponsibility of man towards nature who does not know the

value of nature which has to be preserved and treasured. It reflects that each species have an important role to play in maintaining our ecosystem. It is a known fact that human activity is causing massive extinctions, inspire of the increased efforts on conservation, it has not been enough. The climatic change in the Arctic region is an evident of the rapid change in our environment which is threatening and quite dangerous to all the species. The Ganges pollution is another instance for the irresponsibility towards our responsibility in preserving our nature, Thus the eco- critical study of any work of art reflects the need of the hour and implies the necessity to take essential steps to preserve the nature in order to ensure the being survival and betterment

Reading from this perspective, Sampath's leaving of his own home, and his disagreeing at the end to leave the guava orchard can be critically looked from an eco-critical observing eye. It must be mentioned here that like other environmental novelists, Desai does not emphasize on anthropocentric prejudice against ecological loss, neither does she point out the issues of deep ecology or bio diversity. Rather she has shown here the piercing affair of habitat formation, how human addiction for alcoholic drinks can altogether bring about an extreme change in the entire ecosystem upsetting down its own design. Conceptualizing from this facet, this seemingly amusing tale thus becomes an envoy of ecocritical sagacity thought out of his mind "Leave this tree? Never. Never ever, he thought, his body trembling with indignation" (121) acting like a machine circled lower and lower over the bowl of fur that had been bought.

## Conclusion

Nature and literature goes hand in hand. The world of literature throngs with works dealing with beauty and power of nature. However, the concern for ecology and the threat that the continuous misuse of our environment poses on humanity have only recently caught the attention of the writers. The sense of concern has given rise to a new branch of literary theory, namely ecocriticism. The world is synonymous with society. Ecocriticism expands the idea of the world to include the entire ecosphere. Ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary criticism.

*The Hullabaloo in The Guava Orchard* gives a message to protect our nature to promote the sustainable development. This novel reveals the everlasting dependence of human beings and nature. Sampath is the representative of modern man who yearns for the gentle touch of nature.

There are not many novels in Indian fiction that deal with the theme of ecocriticism though nature has been used as a backdrop in many of the works. Even if nature is presented in any work, it is in a stereotypical way, as a silent presence, and also as to enable the mood and tone of the works. It is because a serious concern with ecology seems to be lacking in the works of the earlier writers. Ecocritical writers prefer to create awareness of the consequences of human action which damages the Planet's basic life support system. Kiran Desai's *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, in this sense of the term, can be regarded as an ecological work.

Species have an important role to play in maintaining our ecosystem. It is an own fact that human activity is causing massive extinction, in spite of the increased effort on conservation. Thus the ecocritical study or any work of art reflects the need of the hour and implies the necessity to take essential steps to preserve the nature in order to ensure the survival and betterment of beings.

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**DONBOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**SEXISM IN C.S. LEWIS' *THE LION, THE WITCH*  
*AND THE WARDROBE***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ALBIN.S.J**

**Register No: DB18AEGR039**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Twinkle Thomas

February 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Sexism in C.S. Lewis’ *The Lion, The Witch, The Wardrobe*” is a bonafide work of Albin. S. J, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. Twinkle Thomas

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Albin.S.J, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Sexism in C.S.Lewis’ *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Twinkle Thomas of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

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Albin.S.J

DB18AEGR039

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Albin.S.J

## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter One:</b>	<b>2</b>
Sexism	
<b>Chapter Two:</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Analysis of The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe</i>	
<b>Chapter Three:</b>	<b>22</b>
<i>Sexism in The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe</i>	
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Work Consulted</b>	<b>31</b>

## Introduction

The project entitled “Sexism in C.S. Lewis’s *The Lion, The Witch, The Wardrobe*” is a deep observing on the work ‘*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*’ trying to bring out the sexism that is hidden the characters of the novel, and try to evaluate sexist factors in the novel. The project is divided in to three chapters. The first chapter titled “Sexism” describes about the sexist movements, theories, gender differences and so on. Sexism may be defined as an ideology based on the belief that one sex is superior to another. It is discrimination, prejudice or stereotyping based on gender, and is most often expressed towards women and girls. The second chapter titled ‘Analysis of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*’ is a detailed analysis of the novel. The third chapter titled ‘Sexism in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*’ is the core chapter in this project, here sexism theory is being applied to the characters to prove that sexism is there in the novel by C.S.Lewis. The gender discrimination and also the fight for the equality also being discussed. More prominence is given to the female characters.

# Chapter 1

## Sexism

Unequal treatment of individuals based on their sex is probably as old as humankind. However, the social recognition that unequal treatment is discriminatory, and the ensuing notion of “sexism”, is far more recent. Long before gender inequality was recognized as a societal problem, early feminists such as Christine de Pizan in the 15<sup>th</sup> century in France, Mary Wollstonecraft in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Britain, and more recently Simone de Beauvoir, only to name a few, denounced the arbitrariness and the illegitimacy of the hierarchical organization of gender differences in the society.

Sexism is a form of prejudice or discriminatory treatment based on a person's sex (Ku 2010). The coinage of this term occurred in concomitance with the realization that the persistent social disadvantage of women urged a collective response. Until World War Two, the term “minority” typically referred to the numerical inferiority of national and linguistic groups. Only in the 50s its meaning made a significant shift to label groups that are inferior in status, or are stigmatized, such as women, people with disabilities, or the elder. Since then, the notion of minority has become “a general term for all groups subjected to prejudice and discrimination” (Meyers 1) This was also a starting point for the study of prejudice (Adorno et al. 1950; Allport 1954) and its underlying motivations originating in intergroup relations. The shift from biological approaches of sex differences to social and cultural ones urged a revision of concepts and terminology.

Differences between men and women that could be accounted for by stable biological factors are since denoted with the term sex, while differences due to more malleable cultural factors are denoted with the term gender (Deaux 1985; Unger 1979). An important discovery in empirical research was that social context moderates differences

that were thought to be rooted in the biological sex, thus making the term gender more accurate. As Deaux and Major write “Now you see them, now you don’t” (369), meaning that in certain contexts we observe differences in attitudes and behaviors between men and women, while in other contexts these differences vanish. A seminal experiment by Goldberg (1968) showed that evaluations of a piece of work varied as a function of the presentation of the author as female or male. Thus, it was not the actual competence of the article’s author that led to perceptual and stable differences in the article’s quality, but the observers’ precognitions in the form of gender stereotypes. Although Goldberg’s findings have suffered from a lack of replication (Swim et al. 1989) the idea of social context as an important moderator of sex differences crucially influenced the upcoming work. In virtually all countries around the world, men are in socially dominant positions relative to women (Glick 2006; Sidanius & Pratto 1999). From this observation, and drawing on the evidence of contextual effects on sex differences, most work on sexism has focused on the status differentials between men and women. It is of no surprise that the mere use of the term 'sexism' conveys the idea of discrimination against women, not men. Although there are incidences of sexism against men, that is reverse sexism, the consequences of gender discrimination are usually psychologically more harmful for the powerless (Schmitt et al. 2002). References to sexism against men are seldom (Ku 2010). The *Ambivalence Towards Men Inventory* (Glick & Fiske 1999) is one of the few attempts to measure sexist beliefs against men (Vandello & Bosson 2012).

Despite differences between the gender status-system and other long-term status systems, notably ethnicity, age, or social class (Fiske 2010), the study of status hierarchies has provided valuable insights for understanding how gender operates at a more general level (Lorenzi-Cioldi 2006; 2009; Ridgeway & Bourg 2004). The

assumption that men have higher status and greater power than women is central to many social psychological analyses of sexism (Wood & Eagly 2010). Stereotypic beliefs about men and women are firmly rooted in society's gendered division of labor, and therefore in the social structure (Guimond et al. 2013; Eagly & Steffen 1984). In general, less prestigious roles and occupational domains e.g., nurse ask for communal behavior, whereas more prestigious ones e.g., bank trader ask for agentic behavior. For instance, Johannesen and Eagly (2002) demonstrated that participants attribute to people higher scores of positive and negative agency, rather than communion, as a function of the target's professional status. The diffuse knowledge that men and women are unevenly distributed in the occupational hierarchy boosts the belief that, in actuality, men are agentic and women are communal. Accordingly, perceivers come to believe that men and women possess the personality characteristics that are required to perform their respective social roles. In contrast, when both genders were portrayed in an ostensibly similar occupational role, the impact of gender stereotypes was reduced (Eagly 1987). Likewise, Lorenzi-Cioldi (1997) demonstrated this pre-eminence of status cues in the interpretation of male and female behavior in a study in which participants rated two managers and two employees of each sex on agentic and communal traits. Participants matched the traits according to the targets' professional roles, rather than their sex, judging both male and female managers as more agentic than the employees.

First Phase: Following Terman and Miles' (1936) and Broverman et al.'s (1972) attempts to measure male and female temperaments and personalities, research produced much evidence about social attitudes toward the sexes. Jarrett and Sherriffs (1953) offered one of the initial attempts to assess, by means of a list of positive and negative behaviors, attitudes "toward the relative 'value' of men and women in our

culture” (41). The authors assumed that 17 of the items were stereotypically male “Proportional to their numbers, most responsible for auto accidents in 1939 were...”, 17 stereotypically female e.g., “Having the most understanding for the needs of children are...”, and 24 neutral.

Participants judged for each item if it was true for men or for women. Results showed that, overall, participants gave more favorable scores to men compared to women. This finding points to the intriguing fact that both men and women show similar tendencies to value the higher-status group. Sherriffs and Jarrett (1953) conducted another study with similar items, and concluded that “stereotypes are substantially the same whether held by men or by women.” (167). Moreover, they were surprised to find that only 5 of the 24 presumably neutral items were actually judged as neutral. They concluded that “virtually no behavior or quality escapes inclusion in either a male or a female 'stereotype’” (167). In an attempt to overcome some methodological deficiencies of these studies, McKee and Sherriffs (1957) asked psychology students to rate men and women on a series of adjectives. Overall, men were again evaluated more favorably than women, an effect that was even stronger among women than men, suggesting a consensual ascription of legitimacy to the gender hierarchy.

Second Phase: This historical phase is divided up in three generations of sexism measures. The first aims to reveal the content of hostility towards women; the second aims to measure hostility in more indirect ways in order to meet social desirability concerns that make people hide prejudice; finally, the current generation integrates the dynamics of ambivalent sexism.

First generation – Old-fashioned attitude scales. The 70s and 80s witnessed the

publication of a number of well-designed gender attitudes scales. These scales were widely used and translated into different languages, which allowed for the first time a comprehensive test of their reliability and validity. They can be considered old-fashioned because they measure traditional attitudes about gender roles and women's inferiority, notably in competence.

Second generation – Modern sexism scales. Gender stereotypes have been quite stable over time, and traditional expressions of hostile sexism in public discourse and sexual violence are still present in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nonetheless, in western societies, the restrictive nature of expectations about men's and women's social roles and behaviors has loosened up after the feminist movements of the 70s and 80s. Thus, more indirect ways of expressing sexism have become common. Two widely used instruments, *Neosexism Scale* (NS; Tougas et al. 1995) and *Modern Sexism Scale* (MSS; Swim et al. 1995) illustrate this renewal. Indeed, these instruments tap opinions about egalitarian practices, rather than asking plain questions about women's competence or gender roles. Tougas et al. define neosexism as a “manifestation of a conflict between egalitarian values and residual negative feelings toward women” (1995: p. 843; e.g., “Women will make more progress by being patient and not pushing too hard for change”; “Due to social pressures, firms frequently have to hire underqualified women”). Likewise, subscales from the MSS deal with the Denial of continuing discrimination e.g., “Discrimination against women is no longer a problem in the United States”, the Antagonism toward women's demands e.g., “It is easy to understand the anger of women's groups in America”, and the Resentment about special favors for women e.g., “Over the past few years, the government and news media have been showing more concern about the treatment of women than is warranted by women's actual experiences.”. Nonetheless, MSS still includes measures of the traditional, more

overt sexism e.g., “Women are generally not as smart as men”.

Third generation – Ambivalence. The above scales still represent clearly negative statements, either overt or more subtle. None of these measures managed to integrate the ambivalent nature of modern prejudice that was initially called into attention by Guttentag and Secors (1983). This requirement was met by ambivalent sexism theory (Glick & Fiske 1996). Central to this theory is the softer and friendlier type of sexism conveyed through benevolence. Traditional hostile sexism is characterized by its overtly negative nature that emphasizes women’s inferiority to men, whereas benevolent sexism emphasizes status differences by affectionate and patronizing behaviors (Glick & Fiske 1996; Rudman & Glick 2008). Benevolent sexism is potentially equally harmful as the hostile, but through a different process. Its ostensibly flattering and friendly nature conceals the underlying expression of dominance, making it more likely to be accepted by women (Moya et al. 2007). Benevolent sexism meets social norms that demand that men protect women. It legitimizes status differences, and undermines potential conflicts and tensions (Lau et al. 2008).

Hostile and benevolent forms of sexism occur most often side by side. Indeed, benevolence contributes to mask the negativity of hostility e.g., Barreto & Ellemers 2013; Swim et al. 2005. Thus, the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske 1996) includes a Hostile sexism subscale HS; e.g., “Many women are actually seeking special favors, such as hiring policies that favor them over men, under the guise of asking for 'equality'” and a Benevolent sexism subscale (BS). The latter has three subcomponents that correspond to the above-mentioned characteristics of benevolence: Protective paternalism e.g., “Women should be cherished and protected by men”, Complementary gender differentiation e.g., “Many women have a quality of purity that few men

possess”, *and* Heterosexual intimacy e.g., Men are complete without women”. Across 16 nations, Glick et al. (2004) found HS and BS to be highly correlated. HS predicted negative trait ascriptions to women, and BS positive trait ascriptions, thus supporting the view of prejudice as an antipathy plus an affectionate patronizing component.

Collectively, the measures described so far can be considered as explicit measures of sexism. In concomitance with these measures, various scholars have argued that expression of opinions is highly contingent on social desirability concerns. Furthermore, attitudes may not be consciously accessible. Self-deception may drive people to negate or hide prejudice, or simply be not aware of their actual prejudice. In the 80s and 90s, a variety of alternative, mostly implicit measures, were developed in response to these new challenges. The most popular measure is the Implicit Association Test. This computerized instrument was originally proposed by Greenwald, Banaji, and Nosek (Greenwald et al. 1998). Participants are asked to either press a key when two stereotypically linked words appear on a screen e.g., a female name and a feminine profession, or to press another key when there is no stereotypical association between the words. If reaction times are faster for stereotypical associations than for non-stereotypical ones, it is inferred that the individual is prejudiced. Other studies have measured unconscious non-verbal behaviors that express prejudice e.g., de Lemus et al. 2012. Overall, however, clear demonstrations of the ecological validity of such measures are still awaited. Sexism sustains social asymmetries in gender relations that typically advantage men. Sexist attitudes and opinions may produce discriminatory treatment such as unequal hiring and promotion practices, but also more extreme forms such as physical aggression and sexual violence. Past research has demonstrated a variety of detrimental discriminatory effects of sexism. The previous discussion of types of sexism is important because each of the types maintains gender hierarchies in

specific ways (Jackman 1994). In particular, it is important to distinguish between effects of hostile and benevolent sexism. One crucial difference is that HS is more easily challenged than BS. The sexist nature of benevolence is particularly difficult to identify as a corollary of discriminatory behavior (Barreto & Ellemers 2013; Kobrynowicz & Branscombe 1997). Women are themselves vulnerable to, and thus accepting, this persuasive influence style. Conversely, they may more easily confront hostility (Moya et al. 2007). Explicit exertion of power, and open acts of hostility, are more likely to fuel a motive for collective action and protest e.g., Becker & Wright 2011. HS is therefore only effective if exercised infrequently (Bugental 2010), and/or when it is balanced with benevolence. Furthermore, recent research also suggests that confrontation of sexist behavior may have negative consequences on the evaluation of women (Becker et al. 2011), and that men judge as less attractive women who do not endorse traditional sexist beliefs (Montañés et al. 2013a; 2013b; see also Lau et al. 2008). Thus, confrontation of sexism is not an easy option for women.

Another consequence of hostile sexism is the so-called stereotype threat effect. Women perform typically worse in stereotypically masculine tasks e.g., a math test as their gender membership is emphasized, even by means of subtle reminders e.g., Spencer et al. 1999. However, similar damaging effects occur with benevolent sexism. A growing body of experimental evidence demonstrates that benevolence is harmful for women's feelings of competence and even actual performances (Dardenne et al. 2007; de Lemus et al. 2012; Moya et al. 2007; Vescio et al. 2005). Women may underperform because of their fear of negative treatment if they reveal good performances. Agentic achievements by women are often judged as a violation of prescriptive gender stereotypes, and can thus lead to punishments, sabotage, and unfavorable evaluations, a phenomenon called backlash (Eagly & Karau 2002; Prentice & Carranza 2002; Rudman

1998; Rudman & Fairchild 2004; Rudman et al. 2012). Research on gender stereotypes has shown that the agentic descriptions of men match closely those of the normative white and healthy adults in general, whereas descriptions of women are embedded in group-specific, relational and communal characteristics. Accordingly, the ‘think manager–think male’ phenomenon shows that leaders in general are most often endowed with masculine, agentic characteristics. Female leaders must therefore face the conflicting demands of what it means to be a good leader and of what it means to be a woman. Role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau 2002), as well as the status incongruity hypothesis (Rudman et al. 2012), examine antecedents and consequences of perceived violations of gender or status expectations. To avoid punishment, women tend to adapt their behaviors, for example by negotiating lower salaries for themselves than for others, not promoting themselves in job-interviews, or hiding their performances. These behaviors support the status quo of the gender hierarchy, and contribute to ban women from prestigious and high-status activities (Rudman et al. 2012). Thus, sexism does not only impact women’s actual performances. It also leads to the downplaying, or the conscious hiding, of successful performances in traditionally masculine domains. Moreover, it has consequences on strategies for identity improvement. Indeed, if men pursue positive distinctiveness using agentic dimensions, women, in a parallel process, pursue positive distinctiveness using communal (status-irrelevant) dimensions. From the social identity perspective, this difference can be conceived of as a social creativity strategy whereby members of a low-status group achieve positive distinctiveness despite their negative standing in the social structure.

Finally, at a macro-level, it has been found that national averages in HS and BS are positively related to gender inequality indexes in those nations (Glick et al. 2004). Research shows that, especially in traditionally male domains, men consider that the

work domain is not suitable for women's qualities and competencies, whereas women accuse sexism targeted against them (Lorenzi-Cioldi & Faniko 2009). More generally, the impact of communal stereotypes on women's professional careers is revealed by the consistent and substantive negative correlations between family life and professional life. The corresponding correlations typically reach outstanding positive levels among men.

## Chapter 2

### ***Analysis of “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe”***

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe begins as four siblings (Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy) arrive in the country to escape the dangers of London in World War II.

Taking refuge with the middle-aged (and unnamed) Professor in his big, rambling house in the country, they are initially excited by the opportunities for fun and play they discover. One day, while exploring the house, Lucy accidentally finds her way into a wintry countryside completely unlike England, particularly because she's met there by the playful Mr. Tumnus, who tells her she's in the land of Narnia and invites her to tea. Later, however, he sadly confesses that he's under orders from the powerful White Witch (who rules Narnia and who has made it eternal winter, but never Christmas) to betray any human visitors to her. Lucy convinces him to let her go, and she returns through the wardrobe to the house, where she is surprised to learn that although she feels she's been away for hours, she's really only been gone a few minutes. She's also upset when the others, particularly Edmund, ridicule her story.

Sometime later, however, Edmund also finds his way into Narnia, where he meets the White Witch. Bribing him with sweets, and strangely intrigued by the fact that he has a brother and two sisters, she convinces him to come back as soon as he can and to bring his siblings. On his way back he encounters Lucy, who is excited that someone else has shared her experience, but whose joy turns to sadness when Edmund, giving in to his nasty side, tells Peter and Susan he and Lucy were only playing. Eventually, all four siblings find their way into Narnia, and Peter calls Edmund out for being a liar and for hurting Lucy's feelings. Edmund nurses a deepening resentment for Peter as the four children discover that Mr. Tumnus has been arrested by the Witch's

wolf police, and then are given shelter by a pair of friendly Beavers, who tell them that things are about to change in Narnia: the mysterious and powerful lion, Aslan, is “on the move” and will soon set things right.

Edmund slips away from his siblings and the Beavers and goes straight to the Witch, who reacts with fearful fury at his reference to Aslan and prepares to intercept him. Meanwhile, Edmund’s siblings and the Beavers flee to where they are to meet Aslan, and eventually encounter him in the company of several large and powerful allies.

Serious conversation between Aslan and Peter is interrupted by an attack by two of the Witch’s wolf police, one of which is killed by Peter and the other of which escapes. The next day, after her attempt to sacrifice Edmund for his treachery is interrupted by an attack of Aslan’s allies sent to rescue him, the Witch arrives for a conference with Aslan. After the conference, Aslan reveals that he has made an arrangement for Edmund’s life to be spared. That night, Lucy and Susan walk with the somber Aslan on his way to keep the arrangement. They watch in grieving horror as the Witch first humiliates him and then takes his life in place of Edmund’s. The next morning, however, Aslan returns to life, and leads his army into combat with the Witch and her allies, eventually defeating her. The novel’s final chapter reveals how Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy are all made kings and queens in Narnia and how their rule of several years ends when, in pursuit of a magical Stag, they find themselves drawn back into England ... only a few seconds after they originally left.

This first section of the narrative introduces the principle human characters (Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy), as well as the circumstances in their lives that set the story in motion and the actual beginnings of that story . Within that general introductory framework, there are several points to note. These include some clear

definitions of character (in particular the leadership of Peter and the curiosity and warmth of Lucy, both of which play key roles in the unfolding of the narrative), an engaging sense of mystery (found mostly in the descriptions of the room in which the wardrobe is found, and of the wardrobe itself) and, perhaps most importantly, the introduction of Narnia - the climate, the mythic/fairy tale sort of people that live there, and above all, the unexpected, magical sensibility of the land itself. In short, these chapters vividly, clearly, and economically establish both story and style, but do so with an engaging warmth, simplicity, and eye for the telling detail.

Other important elements of this section include several references to people, situations, and objects that play key roles later in the action. Perhaps the most significant is the reference to the White Witch, who is later revealed to be the novel's primary antagonist. Other similarly notable elements include the references to Mr. Tumnus being arrested and to Lucy's handkerchief, both of which foreshadow later events, as well as the introduction / development of the narrative's friendly, soothing tone.

The novel introduces one of the narrative's most intriguing elements – the fact that no matter how long someone has spent in Narnia, they return to England only moments after they left. This aspect of Narnia's magic reappears only twice – in the following section, when Edmund and Lucy return from their mutual visit, and, most significantly, at the end of the novel, when all four children, having grown into adulthood in Narnia, return to England the same age as when they left. Aside from making the experience of being in Narnia even more intriguing and magical for the reader, there is the sense that this aspect of the story can also be seen as reflecting the narrative's exploration of the relationship between inner (spiritual) journeys and outer (physical) existence.

Another key element developed in this section is the portrayal of Edmund's nastiness, which is important for two reasons. The first is that it places him, more vividly than the other characters, at the beginning of an important journey of transformation – from being bratty and selfish to being compassionate and selfless. The second is that his nastiness sets up and defines the conflict between him and Peter. Edmund's resentment of Peter's anger in turn triggers Edmund's obstinate determination to punish Peter and the others by turning them over to the Witch. Also, in terms of Edmund, it's intriguing to look for a moment at Turkish Delight – a very sweet, rich, candy made of gelatin, flavorings, and other additives that very often leaves the person who eats it wanting more, in the same way as the Witch's promise of power and status leave Edmund wanting more.

Perhaps, the most important element introduced into the narrative in this section is the actual physical presence of the White Witch, whose power, greed, and evilness are subtly, yet clearly, portrayed. Both the reader and Edmund know that she is not an essentially good person. However, the reader does not fall under her spell like Edmund does. The Professor appears only briefly here and for another brief scene at the end of the novel, but he is both vividly and quite memorably portrayed, partly because of his sensible wisdom, partly because of his open-mindedness, and partly because he is in a significant way quite mysterious. He seems to know something about the situation being described by the children that he's not telling, a situation that, it could be argued, clearly relates to his previous experiences in Narnia. In some ways, he is one of those very welcome characters in children's / young people's literature: a wise, sympathetic, compassionate adult. Meanwhile, there are several other important elements in this section. These include the intensification of the conflict between Peter and Edmund (which leads to future developments in the plot, starting in the next

section), all four of the children making their way into Narnia (which is, arguably, the real start of the novel's primary plot), and the discovery that Mr. Tumnus has been arrested. Two important pieces of foreshadowing (Mr. Tumnus' fear and the reference to Lucy's handkerchief) pay off at this point. In the final moments of the chapter, the author very intriguingly juxtaposes a positive image of hope and possibility (the robin) with the more negative and pessimistic attitudes and commentary of Edmund. This placement of contrasting images, one next to the other, can be seen as an echo of a key aspect of the narrative's central conflict – the negativity associated with the White Witch juxtaposed with the ultimate possibility and hope represented by Aslan. This, in turn, can be seen as a representation of the Christ/Satan conflict which is at the centre of the novel's metaphorical conceit.

Several very important elements are introduced in this section. The first is the appearance of the Beavers, who are notable for several reasons. They are the first of Narnia's talking animals that the children encounter. They are also the first true allies all four children encounter. They are providers of several very important pieces of information. That information includes the revelation of what happened to Mr. Tumnus, the revelation of the thrones at Cairn Paravel and the prophecies associated with them, the revelation of the Witch's ancestry and, most importantly, the revelation of Aslan's impending arrival and identity. Aslan's arrival is easily the most important of all the many pieces of information, in that it sets up the novel's main conflict between what might be most easily described as the forces of good (Aslan) and evil (the Witch). The differences in the children's reactions to the mention of Aslan's name are noteworthy. They are very telling about the characters of the various children and their eventual relationships with Aslan.

Meanwhile, there are several important instances of foreshadowing in this section, including the reference to the Stone Table and the references to people who anger the witch being turned to stone. The first point to note about this section is the detail, mood, and atmosphere with which the author describes Edmund's journey to the Witch as cold, lonely, dark, and miserable. This is particularly significant when juxtaposed with the very different mood and atmosphere with which the author describes the journey of the other children –warm, in a group, bright, and increasingly happy. Another intriguing contrast between these two chapters and the two experiences they portray is the difference between the people encountered. Edmund encounters a hostile wolf and the White Witch, while Peter and the others encounter Father Christmas. Other important points to note in Chapter 9 include the references to the statues of the Lion and the Giant and the celebration of Christmas.

The latter functions on two levels. First, it is a sure sign, as Mr. Beaver says, that the White Witch's power is fading. On another level, it dramatizes the already intensifying, and powerfully looming, conflict between Aslan and the Witch. Finally, elements introduced in this section are the gifts given by Father Christmas to the children. Both the event and the gifts themselves are among the most vivid manifestations of the novel's thematic interest in gifts. Each of the gifts plays an important role in both the climactic battle between the armies of Aslan and the Witch and its aftermath. The first point to note about this section is the detail, mood, and atmosphere with which the author describes Edmund's journey to the Witch in Chapter 9 – cold, lonely, dark, and miserable. This is particularly significant when just apposed with the very different mood and atmosphere with which the author describes the journey of the other children warm, in a group, bright, and increasingly happy. Another intriguing contrast between these two chapters, and the two experiences they portray, is

the difference between the people encountered: Edmund encounters a hostile wolf and the White Witch, while Peter and the others encounter Father Christmas. Other important points to note in Chapter 9 include the references to the statues of the Lion and the Giant (references that foreshadow the important role that each of the reanimated statues plays later in the novel after Aslan has freed them) and the celebration of Christmas. The latter functions on two levels: one, it is a sure sign, as Mr. Beaver says, that the White Witch's power is fading. On another level, it dramatizes the already intensifying, and powerfully looming, conflict between Aslan and the Witch. The last, and perhaps most important, elements introduced in this section are the gifts given by Father Christmas to the children. Both the event and the gifts themselves are among the most vivid manifestations of the novel's thematic interest in gifts (see "Themes/Motifs"), with each of the gifts playing an important role in both the climactic battle between the armies of Aslan and the Witch and its aftermath.

The events of Chapter 13 are in many ways a preamble, a prologue, or a setup for the events in Chapter 14. While it is something of a surprise when, in their first meeting, Aslan and the Witch engage in conversation rather than a battle, there is the sense that the moment has been carefully contrived by the author in order to engage the reader in the greatest possible amount of suspense. In other words, the reader (like the children and the animals) are taken completely by surprise by this turn of events, triggering an intense curiosity in both about what's going to happen next. Meanwhile, it's particularly interesting to note that throughout both these chapters, not only does Edmund remain silent, but narration is also silent on what is going on in Edmund's head and heart.

In purely structural terms, it could be argued that the confrontation between the Witch and Aslan in Chapter 14 is the book's climax – the point of most intense

confrontation between the protagonist (Aslan) and the antagonist (the Witch). Granted it's not much of a confrontation, given that Aslan is essentially surrendering himself to her, but it is certainly a point of intense feeling, power, and confrontation for the Witch. Chapter 14 is the point at which the narrative of this story and the narrative of the Christ story intersect most closely.

The moment of Aslan's sacrifice and the moment of Christ's sacrifice parallel each other in almost every possible way, except one. Christ's allies, most notably the man who became Saint Peter, deserted him throughout his time of trial. Aslan's allies, in the form of Susan and Lucy, do not abandon Aslan. The revival of Aslan is next in the novel's series of climaxes. It is an even greater and more significant point of emotional intensity than his death in the previous section.

Before the narrative gets to that point, however, the author includes one of the most moving pieces of writing in the book. First, there is the description of Susan and Lucy's shattering grief and sadness. Then, the author describes the sunrise and Aslan's body being freed by the mice, with its barely suppressed hum of impending joy and freedom. The language used here is gracefully evocative not only of the new life about to erupt from Aslan and of the new hope being experienced by Susan and Lucy, but also the new hope in the book's metaphoric inspiration. Meanwhile, a more forceful expression of that same hope can be found in the destruction of The Stone Table, which can be seen throughout the novel as a representation of old ways of believing, acting, and connecting both sacrifice and redemption that, with the resurrection of Aslan, become no longer valid. Echoes of both the breaking of the Stone Table and Aslan's rebirth are found in the reawakening of the statues (including Mr. Tumnus) in Chapter 16. In the same way as the table of stone cracks down the middle and falls apart, the stone of the statues is melted into flesh by Aslan's breath, clearing the way for both life

and hope to be renewed. There are several amusing little vignettes, or small scenes, in this section, the lion's giddy happiness at being referred to as one of "us lions" by Aslan and the giant's well-intentioned but ultimately pointless use of Lucy's handkerchief. Both are moments of idiosyncratic charm and delight in the midst of the larger rush of joyful freedom surging through the narrative and into the climactic, triumphant battle with the Witch at the end of the chapter. The first point to note about this section is that the description of what happened in the fight between the two armies (Aslan's and the Witch's) takes place after the fact - that is, after the actual battle. This suggests that the author wanted to leave the details of the battle to the reader's imagination.

The second point to note also relates to the battle - specifically, Edmund's actions in confronting the Witch. Here he acts independently in a way he has never done before - yes, under previous circumstances (getting into the Witch's sledge, leaving the others at Mr. and Mrs. Beaver's) he acted independently, but where in those cases he acted from selfish motives (i.e. greed, a desire for power and status), in this case he acts with complete selflessness. Here it's interesting to note the contrast between his actions and Lucy's in the battle's aftermath. And finally, there is the coronation of the children, a moment which brings the book's main narrative line - the destruction of the White Witch - to a close.

The novel concludes with the narrative of a particular event in the children's adult lives, a piece of writing that might effectively be described as an epilogue, given that it takes place a certain distance of time after the conclusion of the story and shows a specific, story related incident in their lives. The first point to note here is the characters' names. Then, there is the reference to the lamp-post, important to note because it appears both at the end and at the beginning of the children's adventures. The

technical term for this is "bookending" - in the same way as bookends, placed at the front and back of a row of books, keep that row of books in order, so do images, moments, or elements such as the lamp-post appear at the front and the back of a story. Finally, there are a couple of important elements of foreshadowing, but not of elements of the current book. Instead, there are foreshadowing's/references to future books in the series, "The Chronicles of Narnia". The first is Susan's reluctance to explore beyond the lamp-post, a moment that foreshadows her (lack of courage? lack of adventurousness? lack of faith?) in continuing to believe in Narnia as an adult in the real world like the other children who had adventures there. The second is the Professor's reference to both Narnia and the prospect of going back. This not only indicates he's wise about life (i.e. that echoes and/or effects of experiences sometimes show up when one least expects them), but more importantly that he's wise about Narnia, again a foreshadowing of his appearances in later books in the series.

## Chapter 3

### Sexism in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*

C.S. Lewis's series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, has been hailed as a milestone of fantasy and a beloved line of children's books. However, like most great works, it has underlying meanings that are studied and, in some cases, criticized. Some so-called "hidden" messages aren't so hidden at all, such as the obvious Christian allegory throughout the series. Focusing on the first novel of the series, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, one of the many less blatant themes is sexism. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* not only has a sexist view of women, but also a negative prospect of feminism.

Lucy and Susan of the four Pevensie children are seen as inferior to their brothers in many cases. The family dynamic is male-centric. When Edmund realizes he is in the wrong, and that Lucy had been telling the truth about Narnia all along, he calls out to her with an apology. When she doesn't answer, he says, "'Just like a girl,' said Edmund to himself, 'sulking somewhere, and won't accept an apology.'" (Lewis, pg. 30) Edmund dismisses his sister's silence as an overemotional response, typical of the feminine according to him. This was after he had treated her so poorly in the past few days. He had openly mocked her about seeing Narnia, even though she had been miserable. Edmund is still somehow surprised that Lucy would be unwilling to accept his apology. This implies that Lucy should simply hide her pain and blindly accept the apology, and not dwell on it "just like a girl." As he and Lucy are about to leave Narnia to tell their siblings about the magical wardrobe, Edmund faces a difficult task. "But Edmund secretly thought that it would not be as good fun for him as for her. He would have to admit that Lucy had been right, before all the others..." (Lewis 43) Edmund

hates the idea of having to submit himself to admitting that his little sister was right all along. Doing so would have boosted her social status, and Edmund finds this unacceptable. So instead of admitting that Lucy was right, he decided to lie. With "a very superior look" Edmund shatters his sister's trust in him out of selfishness and greed. (45) While her brother Peter does defend against Edmund's verbal assault, he goes on to label her as "going queer in the head" and "turning into a most frightful liar." ( 45)

Susan is described as someone who is less than her brothers. She is seen in a weaker, more submissive light. When the four discover Mr. Tumnus the faun has been arrested and his house ransacked, she remarks, "'I wonder if there's any point in going on [...] I mean, it doesn't seem particularly safe here and it looks as if it won't be much fun either. And it's getting colder every minute, and we've brought nothing to eat. What about just going home?'" (59) However, her attitude is arguably the most practical. Four children with no supplies in a strange, snow-laden land. It would be difficult to imagine wanting nothing more than to return home, to the security of the familiar. She also appears to have the motherly role of the group, taking on a stereotypically female occupation. She is the one who suggests they put on the fur coats in the cold. Susan isn't seen as a warrior, but of a protector. While this is a valuable and noble position, one can't help but be somewhat bothered that a woman is given such a role.

On the other hand, her younger sister Lucy is determined to continue, as well as Peter, so she appears unadventurous and cowardly in comparison. Susan is seen as a weaker person when the children are attacked by wolves. She had managed to climb up a tree, yet, "Susan had not been able to get higher than the second big branch. One of her legs hung down so that her foot was only an inch or two above the snapping teeth. Peter wondered why she did not get higher or at least take a better grip; then he realized

that she was just going to faint and that if she fainted she would fall off." However, even Peter admitted that he "did not feel very brave, indeed, he felt he was going to be sick." ( 131) Yet he managed to fight the wolf anyway. When the wolf is killed and Susan gets out of the tree, Lewis goes on to say, "...I won't say there wasn't kissing and crying on both sides. But in Narnia no one thinks any the worse of you for that." (132) The fact that Lewis clarifies that it is acceptable in Narnia to cry signifies that being emotional (and thus, being stereotypically feminine) is unacceptable elsewhere, perhaps in the real world that the children came from.

Mrs. Beaver, wife to the beaver who helps the children, fits right in the female design. While she is a considerably minor character, she is worthy of mention. She is always seen using her sewing machine or preparing dinner with Susan and Lucy. Meanwhile, her husband is catching fish or repairing the dam with Peter and Edmund. When word gets out that Edmund has betrayed them and that the White Witch was on her way, she is nothing but a nuisance. She takes her time packing food and supplies, which angers Mr. Beaver and the children. While she does show a level of cleverness that her husband did not anticipate, her character is still portrayed as silly and bothersome. "Course we've got a hope. We can't get there before her but we can keep under cover and go by ways she won't expect and perhaps we'll get through." (101) She even suggests taking her sewing machine along, despite how cumbersome and impractical it would be. Perhaps her character is for comic relief and to build up excitement. The Witch is on the way, and Mrs. Beaver is stalling. However, making the entire party wait for her comes off as annoying. It appears that her personality is a mockery of a stereotypical woman, who makes things overly complicated and frustrating in a high-stress situation.

Arguably, the most convincing instance of sexism in the novel is the appearance

of Father Christmas. The Witch's spell is failing and Christmas has come again at last, and with it the spirit of gift giving. Mrs. Beaver receives a new sewing machine, which is unsurprising considering she spends nearly all her time in the book doing such "womanly" chores. Peter is given a sword and shield, while Susan is given a bow and a horn to call for help. Instead of giving Susan a sword of her own to defend herself, she is dependent on others for rescue. While Father Christmas gives her the bow and quiver of arrows, he makes sure to mention, "You must use the bow only in great need [...] for I do not mean for you to fight in battle." (108) Lucy had been gifted a diamond bottle, filled with "a cordial made of the juice of one of the fire- flowers that grow in the mountains of the sun. If you or any of your friends is hurt, a few drops of this will restore them." Once again, a female is given the position of protector, rather than warrior. In addition to the bottle, he gifts her a small dagger, to which Father Christmas warns, "And the dagger is to defend yourself at great need. For you also are not to be in the battle." Lucy, being the curious girl she is, asks for an explanation, as she considers herself "brave enough." Father Christmas answers, "But battles are ugly when women fight..." which could imply a number of things. (109) Father Christmas could mean that women are not skilled warriors, or that they belong healing and calling for help, hence the gifts he gives Susan and Lucy. This scene makes it very clear what C.S. Lewis believes, for Susan and Lucy stay in their expected roles.

*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* also has an outright negative opinion on feminism. The Queen, also known as Jadis or the White Witch, is the only female character with any sort of power and status, yet is evil and gets killed for her crimes. This is a metaphor for feminists; a woman should not seek power, and if she does she will be punished for it. She is a typical witch, abusing her power and using her magic for personal gain. She has a very important position in Narnia. "You know that every

traitor belongs to me as my lawful prey and that for every treachery I have a right to a kill... And so, that human creature is mine. His life is forfeit to me. His blood is my property." (142) The White Witch is basically "the Emperor's Hangman," executing all betrayers. This could be another symbol for women in power; if a woman is given a high-ranking position, she will ultimately seek more power for herself and become corrupt, like the Witch. It is also mentioned that the Queen is the daughter of Adam's first wife, Lilith. Lilith, though not mentioned in the Bible, was cast from the Garden of Eden because she refused to submit to Adam. Lilith has been used as a symbol for feminism.

C.S. Lewis's opinion is apparent when Mr. and Mrs. Beaver describe Jadis's origin. "But she's no Daughter of Eve. She comes of your father Adam's [...] first wife, her they called Lilith. And she was one of the Jinn. That's what she comes from on one side. And on the other she comes of the giants. No, no, there isn't a drop of real human blood in the Witch.' That's why she's bad all the way through, Mr. Beaver." (81) If the Witch is "bad all the way through," then Lewis must disapprove of the story of Lilith.

The Witch shows a deep hatred for all things that threaten her power. Even at the mention of Aslan, she responds, "If either of you mentions that name again, [...] he shall instantly be killed." (122.) Aslan is her superior, though she speaks of him as if he is below her. This is similar to a woman hating men because of her lower social status. The capture and humiliation of Aslan could be compared to a feminist rebellion against her oppressor, in which she gets revenge for his dominion over her. Jadis shaves his mane, a source of pride, and ties him up until he's helpless. Her followers taunt and demean him. However, though he is muzzled and unable to defend himself, they continue to bind him. "They began to drag the bound and muzzled Lion to the Stone Table, some pulling and some pushing. He was so huge that even when they got him

there it took all their efforts to hoist him onto the surface of it. Then there were more tying and tightening of cords. 'The cowards! The cowards!' sobbed Susan. 'Are they *still* afraid of him, even now?'" (154) Even with this dominance over her enemy, the Queen and her followers are still afraid to be near Aslan. This aversion is warranted, according to C.S. Lewis, since Aslan was such an adversary. This could signify that women should have a level of fear against men, and should be hesitant if not completely unwilling to rebel.

Though the book maintains a rather sexist opinion of women, it is imperative to remember the time frame in which the book was published. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* was first published in 1950. At this point in history, women's liberation was still far off, and old ideas of a woman confined to the kitchen and nursery prevailed. A good story attempts to relate to its readers, so creating a world with a society that mimics reality is common. Lewis can't be blamed for writing what was considered the social norm of the time. It wasn't out of a mere hatred or bias against women, it was the typical mindset.

With progression in civilization comes the progression of literature. Modern fantasy writer Terry Goodkind, author of *The Sword of Truth Series*, demonstrates contemporary views. In his first novel, *Wizard's First Rule*, Goodkind's description of the heroine is vastly different than Lewis's characterization of Lucy and Susan.

"Richard approached and stopped three strides away so as not to appear a threat. She stood straight and still, her arms at her side. [...] Her green eyes came unafraid to his. The connection was so intense that it threatened to drain his sense of self. He felt that he had always known her, that she had always been a part of him, that her needs were his needs. She held him with her gaze as surely as a grip of iron would, searching his eyes as if searching his soul, seeking an answer to something. [...] The intensity of her

gaze relaxed, loosening its hold on him. In her eyes he saw something that attracted him more than anything else. Intelligence. He saw it flaring there, burning in her, and through it all he felt an overriding sense of her integrity. Richard felt safe." (Goodkind 8) This woman is Kahlan Amnell, a very powerful figure in her homeland of the Midlands. The passage begins with Richard worrying over the woman's reaction, as if she'd run away in fear. Yet it is Richard who feels dominated by Kahlan's look alone. She is shown in a heroic light. Kahlan is calm and collected, standing with proper posture. It is stereotypical that a woman would feel secure around a man, but Kahlan exudes a power of protection all her own. Goodkind's portrayal of a strong female character is a reflection of the modern day, just as Lewis's.

Evidently, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* has sexist themes regardless of its childlike style. Lucy and Susan, the book's heroines, are given second-tier positions in this world. Peter and Edmund become more powerful and dominating, despite Edmund's treachery to his siblings. The White Witch is the only female with any sort of power and influence, and is killed for overstepping her boundaries. This can be linked with a discouragement of women's rebellion against men. While this novel is not what readers today would consider "politically correct" or "progressive," it is still a bringer of nostalgia for many people. It's created many young booklovers, unlocking countless enchanting worlds to them. Every book is flawed in a way; what's important is what makes them worthwhile. The female characters in the entire novel series that discussed in this study claims as sexist by many critics and readers. In this modern era, Lewis's ideas about hierarchy and male authority may be interpreted as sexist. For example, the male authority of Aslan. The male authority in *The Chronicles of Narnia* is dominant, in the beginning, when Narnia is established, Aslan only called creature with the male trait. It claims that Aslan believes that the male gender is superior to

female and able to become the leader for its people in Narnia. Where the female characters in the novel play a major role in the stories, they fight together alongside the male characters even though the female characters do not fight directly in battle. But, they become a support figure in the battle, which is an important character in battle too, such as Lucy that becomes a healer who heals the injured person in the battle with magic cordial. It is also clear that sexism which reflected to female characters in the entire novels series, is not only indicated by the author C.S. Lewis, but also the male protagonist in the novel itself. The claims of sexism by some other critics and readers will continue to attack The Chronicles of Narnia both now and in the future. In another sense, even though they realize that this novel looks or claims as sexist, there are still many people in the world who support and love this novel and feel that the amazing stories of this novel have influenced their lives in positive terms. Smart readers, when reading this novel, will certainly sort out to follow the positive examples they have captured while reading this novel series and avoid a negative one. For example, this novel teaches the reader to respect all people regardless of their gender and race in various ways.

## Conclusion

This project has been a critical examination of the novel "*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*" on the basis of sexism. This thesis has taken a critical lens as part of the larger goal of critical studies to mitigate harm on personal and cultural identity for women and minorities. Readers will take the racism, sexism and all and place it on a pedestal of belief. As previously stated in this thesis, there is little reason to believe that either readers or writers are consciously promoting an active agenda of discrimination. The issues of hidden sexism and racism are subtler, and much larger than the individual books. The morality associated with the novel by some exaggerates these issues and creates a conflation of these discourses with ethical belief, and the acceptance of the wholesomeness of the novel creates an unquestioning attitude towards the discourses in the book, that reinforces the continuation of imbalanced power structures.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE  
ANGADIKADAVU**

**PSYCHOANALYTIC ELEMENTS IN *OF MICE AND  
MEN* BY JOHN STEINBECK**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
For the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**ALEX BENADICT KUZHIPALLIL**

**Register No : DB18AEGR040**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor : Ms Anu DB

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# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “Psychoanalytic Elements in *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck” is a bonafide work of Alex Benadict Kuzhippallil , who carried the project work under my supervision . This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr Sarath Krishnan

Ms Anu DB

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

Declaration

I, Alex Benadict Kuzhippallil, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Psychoanalytic Elements in *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck “ has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Anu DB of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College .

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Alex Benadict Kuzhippallil

22/06/2021

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Alex Benadict Kuzhippallil

## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter One	2
Theory of Psychoanalysis (Theory of Id, Ego and Superego)	
Chapter Two	9
Of Mice and Men :Summary and Analysis	
Chapter Three	15
Theoretical Perspective of Of Mice and Men	
Conclusion	23
Works Cited	24

## Introduction

I had done a project. This project is about a literary work and the theory applied in it. The work is the novel *Of Mice and Men* written by John Steinbeck and the theory applied in this work is the theory of id, ego and superego formulated by Sigmund Freud. This project intends to study the unconscious human mind by analysing the minds of the characters in the novel *Of Mice and Men*. This project is divided into three chapters. First chapter is about the theory. Theory of id, ego and superego is explained in this chapter. Second chapter is about the summary of the novel. The story and themes of this novel are explained in this chapter. Third chapter explains how the theory is applied in this novel .

The central characters in this novel are George Milton and Lennie Small. The theory of id , ego and superego is applied in this novel by categorising each character in a particular mental state like George is linked with the mental state of superego and Lennie is linked with the mental state of id . Likewise the Freudian libidinal and sexual richness is being evident in the behavioural pattern and conversation among the characters. This project will end by explaining the unconscious human mind.

## Chapter 1

### Theory of Id, Ego and Superego

Sigmund Freud formulated the theory of id, ego and superego. Sigmund Freud was an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis. According to Freud human personality is complex and has more than a single component. In his famous psychoanalytic theory Freud states that personality is composed of three elements – the

id, the ego and the superego. These elements work together to create complex human behaviours. Each component add its own unique contribution to personality and the three interact in ways that have a powerful influence on an individual. Each element of personality emerges at different points of life. According to Freud's theory certain aspects of your personality are more primal and might pressure you to act upon your most basic urges. Other parts of your personality work to counteract these urges and strive to make you conform to the demands of reality. Here is a closer look at each of these key parts of personality, how they work individually and how they interact .

According to Freud id is the source of all the psychic energy making it the primary component of personality . The id is the only component of personality that is present from birth. This aspect of personality is entirely unconscious and includes instinctive and primitive behaviours. The id is driven by pleasure principle which strives for immediate gratification of all desires, wants and needs. If these needs are not satisfied immediately, the result is a state anxiety or tension. For example, an increase in hunger or thirst should produce an immediate attempt to eat or drink. The id is very important early in life because it ensures that an infant's needs are met. If the infant is hungry or uncomfortable they will cry until the demands of id are satisfied.

Young infants are ruled entirely by the id, there is no reasoning with them when these needs demand satisfaction. Imagine trying to convince a baby to wait until lunchtime to eat their meal. The id requires immediate satisfaction, and because the other components of personality are not yet present , the infant will cry until these needs are fulfilled. However immediately fulfilling these needs is not realistic always or even possible. If we were ruled entirely by the pleasure principle, we will find ourselves grabbing the things that we want out of other people's hands to satisfy our own cravings. This behaviour would be so disruptive and socially unacceptable. According

to Freud, the id tries to resolve the tension created by the pleasure principle through the use of primary process thinking, which involves forming a mental image of the desired object as a way of satisfying the need. Although people eventually learn to control the id, this part of personality remains the same infantile, primal force throughout the life. It is the development of ego and superego that allow people to control the id's basic instincts and act in ways that are both realistic and socially acceptable.

According to Freud, the ego develops from the id and ensures that the impulses of the id can be expressed in a manner that is acceptable in the real world. The ego functions in conscious, preconscious and unconscious mind. The ego is component of personality that is responsible for dealing with reality. The ego operates based on the reality principle which strives to satisfy the id's desires in realistic and socially appropriate ways. The reality principle weighs the costs and benefits of an action before deciding to act upon or abandon impulses. In many cases the id's impulses can be satisfied through a process of delayed gratification – the ego will eventually allow the behaviour but only in appropriate time and place. Freud compared id to the horse and ego to the horse's rider. The horse provides power and motion while the rider provides the direction and guidance. Without its rider the horse may simply wander wherever it wished and do whatever it pleased. The rider gives the horse directions and commands to get it to go where the rider wants it to go. The ego also discharges the tension created by unmet impulses through secondary process thinking, in which the ego tries to find an object in the real world that matches the mental image created by the id's primary process. Imagine that you're stuck in a long meeting at work. You find yourself growing increasingly hungry as the meeting drags on. While the id might compel you to jump up from your seat and rush to the break room for a snack, the ego guides you to sit quietly and wait for the meeting to end. Instead of acting upon the primal urges of

the id , you spend the rest of the meeting imagining yourself eating a cheeseburger. Once the meeting is finally over you can seek out the object that you were imagining and satisfy the demands of the id in a realistic and appropriate manner.

The last component of personality to develop is the superego. According to Freud, the superego begins to emerge at around age five. The superego holds the internalized moral standards and ideals that we acquire from our parents and society (our sense of right and wrong). The superego provides guidelines for making judgements. The superego has two parts : conscience and ego ideal. The conscience includes information about things that are viewed as bad by parents and society. These behaviours are often forbidden and lead to bad consequences, punishments or feelings of guilt and remorse. The ego ideal includes the rules and standards for behaviours that the ego aspires to. The superego tries to perfect and civilize our behaviour. It works to suppress all the unacceptable urges of the id and struggles to make the ego act upon idealistic standards rather than upon realistic principles. The superego is present on the conscious, preconscious and unconscious.

When talking about the id, ego and superego, it is important to remember that these are not three separate entities with clearly defined boundaries. These aspects are dynamic and always interacting to influence an individual's overall personality and behaviour. With many competing forces, it is easy to see how conflict arise between the id, ego and superego. Freud used the term ego strength to refer to the ego's ability to function despite these duelling forces . A person who has good ego strength can effectively manage these pressures while a person with too much or too little ego strength can be unyielding or disruptive.

According to Freud, the key to a healthy personality is a balance between the id, ego and superego. If the ego is able to adequately moderate between the demands of reality, id and superego a healthy and well adjusted personality emerges. Freud believed that an imbalance between these elements would lead to a maladaptive personality. For example, an individual with an overly dominant id might become impulsive, uncontrollable or even criminal. Such an individual acts upon their most basic urges with no concern for whether their behaviour is acceptable, appropriate or legal. On the other hand an overly dominant superego might lead to a personality that is extremely moralistic and judgemental. A person ruled by the superego might not be able to accept anything or anyone that they perceive to be bad or immoral.

Freud's theory provides one conceptualization of how personality is structured and how the elements of personality function. In Freud's view a balance in the dynamic interaction of the id, ego and superego is necessary for a healthy personality. While the ego has a tough job to do, it does not have to act alone. Anxiety also plays a role in helping the ego mediate between the demands of the basic urges, moral values and real world. When you experience different types of anxiety, defence mechanisms may kick in to help defend the ego and reduce the anxiety you are feeling.

Libido is a person's overall sexual drive or desire for sexual activity. In psychoanalytic theory libido is psychic drive or energy particularly associated with sexual instinct but also present in other instinctive desires and drives. Libido is influenced by biological, psychological and social factors. Biologically the sex hormones and associated neurotransmitters that act upon the nucleus accumbens regulate libido in humans. Social factors such as work and family and internal psychological factors such as stress and personality can affect libido.

Libido can also be affected by medical conditions, medications, lifestyle and relationship issues and age. A person who has extremely frequent or a suddenly increased sex drive may be experiencing hypersexuality, while the opposite condition is hyposexuality. A person may have desire for sex but not have the opportunity to act upon that desire or may on personal, moral or religious reasons refrain from acting on the urge. Psychologically a person's urge can be repressed or sublimated. Conversely a person can engage in sexual activity without an actual desire for it. Multiple factors affect human sex drive including stress, illness, pregnancy and others. A 2001 review found that on average men have a higher desire for sex than women. Sexual desires are often important factor in the formation and maintenance of intimate relationships in humans. A lack or loss of sexual desires can adversely affect the relationships. Changes in the sexual desires of any partner in a sexual relationship if sustained and unresolved can cause problems in the relationship. The infidelity of a partner may be an indication that a partner's changing sexual desires can no longer be satisfied within the current relationship. Problems can arise from disparity of sexual desires between partners or poor communication between partners of sexual needs and preferences. There is no widely accepted measure of what is a healthy level for sex desire. Some people want to have sex everyday or more than once a day ;others once a year or not at all. However person who lacks a desire for sexual activity for some period of time may be experiencing a hypoactive sexual desire disorder or asexual. Sigmund Freud who is considered as the originator of the modern use of the term defined libido as a quantitative magnitude of those instincts which have to do with all that may be comprised under the word love. It is the instinctual energy or force contained in what Freud called id, the strictly unconscious structure of the psyche. He also explained

that it is analogous to hunger , will to power and so on insisting that it is a fundamental instinct that is innate in all human beings.

Freud developed the idea of a series of developmental phases in which the libido fixates on different erogenous zones first in the oral stage, then in the anal stage , then in the phallic stage, through the latency stage in which the libido is dormant to its reemergence in the puberty at the genital stage. Freud pointed out that these libidinal drives can conflict with the conventions of civilised behaviour represented in the psyche by the superego. It is this need to conform the society and control the libido that leads to tension and disturbance in the individual prompting the use of ego defences to dissipate the psychic energy of these unmet and mostly unconscious needs into other forms. The excessive use of ego defences results in neurosis. A primary goal of psychoanalysis is to bring the drive of id, into consciousness allowing them to be met and reducing patient ,s reliance on ego defences. Freud libido as passing through a series of developmental stages within the individual. Failure to adequately adapt to the demands of these different stages to could result in libidinal energy becoming dammed up or fixated in these stages producing certain pathological character traits in adulthood . Thus the psychopathologized individual for Freud was an immature individual and the goal of psychoanalysis was to bring these fixations to the conscious awareness so that the libido energy would be freed up and available for conscious use for some sort of constructive sublimation.

In Freudian psychoanalysis the pleasure principle is the instinctive seeking of pleasure and the avoiding of pain to satisfy the psychological and biological needs. Specifically the pleasure principle is the driving force guiding the id. Freud used the idea that the mind seeks pleasure and avoids pain in his Project for a Scientific Psychology of 1895 , as well as in the theatrical portion of The Interpretation of

Dreams of 1900, where he termed it the unpleasure principle. In the Two Principles of Mental Functioning of 1911, contrasting it with the reality principle Freud spoke for the first time of “the pleasure – unpleasure principle or more shortly the pleasure principle. In 1923 linking the pleasure principle to the libido he described it as the watchman over life and in Civilization and its Discontents of 1930 he still considered that “what decides the purpose of life is simply the program of the pleasure principle.

## Chapter 2.

### Summary of the Novel

#### About the author

John Ernst Steinbeck Jr was an American author and the 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature winner “for his realistic and imaginative writings, combining as they do sympathetic humour and keen social perception. He has been called “ a giant of American letters “, and many of his works are considered as classics of Western literature. He was born on February 27, 1902. Steinbeck’s first novel, *Cup of Gold* published in 1929, is loosely based on the life and death of privateer Henry Morgan. It centres on Morgan’s assault and sacking of the city of Panama, sometimes referred to as the Cup of Gold and on the women brighter than the sun who were said to be found there. Between 1930 and 1933 Steinbeck produced three shorter works. *The Pastures of Heaven*, published in 1932, consist of twelve interconnected stories about a valley near Monterey, which was discovered by a Spanish corporal while chasing runaway Indian slaves. In 1933 Steinbeck published *The Red Pony*.

His next work was *To a God Unknown* named after a vedic hymn. Steinbeck achieved his first critical success with *Tortilla Flat*, a novel set in post-war Monterey,

California. Steinbeck began to write a series of “*California novels*” and *Dust Bowl fiction* set among common people during the great depression. These include *In Dubious Battle*, *Of Mice and Men* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. He also wrote an article series called *The Harvest Gypsies* for the *San Francisco News*, about the plight of a migrant worker. *Of Mice and Men* was a drama about the dreams of two migrant agricultural labourers in California. It was critically acclaimed and Steinbeck’s 1962 Nobel Prize citation called it a “little masterpiece”. Steinbeck followed this wave of success with *The Grapes of Wrath* based on newspaper articles about migrant agricultural workers that he had written in San Francisco. It is commonly considered his greatest work. *The Grapes of Wrath* was controversial.

Steinbeck’s New Deal political views, negative portrayal of aspects of capitalism and sympathy for the plight of workers, led to a backlash against author, especially close to home. Claiming the book was obscene and misrepresented conditions in the county, the Kern County Board of Supervisors banned the book from the county’s publicly funded schools and libraries in August 1939. This ban lasted until January 1941. Of the controversy Steinbeck wrote, “the vilification of me out here from the large landowners and bankers is pretty bad. The latest is a rumour started by them that the Okies hate me and have threatened to kill me for lying about them. I am frightened at the rolling might of this damned thing. It is completely out of hand; I mean a kind of hysteria about the book is growing that is not healthy”. Most of Steinbeck’s work is set in Central California, particularly in the Salinas valley and California Coast Ranges region. His works frequently explored the themes of fate and

*Of Mice and Men* is a novel written by John Steinbeck. The novel which takes place during the Great Depression, begins beside the Salinas river near Soledad in California where two migrant workers, Lenny Small and George Milton are walking to

a nearby ranch . They have recently escaped from a farm near Weed where Lenny , a mentally deficient yet gentle man was wrongly accused of rape when he touched a woman to feel her soft dress. As they walk along George scolds Lenny for playing with a dead mouse and warns him not to speak when they reach their place of employment. After they make up , George repeats to Lennie the details of their dream , where he and Lennie will raise enough money to buy a patch of land where they will have a small farm with vegetable patch and rabbit hutch. George tells to Lennie that if he gets in trouble as he did in the Weed , he should return to the brush near the river and wait for George to find him .

When George and Lennie reach the bunkhouse at the farm where they will work, an old man named Candy shows them their beds and tells them that the boss was angry that they didn't show up the night before. Soon the boss questions George and Lennie . He discovers Lennie's mental impairment and can't understand why George would travel with him until George lies that Lennie is his cousin. After the boss leaves , his son Curley enters the bunkhouse. Curley is a short man who hates larger men out of jealousy and insecurity; he has a new wife whom everyone suspects unfaithful. His wife visits the bunkhouse later that night searching Curley and flirts with other men. Later , Curley returns looking for his wife and attempts to start a fight with George. After a day of work the men return to the bunkhouse.

Slim, whose dog had a new litter of puppies gave Lennie one of them. George admits to Slim that he and Lennie escaped lynching when Lennie was accused of rape. Carlson complains about Candy's dog, a decrepit and stinking creature. He offers to shoot the dog and after repeated complaints Candy relents , despite his obvious wish to keep the dog . George complains about tarts such as Curley's wife and when the other men suggest that they visit the whorehouse next night, George says that he prefers the

company of whores , since with them there is no chance of danger. When George again tells Lennie about the house that they will have, Candy overhears. Candy offers to pool his money with their's if they allow him to work in their farm.

A bit later, Curley searches for his wife once more ; he attacks Lennie when he suspects that Lennie is laughing at him. Curley punches Lennie several times but Lennie never fights back until George gives him permission, at which point Lennie crushes Curley's hand. While other men are at the whorehouse Lennie visits Crooks, the black stable buck. Crooks is rude and contemptuous towards Lennie until he realizes that Lennie has no ill intent. Candy also visits the two men for they are the only men left at the ranch while others are in town. They discuss the plan for a new farm and Crooks shows some interest in joining them.

Curley's wife sees these men and seeks their company out of loneliness ; when Crooks tells her that she is not supposed to be in his room, she upbraids them as useless cripples and even threatens Crooks with lynching. The next morning Lennie accidentally kills his new puppy when he bounces it too hard. Curley's wife finds him in the barn with the dead puppy. She pities him and allows him to feel how soft her hair is. When he handles her too forcefully, she screams. Lennie covers her mouth and accidentally snaps her neck . After this killing, Lennie flees from the ranch. Candy and George find the body and infer Lennie's guilt.

Candy alerts other men and Curley forms a party to find Lennie and kill him. In the interim George steals Carlson's gun , leading the other men to think that Lennie took it before he escaped. George who points at Curley and other men in the wrong direction finds Lennie in the brush where he told him to return at the beginning of the novel. Lennie has been having hallucinations of a giant rabbit and his Aunt Clara; they

warns Lennie that George will be angry at him for killing Curley's wife and that he has lost the possibility of having a house with a rabbit hutch. George reassures Lennie that they will have the rabbit hutch after all, meanwhile preparing to shoot his friend with Carlson's gun.

Upon hearing the shot, the other men find George and Lennie. George tells them that Lennie had stolen the gun and that he shot Lennie after the gun got loose in a struggle. Steinbeck emphasizes dreams throughout the book. George aspires to be his own boss, to have a homestead and most important, to be somebody. Lennie aspires to be with George on his independent homestead, and to quench his fixation on soft objects. The aspirations of other characters are also mentioned in the novel. Loneliness is a significant factor in several characters' lives. Steinbeck's characters are powerless due to intellectual, social and economic circumstances.

Lennie possesses the greatest physical strength of any character, which therefore should establish a sense of respect as he is employed as a ranch hand. However his intellectual handicap undercuts this and results in his powerlessness. Economic powerlessness is established as many of the ranch hands are the victims of the Great Depression. Regarding human interaction, evil of oppression and abuse is a theme that is illustrated through Curley and Curley's wife. Fate is felt most heavily as the characters' aspirations are destroyed when George is unable to protect Lennie.

*Of Mice and Men* tells the story of how George and Lennie's friendship is tested by the isolation and predatory reality of life of poor migrant workers in depression-era America. George and Lennie are the protagonists and their friendship is

unique in the world of the novella ; almost every other character notes that they have never seen such a close partnership between two migrant labourers before. George and Lennie's biggest struggle is centered around surviving their oppressive, impoverished circumstances and becoming financially stable enough to own land together. This dream of one day purchasing a farm is complicated by Lennie's inability to stay out of trouble on the job and George's inability to stay angry at Lennie long enough to leave and find work on his own.

After the first section of the novel the reality of ranch life begins to cast its shadow over George and Lennie's dream . Curley's, the son of boss, is aggressive and preys on weak Lennie. But Curley's wife seeks the company of Lennie . The reason why Lennie and Curley's wife are together because they have been bullied by Curley and ultimately the harsh way of life on the ranch. He accidentally kills Curley's wife while stroking her soft hair. Lennie ran away from there as he was scared. Mistrust also dictates the other workers' responses when they discover the body of Curley's wife. They all assume that Lennie is guilty of a deliberate murder and Curley's bullying seals Lennie's fate. He forces George to join the party searching for Lennie.

The remainder of the story shows how George finds the hiding place of Lennie by the riverbed and they talk about their future farm exactly as they have done countless times before. While Lennie remains ignorant of his impending fate George knows that this is the last time he will recount this shared dream and his hope of a financially stable life will soon be vanquished . When George is forced to kill Lennie before the search party can find him , it is not only Lennie who is destroyed but also the unique friendship the two men have shared. This idealized friendship has been utterly defeated by the isolation, mistrust and fear which is the reality of migrant working class life. The

rarity of their relationship is elevated making Lennie's death that much more tragic since George not only loses his friend but his dream of a better life.

### Chapter 3.

#### Psychoanalytic Theory in the novel *Of Mice and Men*

The theory of id, ego and superego (psychoanalysis) was formulated by Sigmund Freud. Freud is an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis. In context to the psychoanalytic approach to John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, this theory truly fits for George Milton as superego and Lennie Small as id figure. Just as superego is the moral organ of the mind, here in this novel George is the moral instructor of Lennie. George plays the superego part of Lennie. We evidence it in the very start of the novel, George warning Lennie, "for God's sake don't drink too much ..... You are going to be sick like you was last night and also warning that you are not going to do bad things like you done in Weed, neither". It is similar to our conscience warning us against the fear of punishment or getting into serious trouble or danger, if something being considered as wrong is done by us. George is all the time caring and precautionous for Lennie trying to make him understand what is good and what is bad.

He is morally correct on grounds of humanity for caring a man like Lennie who couldn't live on his own because of short intelligence and his own superego is evident when he comes across his confession when his one of the practical jokes got Lennie

nearly drowned at Sacramento River and from he stopped doing something like that anymore. Just as our conscience tried to take control of mind over desire, superego struggles to take charge of mind against id. In the similar way we find George trying to take control of Lennie while he is doing something unacceptable according to social norms, like the instances where he kills a mice while petting but doesn't wants to leave its dead body, George throws the dead mice away. He restrains Lennie from having small puppy in the bunkhouse and orders him to leave it at the barn at its best with its mother. It was George who freed the girl at the weed out of Lennie's hold and Curley's hand out of Lennie's paw. Thus he has a constraining effect on Lennie , akin to superego over mind against the time when id is not.

There are other instances where George's act of having a foreshadow of the coming danger in future and warning Lennie against such dangers of future like Curley messing up with Lennie and Curley's pretty wife becoming a jail bait for him, asking Lennie to avoid both of them makes Lennie resemble the conscience part of us, which warns of coming troubles and tries to not let us get into those traps. But it is the pleasure loving nature and reluctant nature of us; the id , to disobey the things forbidden to do at first place. It is just because it brings pleasure , the same pleasure for which Adam and Eve were punished which they had gained by disobeying God , plucking apple from the tree of true knowledge and having a bite of it and losing pure innocence which resulted for their banishment from the Garden of Eden.

There are various instances in the novel where Lennie comes up as personification of id . Although he is warned by George , he is reluctant to have the dead mice. He is even warned against not to remain around Curley's wife in any case, but gets easily allured by her and does the mistake of touching her soft hair, causing the

death series to start from the death of Curley's wife and then death of his own , thereby causing death of dreams of himself , George and that of Candy to own a land of their own. Lennie disobeys his best friend and conscience George just because he finds the pleasure doing the things that he is fond of. It is his pleasure for touching and petting soft things that ultimately causes to have an end like a dog.

Apart from Lennie's characterization as id figure, his wrong acts are being followed by self realization. Every time he does a wrong thing he repents and excuses that he didn't mean to hurt either when it was Curley's wife or small puppy or the little mice. It is this point when we come across Lennie's psychic ego , which follows reality principle. After every act of stroking or feeling soft things by touching and causing death of that mice and puppy and even accidentally killing of Curley's wife, he is aware of the fact that he has done a bad thing. His realization of the wrong is the moment , where his psychic ego comes to live which makes him sorry and helpless and face feeling of guilt which resulted from pleasure driven behaviour.

When it is about pleasure, what we often come across is sexual instincts which is the source of immense pleasure which brings about both physiological and psychological satisfaction which in terms of Freudian psychoanalysis comes under the category of sexuality. According to Freud , the force by which the sexual instinct is represented in the mind is given the name libido – sexual hunger. In general sense, libido is misunderstood and limited only to sexual relations , where as in actual it has a large diameter encircling various sensual pleasures and gratifications.

In this novel the libido factor seems to dominate from the very beginning. Lennie is a guy with fully grown up body but his brain is still stuck to the level of a small kid. He is physically mature but mentally immature. Although being capable of

copulating , his sexual desires are caged in his childish mind . Thus his sexual energy – the libido is not finding a way out naturally and thus is the cause for Lennie’s love for soft things . Brent D. and Richard N. Williams presented that “All human behaviour had a core of sexual motivation is the assertion that the sexual motivation itself arises from the body rather than from the mind. But here in case of Lennie it is both body and mind acting together persuaded by psychic drive of libido submerged in unconscious which causes him to love soft things like mice, rabbit, puppy, velvet, silk and Curley’s wife’s hair.

This feel of softness brings a compensatory feeling for Lennie’s own id, an alternate option for physical sexual pleasure. Being of childish mind he is not aware of the adult means of quenching his thirst for sex at so called cathouses or it would be more correct that he is not aware actually of what physical sex is. Thus it’s his mind and body which have found their own means to find relief of that sexual tension. His fingers have replaced his male sexual organs in terms of sensing soft things physically leading to immense pleasure rather the surface area of pleasure has increased here as compared to that of phallus and it’s the smoothness of hairy skin of mice, puppy, rabbit and velvety hair of Curley’s wife which has replaced the softness of female or male sexual organs that he is touching as we find Lennie saying to George that he wasn’t doing nothing bad with it, just stroking it.

Also the conversation between Curley’s wife and Lennie at barn , where she tries to bring Lennie’s attention towards her in context of her soft hair and later fighting back, struggling to get freed from Lennie’s grip when he tries to shut her up of screaming out of fear of George , include such exchange of words which during a sexual act occurs between the copulating couple finding pleasure verbally and

physically thereby bringing psychological fulfilment of dirty talking during sex. Such words of Curley's wife include "But mine is soft and fine , here -feel right here , feel right around there and see how soft it is and find Lennie saying words like "Oh! That's nice... Oh! That's nice" and again Curley's wife screaming "Don't you muss it up ... look out now you will miss it up , you stop it now... you will mess it all up , Let go... you let go". Further Lennie's words " Please don't do that ,now don't, don't you go yelling " resembles the words that a male says a female , while forcing her into a sexual act though she doesn't has the willingness to have sex and screams thereof whose orgasmic end is brought about in a symbolized way by "and then she was still ". This whole symbolism shows an affinity for the libido driven act of Lennie and Curley's wife.

One more thing that is remarkable is Steinbeck's use of certain words which do have a textual as well contextual , direct or indirect connection with sexual symbolism such as jerks, jerked, jerk line being used combined with girl characters in the novel , scummy having the word cum , the word stroking used at various places by Lennie are the visual evidences of the libidinous effect on the author and the character as well. Steinbeck may have used more decent words than that which are being used in normal context but his adherence to such words do support the silent release of the libidinous energy of mind. There are certain psychological or social factors that affect the libido. These factors include lack of privacy or intimacy, stress or fatigue , distraction or depression . Environmental stress such as prolonged exposure to elevated sound levels or bright light can also affect libido. Other causes include experience of sexual abuse, assault, trauma or neglect, body image issues etc.

Struggling to find pleasure as well as trust issues many with PTSD experience feelings of vulnerability , rage and anger and emotional shutdowns which have been shown to inhibit sexual desire in those with PTSD. Reduced sex drive may also be present in trauma victims , like in Lennie, due to issues arising in sexual function. For women it has been found that treatment can improve sexual function thus helping restore the sexual desire ,like in Curley's wife. Depression and libido decline often coincide with reduced sex drive being one of the symptoms of depression. Those suffering from depression often report the decline in libido to be far reaching and more noticeable than other symptoms. In addition those with depression are more reluctant to report their reduced sex drive often normalizing it with cultural or social values. Physical factors that can affect the libido include endocrine issues such as hypothyroidism the effect of certain prescription medications and the attractiveness and biological fitness of one's partner among various other lifestyle factors. In males the frequency of ejaculations affects the levels of serum testosterone, a hormone which promotes libido. Anaemia is a cause of lack of libido in women due to the loss of iron during the period. Smoking, alcohol abuse and the use of certain drugs can also lead to a decreased libido. Moreover specialists suggest that several lifestyle changes may help increase one's sexual desire.

Libido is governed primarily by the activity in the mesolimbic dopamine pathway. Consequently dopamine and related trace amines that modulate dopamine neurotransmission play a critical role in regulating libido. Other neurotransmitters , neuropeptides and sex hormones that affect sex drive by modulating activity in or acting upon this pathway include :

- Testosterone (male sex hormone)
- Estrogen (female sex hormone)

A woman's desire for sex is correlated to her menstrual cycle with many women experiencing a heightened sexual desire in the several days before ovulation. This is what happened in the case of Curley's wife.

In Freudian psychoanalysis the pleasure principle is the instinctive seeking of pleasure and avoiding of pain to satisfy biological and psychological needs. Freud contrasted the pleasure principle with the counterpart concept of the reality principle which describes the capacity to defer gratification of a desire when circumstantial reality disallows its immediate gratification. In infancy and early childhood the I'd rules behaviour by obeying only the pleasure principle. People at that age only seek immediate gratification aiming to satisfy cravings such as hunger and thirst and at later ages the id seeks out sex. Maturity is learning to endure the pain of deferred gratification. Freud argued that "an ego thus educated has become reasonable; it no longer lets itself be governed by the pleasure principle but obeys the reality principle which also at the bottom seeks to obtain pleasure but pleasure which is assured through taking account of reality even if it is pleasure postponed and diminished. In his book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* published in 1921 Freud considered the possibility of the operation of tendencies beyond the pleasure principle, that is, of tendencies more primitive than it and independent of it. By examining the role of repetition compulsion in potentially overriding the pleasure principle, Freud ultimately developed his opposition between libido, the life instinct and the death drive.

*Of Mice And Men* written by John Steinbeck is about the lives of working men on a ranch during the Great Depression. John Steinbeck was highly capable of capturing the lives and thoughts of working men during the Great Depression, also bringing in the suffrage of mentality and how it was viewed by others in that era. Thus

*Of Mice and Men* being analysed based on Freud's psychoanalysis reveals how artistically Steinbeck has embodied the psychic id as Lennie, psychic superego as George and presented the id – superego mechanism of these two characters as well. Also the dominance of sexuality in human behaviour and the deep relationship between id and libido is evident by means of characters, the selected words used by the author in the novella in special reference to Lennie and Curley's wife ultimately proves the application of psychology specifically psychoanalysis to the realms of literature. With characters like these two the book exploits the human condition that concerns circumstances given by life. Steinbeck shows the human condition of men while they survive in the American depression.

## Conclusion

This project had fulfilled its aim. This project had studied about the unconscious human mind. This was done by applying a theory in a literary work. The theory was the theory of id, ego and superego formulated by Sigmund Freud and the literary work was *Of Mice and Men* written by John Steinbeck. The central characters of the novel *Of Mice and Men* are George Milton and Lennie Small. The theory was applied in the work by categorising each character in a mental state like George was linked to the mental state of superego and Lennie was linked to the mental state of id, ego and libido. The project was divided into three chapters. First chapter was about the theory. Second chapter was about the summary of novel. Third chapter was about how the theory was applied in the work. This project shows that the novel *Of Mice and Men* is a creation by mind (author), of minds (characters) and for minds (readers).

Just as superego is the moral organ of the mind, George is the moral instructor of Lennie. Libido is a person's overall sexual drive or desire for sexual activity. Libido is the cause behind Lennie's love for soft things. There are evidences of libidinal driven acts of Lennie and Curley's wife in the novel. There are various instances in the novel where Lennie comes up as an embodiment of id. Lennie's realization of the wrong is the moment where his psychic ego comes to live. This project analyses the human mind by analysing the novel *Of Mice and Men*.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**MARXIST READING OF SUDHA KONGARA'S  
FILM *SOORARAI POTTRU***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Arts

**ATHUL O T**

**Register No. DB18AEGRO41**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mrs. JESNA KURIAKOSE

June 2021

# KANNUR UNIVERSITY

## Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “MARXIST CLASS DIFFERENCE THERORY  
IN SUDHA KONGARA’S FILM SOORARAI POTTRU is a bonafide work of  
Mr Athul O T who carried out the project work under my super vision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Mrs. Jesna Kuriakose

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Athul O T hereby declare that the project work entitled “MARXIST CLASS DIFFERENCE THERORY IN SUDHA KONGARA’S FILM SOORARAI POTTRU” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Jesna Kuriakose of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science college.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

ATHUL OT

07-06-2021

DB18AEGR041

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## Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter one	2
Marxism: A Theoretical Overview	
Chapter Two	13
Introduction to the movie Soorarai Pottru	
Chapter Three	21
Elements of Class Difference In Soorarai Pottru	
Conclusion	29
Works cited	31

## **Introduction**

Films are the mixture society they portray the social life, relationships, and the issues prevailed in a society. Marxism and the class difference are the one of the vital topic discussed in cinema. Even in the Postmodern society, people are discriminated in the name of caste and cost.

Marxist criticism or in Marxism they explore the different treatment shows in the society towards the rich and poor. The ruling class or the capitalist are :{the superior group of people and they enjoy {ghhxgyx} and power and the other group is or working class who are powerless and struggling group. The class difference includes in Marxism is abant the discrimination prevailed in a society on the basis of money and power.

This project titled as Marxistic reading of Sudha Kongara's Soorairi Pottru explore the class difference exist in the postmodern Indian society through detail analysis of the movie. The first chapter "Marxism: A Theoretical over view" details the history of Marxism with special emphasis on class difference. The chapter briefly introduces the orgin of Marxist criticism and detail the class difference and it's impacts on the society the second chapter introduction to the movies and characters gives the brief summary of the movie Soorairi Pottru and introduce the main characters in the movie. In the third chapter, the main study is undertaken through the detailed study of the film and examinins the element of class difference and how it effects the daily living of the character in a capital society

## Chapter one

### Marxism: A Theoretical Overview

The German philosopher Karl Marx [1818-83] and the German Sociologist Friedrich Engels [1820-1895] are the founding father of Marxism. The two German met in England and formulated a theory which they called Communism in their Communist Manifesto in 1848. They didn't attempt full length study of art and literature. However its implications on literature are far-reaching; socially and culturally reflecting the root and significance of Marxism. According to Marx all ideal systems are the products of social and economic existence. Marxism is a materialistic philosophy that tries to explain our living in terms of concrete and assumes the existence of a world beyond the physical world around us. Marx believed that only material interests of the dominant social class determine our existence, be it the legal, economic or cultural or class-consciousness.

Marx argues that society is composed of two main classes; Capitalists are the business owners who organize the process of production and who own the means of production such as factories, tools and raw materials, and who are also entitled to any and all profits. The other much larger class is composed of labour. Laborers do not own or have any claim to the means of production, the finished products they work on or any of the profit generated from the sales of those products. Rather labour works only in return for a money wage. Marx argued that because of this uneven arrangement capitalists exploit workers. Another important theory developed by Marx is known as historical materialism. This theory posits that society at any given point in time is ordered by the type of technology used in the process of production.

Peoples were divided into classes and that the class struggle existed in society before the birth of Marxism. But, begin idealists in their understanding of social life. They were unable to find the objective basis for the division of society into classes. They did not see that the reason for the class division of society into classes. They did not see that the reason for the class division of society should be sort in material production. Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in historically determined system of social production, by their relation to the means of production, by their role in the social wealth of which they dispose and the manner of obtaining it. Before “Lenin” published his state and revolution in 1917 the Marxian theory of the state had been almost neglected not only in economics but also in Sociology and political science. Even since 1917, it has been clearly understood social scientist in number of books on the history of economics which has seen.

Class struggle is a fundamental theme of recorded history. In every non socialist society there are two main categories of class, the ruling class or classes and the subject class or classes. The ruling class possesses the major instruments of economic production and distribution and the means of establishing its political dominance, while the subject class serves the interests of the ruling class, and is politically, economically and socially dominated by it. There is conflict between the ruling class and the exploited class. The nature and cause of the conflict is influenced by the development of productive forces. That is, in any given class formation, whether it be feudalism, capitalism, or any other type of society, the institutions and ideas associated with it arise from the level of productive forces and the mode of production. The moment private ownership of the means of production appears, and capitalists start exploiting workers the

capitalists become a bourgeois class, the exploited workers a working class. For, in the final analysis, a class is nothing more than the sum total of individuals bound together by certain interests which as a class they try to preserve and protect.

Every form of political power, whether parliamentary, multi-party, one-party or open military dictatorship, reflects the interest of a certain class or classes in society. In socialist states the government represents workers and peasants. In capitalist states, the government represents the exploiting class, the state then, is the expression of the domination of one class over the other class.

Inequality can only be ended by the abolition of classes. The division between those who plan, organise and manage and those who actually perform the manual labour continually recreates the class system. The individual usually finds it very difficult, if not impossible to break out of the sphere of life into which he is born and even where there is equality of opportunity, the underlying assumption of inequality remains where the purpose of opportunity is to aspire to a higher level in a stratified society.

**CLASS CHARACTERISTICS AND IDEOLOGIES** - There is a close connection between socio-political development, the struggle between social classes and the history of ideologies. In general, intellectual movements closely reflect the trends of economic developments. In communal society, where there are virtually no class divisions, man's productive activities exert a direct influence on his outlook and aesthetic tastes. But in a class society, the direct influence of productive activities on outlook and culture is less discernible. Account must be taken of the psychology of conflicting classes.

Certain social habits, dress, institutions and organisations are associated with different classes. It is possible to place a person in a particular class simply observing his general appearance, his dress and the way he behaves. Similarly, each class has its own characteristic institutions and organisations. For example, co-operatives and trade unions are organisations of the working class. Professional associations, chambers of commerce, stock exchanges, rotary clubs, Masonic societies, and so on, are middle class bourgeois institutions. Ideologies reflect class interests and class consciousness. Liberalism, individualism, elitism, and bourgeois democracy, which are an illusion, are examples of bourgeois ideology. Fascism, imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism are also expressions of bourgeois thinking and of bourgeois political and economic aspirations. On the other hand, socialism and communism are ideologies of the working class, and reflect its aspirations and political economic institutions and organisations.

Before Marx came on the scene, the incipient working classes movement was groping in the dark, without a scientifically grounded goal or a true path to emancipation from the yoke of capital. Again and again, diverse social schemers and Utopians befuddled the workers minds with petty-bourgeois superstitions and confused them with fantastic projects.

The rapid growth of productive forces in the industrial revolution created a real basis for solving the great historical task of abolishing the exploitation of man by man and emancipating labour. With the development of capitalism there arose a social force capable of tackling the task. It was the working class. The stormy revolutions and mass workers actions attendant on the collapse of feudalism and the establishment of capitalism had so bared class contradictions and burning social problems that they could

no longer be ignored. Marxist ideology did not of course, arise outside the mainstream of Social thought or the development of world civilization. Marxism came as the legal heir to mankind's greatest discoveries in the study of nature and social life.

Marx took critical stock of all the rational elements of the leading trends in social thinking, verified them in the light of the working classes movement and creatively reworked them from the proletarian standpoint.

The significance of Marx's scientific discoveries for the working class and all working people was given the most profound and clear-cut definition by V. I. Lenin, who wrote, Marx's philosophical materialism alone has shown the proletariat, the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have hitherto languished. Marx's economic theory alone has explained the true position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism. Marxism, as the scientific expression of the interests of the working class, took shape and developed in close connection with the proletariat's class struggle. Marx saw this as the high humanistic purpose of the proletariat's class struggle, which is aimed at releasing the man of lab from the in human conditions of bourgeois society.

Marx was not a prophet preaching to the masses, but a man who made science serve the oppressed and turned it into a weapon which the masses themselves could wield.

Marx's intimate ties with the workers and his profound knowledge of every form of movement enabled him to act as spokesman in the true sense of the word for the forward- looking workers, giving expression to the special consciousness of the proletariat of the world.

The whole history of the international working classes movement, the advance of the world revolutionary process as a whole and the ups and downs of the revolutionary struggle in the various countries provide irrefutable proof that of party guided by the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism can play the part of a vanguard fighter. The whole of Marx's life and work is brilliant scientific thinking and revolutionary inspiration.

Marxism and Workers - The working class is central to the Marxist enterprise. There is a whole Marxist myth constructed around the concept of the proletariat. Workers is seen as central to the development of modern society and workers are seen as the grave-diggers of capitalist society. This is followed by a consideration of the role of workers in the Russian Revolution. This was after all, the first time that workers had a chance to build a new society along Marxist lines. This is followed by a discussion of various subsequent debates on the role of the working class in politics, such as the new working class.

The concept of class is nevertheless applicable to the social, political and economic process of pro-industrial capitalist societies, social relation of production are not clearly defined by sharp division between wage and capital. A stand out amongst the most effective sociological clarifications of social clash is that of Karl Marx, who place a class conflict amongst low class and bourgeoisie characteristic for entrepreneur, mechanical society. This idea is capable in being dynamic, naturally powerful, and seeming to fit well with history. It is intense in giving in one bundle a portrayal, a clarification, and an expectation of contemporary issues, and a cure. Recognize that Marx saw the structure of society in connection to its real classes, and the battle between then

as the motor of progress in this structure, nor were class practical components keeping up the framework. The structure itself was a subordinate of a fixing in the battle of classes.

Class conflict is the source of social change, without such conflict society would stagnate. Class conflict arises primarily from the disparity in the distribution and access to economic power within the society.

The way to understanding Marx in his class definition. A class is characterized by the responsibility for. Such possession vests a man with the ability to reject others from the property and to utilize it for individual purposes. In connection to property there are three extraordinary classes of society, the bourgeoisie (who claim the methods for generation, for example, apparatus and production line structures and whose wellspring of wage is benefit), landowners, and the low class.

Class accordingly is controlled by property, not by wage or status. These are dictated by appropriation and utilization, which itself eventually mirrors the generation and power relations of classes. the social state of bourgeoisie generation are characterized by common

property. Class is subsequently a hypothetical and formal relationship among people. The power changing dormant class enrollment into a battle of classes is class intrigue. Out of comparative class circumstances, people come act also. They build up a shared reliance, a group; a mutual intrigue classes are shaped, and for Marx, people frame classes to the degree that their advantages connect with them in a battle with the inverse class.

At begin with, the interest related with arrive possession and lease is unique in relation to those of the bourgeoisie. In any case, as society development, capital and land proprietorship converge, as to do interest of land owners and bourgeoisie. At long last connection of creation, the characteristics restriction amongst low class and bourgeoisie decides every other movement. As Marx saw the advancement of class strife, the battle between classes was at first kept to singular processing plans. In the end giving development of free enterprise the developing divergence between life states of bourgeoisie and low class and expanding homogenization inside each class, singular battles wind up noticeably summed up to coalitions crosswise over production lines.

Progressively class strife is showed at the societal level. Class cognizance is expanded, basic interest and arrangements are composed, and the use of and fight for political control happens. Classes end up noticeably political powers. The spread of political powers. The spread of political power is controlled by control over age (i.e., capital). Capital presents political power, which the normal class uses to legitimize and secure their property and consequent social relations.

Class relations are political, and in the develop industrialist society, the state's business is that of the bourgeoisie. In addition, the scholarly premise of state control, the thoughts defending the utilization of state power and its appropriation, are those of the decision class.

The learned person social culture is simply a superstructure laying on the connection of creation, on responsibility for methods for generation

Marx's Myth - The proletariat, for Marx, is the class under capitalism that has nothing to lose but its chains. This group of workers exists only so long as they get labor and find work only in so far as their workers increases capital.

This proletariat was created by the Industrial Revolution and was crowded into the teeming industrializing cities of this era. Their conditions of existence led them inexorably towards combinations, then strikes and insurrections. While they had nothing, no status, no property, they were also the bearers of a new universality against the bourgeois or capitalist class they confronted, which exuded particular interest.

The proletariat, in short, was to become for Marx the new universal class in history. Their presence at the heart of the new capitalist society was its fatal flaw or contradiction.

The working class just is an innovators class. The further classes die lastly vanish despite late industry; the working class is its specific and fundamental item. The association of the low class into a class, and thus into a political gathering, is disturbed by rivalry among laborers. Be that as it may, it ever ascends again more grounded, firmer and mightier.

Thus the incoherent mass scattered over the whole country starts to organize and struggle against the dominant order. The expansion of capital requires waged labourers and at first, competition among these labourers prevents combination. Gradually this situation is overcome and big industry promotes association among the wage labourers. The development of modern industry sows the seeds of its own ruin. Its fall and the triumph of the low class are similarly unavoidable.

To conclude then, Marx created a veritable myth of the proletariat as universal historical subject and indication of a new co-operative and ultimately classless social order.

Marxism and the Modern world - There is a continuous and even increased relevance for the ideas of Karl Marx in this period of global turbulence. Marx's methodology and his theoretical toolbox have a deep relevance in a period of renewed capitalist crises. The Marxist enterprise as in based on Karl Marx's foundational thinking, is an open one, based on critical engagement with the key issue of the day in a creative and not theological manner and in dialogue with many other political and cultural currents oriented towards a better tomorrow.

The capitalist press was replete with references to Karl Marx and his theory of capitalist development and crises following the global financial crises which emerged in 2007. Economic liberalism had hit the rails and the only rational explanation could be found in Marx. Barely fifteen years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, supposedly Marxism in practice, its founding political philosophy was being used as the key to understand the collapse of economic liberalism and the political liberal faith which had preached the end of history and there is no alternative. However, there are very few political forces anywhere in the world based on, and actually putting into practice, the ideas of Karl Marx.

There is a close relationship between Marx's thought and the onset of modernity, indeed the very idea of Marxism is inconceivable outside of the historical conjunction of enlightenment philosophy, economic rationalization, techno scientific innovation and social detraditionalization which emerged in Europe after the middle age.

Marx's intellectual project is marked by an increasingly acute sense of the economic and technological mechanisms through which the old feudal order was being displaced by a new regime based on the realization of profit through the sale of commodities.

We can consider Marx as the greater grandfather of today's anti-capitalist movements of course much has changed. For example, Marx seems to have assumed that natural resources were inexhaustible and thus he has a much more limited ecological perspective than one's would expect today. But on the other hands Marx portrays a world in which the capitalist market comes to permeate society, putting a price on everything and crowding out non-economic forms of value. Business grow ever larger, becoming more ruthless and exploitative and more vampires like in the process. Yet within less than a decade into the new century some basic Marxist insights were once again becoming common currency.

The claims of neoliberal globalization, for example that it would lead to a decline of global inequality, but it had disproven by the senior World Bank economists. It became clear that global capitalism was not some form of rational order. To understand the contradictions of this new global order, Marx's original theory of capitalism was a required starting point. This world history is not one characterized by a smooth progress to a conflict free future. Rather it was and is today of course characterized by global uneven development, wars between nation states and struggles between social classes and groups. Marx does not counter pose the revolution, but he provides some of the tools for a critical analysis.

## **Chapter two**

### **Introduction to the movie *Soorarai Pottru***

Film has a special impact to the society. Day by day this industry is growing very fast as an art also with financially. Every year the number of film getting released and the number views are also increase. Now the audiences are very close to the film and character therefore the impact of a film in a society is now very high, that is the reason to done a critical study on the way characters are begin portrayed in film gains significance.

The films have a very interesting history. Lumiere Brothers introduced the film as the most influential art form and all film conceiving character and story with their own experience and scenes seen by them. Therefore it is very interesting for the audience. There is the detailed history of the film introduced by Lumiere Brothers

The French film theorist Christian Metz has famously argued that on one level, all films are fiction films. All cinematic experience is based by definition on illusion. Motion pictures are fundamentally still images projected on the screen. From this perspective, the fiction film is a specific type of cinema based on the content of the images and sounds rather than their material traits. The fiction film, subject of narrative history, theory and criticism, assumes a spectator who not only sees movement where none really exists, but also constructs character, time, space, themes

Here we discuss the film *Soorarai Pottru* by Sudha Kongara Prasad she is a famous Indian screen writer and director, who is debut as a screen writer with the film *Mitr, My friend* in 2002. Her movie credits include *Andhra Andagadu* (2008) and *Drohi* (2010), and *Irudhi Suttru* (2016) (also releasing as *Saala Khadoos* in Hindi). In 2017, she wrote and directed the movie *Guru* starring Daggubati Venkatesh and Rithika Singh in the lead roles. Her 2020 release includes *Soorarai Pottru*

*Soorarai Pottru* largely works as it about a larger –than- life deam than one particular person. It's true that the film is based on G.R Gopinath's life, but the dramatic events carefully been picked from his tall tale are about a handful and director Sudha Kongara has glued them well with enough grit to sustain the proceedings.

Maara, which is the abbreviated version of Nedumaaran Rajangam (suriya), is the name of a medieval Pandya king. It is a mere coincidence if Maara's friend, Chaitanya Rao. Wasn't called Che (fashioned after the Marxist revolutionary Che Guevare). When two characters in main stream Tamil film are named the historic figures, you know what to come. A bit of raw tenaciousness was expected from the start when this project was announced since we are already seen what Kongara is made of – the credit goes for the previous sports drama, *Irudhi Suttru*.

If Ritika Singh gloriously matched her steps to the upbeat number “Vaa Machaney” in *Irudhi Suttru*, Suriya dance to “mannuruda”, a song that celebrates the death of a old man. In the opening scenes the film *Soorarai Pottru*.the shirts worn by both the leads in the respective songs also appear the same shade. Even Marras, like Madhi (Ritika Singh). Is short tempered. The anger steams from being ridiculed and belittled here. The rebel with an idea often loses his cool, for his constantly told that he doesn't

belong in the heights that he aspires to reach He wants to sell air tickets for as low as low as one rupee and still turn around a profit, but he faces obstacles all along the way at top.[he beginning part of the film there was no one to support his there we can see the capital attacks towards

On the other side of the fence there's Boomi (Aparna Balamulari) who as mind a business idea of her own. She's that sort of woman who tell us her family members that she doesn't want to marry Marra right way and argues that it's better to build empires first and then dive into the dive into the blissful, or messy married life. Kongara capture the romantic between these two protagonists freshly. There is lot of scenes Kongara use to show their romance, different songs some different shots etc. she doesn't change any dynamic between the couples to extent that it comes across as trailblazing. But, there's a certain sense of promise in how she manages to bring the two together.

Bommi gives it back rightly when Marra mocks her bakery, business and enlightens him as to what's actually feeding him. Even when you take their wedding, for example, the senses are light and cheeky. In fact, it takes their place according to the tradition of suyamariyathai (self -respect). When there is no question tying the mangalsutras, or the inclusion of the Brahmin priest in the ceremony. The groom and the bride just garland practice allows them to solemnize their marriage without burdening themselves with the mantras and financial difficulties that naturally accompany big-fat traditional wedding.

It is important to note the suyamariyathai setup because towards the end. Maara explain that he wishes to break caste barriers by making the common people, who make up the real majority in terms of population, fly. Come to think of it, that was the reason

for self respect marriages to become popular. Maara doesn't differentiate his personal and professional affairs. He only feels a bit dejected and unmanly when he takes money from his wife. It seems as though he hasn't crossed that barrier yet.

If Maara want to shorten the gap between the facilities enjoyed by the lower caste and the upper castes, Paresh Goswami (Paresh Rawal) want to lengthen it. Of course, he's the baddie that keeps challenging Maara and his dignity. In this part of the movie actually discuss the low class people Maaran represent the all low class and Paresh was the representation of the high class society. The hero talks with tears in his eye about the breaking down the walls that separate the different classes and the villain sanities his hand every times he comes in contact with any other person. It's not a subtle signifier in any form, but it brings the thoughts and ideology of Goswami to the fore immediately.

Again, Goswami and Maara do not engage in duels. They simply fight for the principles they believe in. And, perhaps, the funniest bit is covered in the character that has been inspired from Vijay Mallya's elitism. Maara calls the latter a socialite as if he's spitting the word out with disgust and the Mallya-like character reacts to it with utter nonchalance.

Here this film according to the person Captain Gopinath's life, he given a interview and in this interview he compare the film and his life.

BENGALURU: Captain Gopinath's phone has not stopping buzzing congratulatory messages ever since the release of Tamil film Soorarai Pottru, which was based on his life and stars actor Suriya in the lead role. However he still finds fame awkward.

While Gopinath is quite happy with the way the movie has turned out, he tells CE that Girish Karnad was the first person to convince him that his journey should be made into a movie.

The reason behind the film it was that the book written by Captain Gopinath Simply Fly: A Deccan Odyssey, in the interview he said that “After reading my book Simply Fly: A Deccan Odyssey, he told me, ‘captain, you have village, Army, politics, helicopter, airplane... your story is so visually fascinating. It should be made into a movie, but I was shy. He later told my wife Barghavi too that if I am ready to give the rights he is ready to wear the greasepaint, “laughs Gopinath, as he recalls the conversation that took place in 2007, two years before Karnad passed away.

Even when the film’s director Sudha Kongara approached him to get the rights of his book for a movie, Gopinath was still not sure. It was when Guneeth Monga, the co-producer of the movie, who has critically acclaimed movies like Gangs of Wasseypur, The Lunch Box, Massan, Period. End of the sentence to his credit, reached out that something changed in Gopinath.

“Guneeth Monga said the story held a special place for her because the first flight she ever took was Air Deccan. Then I researched her work and felt it would be good to give the rights of the movie,” says Gopinath, who was well aware that the makers would take creative liberty.

“My concern was that the message should not be lost. While there is masala, there is also meat beneath it. I am happy the message is loud and clear in the film,” emphasizes

the 68-year-old, who shuttles between Bengaluru and his village Gorur in Hassan district, and remains busy with “writing, and mentoring inspiring entrepreneurs”.

Gopinath was also all praises for the makers for portraying the female lead as a “strong support than a subordinate”. He says it was important to show the female lead playing his wife’s character as someone who had her own dream. “When there is a success story, there is usually a team behind it. My wife is that support for me,” adds Gopinath, whose wife still runs her bakery, Bun World Iyenger Bakery, which currently has four branches in Bengaluru, the oldest being the one in Malleswaram that was opened 25 years ago. (G.R)

Talking about the scene in which Nedumaaran Rajangam (played by Suriya) asks Bommi (the wife, played by Aparna Balamurali) for financial help, Gopinath says no such thing happened in real life. “It was like a metaphor. Though I never asked for any financial help, she was my strongest support,” says Gopinath.

Thinking of a low-cost airline at a time when flying was still a luxury, he admits, was an audacious step. “One day, I was driving to my village and I came across a computer training centre, which was a new thing. It seemed like a new country, one with hungry consumers, where people had refrigerators and other electronic items displayed in their living rooms,” he says.

“It’s not always hard work and perseverance that brings success, it’s also optimism. It is important that you wake up and believe that things will work out.”

The film was help to increase the image of Captain Gopinath because through this film the lot of audience familiar with his life. It was very interested movie for all type of peoples for a young person it was a hope for their life in case of a family it was a romantic film also. The director leads the story in many forms.

On a more personal level, there is also the breaking of the male ego barrier, where the wife who runs a successful bakery business happily takes over the family's breadwinning responsibilities for a good number of years (I promise, this is how the story goes and it wasn't intended as a bun. sorry pun)! And lest we forget, the film has released directly on OTT (Amazon Prime), a major barrier breaking exercise in itself given the historic relevance in our parts of Deepavali release frenzy in theatres.

There is a short flashback from his teenage years where we see him involved in violent protests, to have their town's railway station listed as an official halt for passenger trains. He wants to bring planes to his people next. What ignites this ambition is a distasteful incident, where he fails to reach home in time for his father's funeral, thanks to exorbitantly priced flight tickets.

This coupled with a stint in the Air Force gives him an idea, that of operating a 'low cost' airline in the country. The prevailing high prices are only the product of poor industry practices and an ever-increasing class divides, he argues. What if we make the airline no-frills? What if we side-step agents and allow direct online bookings? What if we just lease aircrafts instead of buying them outright, and while we're at it, why not have these planes do multiple daily round trips? And finally, why do we require these extra-large fuel-sucking planes anyway? In his words, why can't we just have an airline that's the equivalent of an 'Udupi hotel' in the sky, instead of all this 5-star opulence?

Maaran's ideas are solid, but like any others, he soon realizes his journey's going to be one full of turbulence. In fact, Soorarai Pottru's biggest win lies in how it translates these travails of entrepreneurship authentically on to the screen. Maaran faces rejection from all banks and about twenty-odd venture capitalists, before finally managing to get one VC on board, who then ends up backstabbing him anyway. These plot points seemed silly at first as the movie proceeds it clearly shown how difficult it must indeed be for a first-time entrepreneur, with no financial or legal background, to verify such complex VC arrangements to the letter. Maaran also incurs the wrath of his potential competitors, the country's existing aviation oligopoly. The chief antagonist here is Mr Paresh Goswami (Paresh Rawal), the owner of a rival airline. They all look down on Maaran as a rogue new entrant who poses a threat and use every possible influence to sabotage his repulsive schemes. And finally, there's also Government red tape and apathy. It is echoed more than once how 'even Ratan Tata' had to wait outside the DGCA's office for 20 years to get his aviation permit. Maaran's situation is no different and it requires the intervention of none less than the President of the country to get him out of his predicament!

Soorarai Pottru, which will go down as one of the best film of the year, but unfortunately on March 15, it was announced that the film missed out on nomination and is now officially out of Oscar race but it was a great achievement that a Indian film get a space in a Oscar nomination. There are lots of award for this film they are three (JWF movie Awards), two (Behindwoods Digital Awards), one (Oxygen play awards) and 2 nominations, three (Blacksheep Digital Awards), five (Cinema At its Best Awards) and six nominations, 4 nominations in (Critics choice Film Awards).

Soorarai Pottru was selected as one among the ten Indian film to be screened under the Best foreign Film category at the 78th Golden globe awards it is a proud movement when Tamil film Soorarai Pottru, directed by Sudha Kongara reach these awards. It emerged as the only Indian film amongst 366 films eligible for the best picture in academy Awards.

It discuss about the society and the class difference in now a days the empowerment of low class or the working class was discuss here very clearly.

## **Chapter – Three**

### **Elements of class difference in Soorarai Pottru**

Film has a major role in the spread of class difference that prevailed in our world. Sudha Kongara's 2020 film Soorarai Pottru is an example for that. This film portrays the difference between capitalist and the working class. The central theme of the film is the rise of common man. Maaran is a representative of the working classes society. His struggles to fulfil his dream is the core theme of the film. The film addresses the issues of the working classes man, Maaran. Soorarai pottru is an inspiring tale with a robust performance form Maaran portrayed by the actor Suriya. Maaran I an arduous fighter with strong will power potential and confidence. He has his own dreams and plans and he struggles to achieve those dreams in a capitalist society. As a middle class man he suffers a lots of oppressions and societal pressure from the side of capitalist. Maaran's biggest dream in his life is to own a airline for the common people.

The Tamil film Soorarai pottru take its inspiration from the real life story of Mr G. Gopinath. In the initial scene of the movie set in a small village Maaran's family

reside in this village and he complete his studies on their. Later on the story shift his attention on village to city' which shows Marran's sting will power to dream high. Even though he faces lot of struggles and oppressions he never give up. There are so many instances of class difference in the film which prevents Marran from achieving his dreams.

The film focuses it's attention on the struggles of working class for their rights and now the ruling class suppress the efforts of the working class to empower themselves. The working classes struggles are portrayed through the protagonist. .Maaran belongs to a middle class family and his ambition to own an airline company that sells ticket for one rupees. his intention was not to become rich but to eliminate the barriers in the name of caste and money.

In the first scene of this cinema, which takes place in a moving train. There are instances of class difference.

“Get your hands off me!

I shouldn't have helped you

Isn't this a reserved compartment?

What's that stench? Dried fish? Yuck!”

(MAARAN)

Here it can see that the two people are having a conversation. the man is from an upper-class society. The man feels disgust to sit with her and thinks that the compartment is for rich people and as the lady is a fish- seller she is below him and should sit in a general compartment. Even her appearance and attitude are shown negatively.

There are many more instances in the movie where low class people fight for their rights in the capitalist society. As the film proceeds it is shown that the village people are protesting to leave a stop for the train in their village (these protesters are the representation of working class people and the police officers who are the representatives of capitalist or ruling class are suppressing the protest)

“stop the express train here

stop all the express train here!”

(MAARAN)

Every film has a protagonist the film's protagonist is Maaran and the antagonist is Paresh Goswami. Mr Goswami is the representative of higher class society. He owns an airline company, Jaz which sells tickets at high cost. In the 34th and 35th seconds of the film, it is shown that Maaran is traveling in the flight owned by Mr Goswami. Maaran is traveling along with Paresh babu in the business compartment. When Maaran shakes his hand with the capitalist Mr Goswami, he sanitizes his hands. It indicates that the capitalist sees the working class as mean, untidy and of low standard. They think that middle class people are not equal to them and are of low status. The protagonist Maaran wants to remove this attitude of capitalist towards the working class.

When Mr. Goswami's Jaz airline is for rich Maaran wants to start an airline for the masses and he wants to execute his dream with the help of Paresh Goswami he says

“An Airline for the common man

A low cost airline for everyone. I want to execute this idea with you sir”

(MAARAN)

But Paresh mocks Maaran and says it possible for him to start an Airlines that sells tickets for one rupee the capitalist mentality of Mr Goswami didn't let him to join his hands with Maaran and he replies.

“would anyone wants to see beggars and coolies own plane.

I don't want my passenger to suffer”

(PARESH)

These dialogues clearly shown the attitude of Paresh he is the symbol of capitalist society who views common people are good for nothing. He thinks they are not equal to rich and they don't need to have dreams.

Praresh's negative approach towards the middle class is visible when he insults Maaran and ask him to get out from a flight owned by him when maaran decides to stay back the capitalist the capitalist Paresh ask the pilot to land the flight and says,

“you own the tickets but I own the plane my friend” (PARESH)

Here the egoistic attitude of a capitalist is shown.

The Marxist criticism often discusses the superior attitude of capitalist towards the working class. Owner class is often shown as the powerful group. In 54th min of the film the authoritative mentality of capitalist is clearly shown Maaran waites four days in an office in order to get the approval for his dream project but the officers, who works for the upper class uses their power and authority to stop Maaran's project. Here it is shown that low the capitali st uses the how the officer to suppress the middle class. It is an instance of class difference.

In a capitalist society the upper class considers themselves as privileged and they possess all the rights. In 01.02 min of the film there is an emotional scene. The scene takes place in an airport and the protagonist Maaran is shown crying and begging in front of money. Maaran's father is dead and he is lacking money to buy a flight ticket for himself and is denied to attend his father's funeral. In Indian culture, the son is the one who performs the last rites of his deceased father, but for being a middle-class man, he is denied that right and on the other hand, the police man arrested him and threw him out of the airport.

In this scene, the miserable condition of the working class is represented, when a well-dressed gentleman from a higher class says

“when you fly, you should bring money”

(PARESH)

Marxism is the movement of the working class against the oppressions they faced. It is not the struggle of a single man but the protest of masses. In a particular scene of the film, when Maaran is lacking money to start his project, he seeks help from his villages. Each of them contributed a sum of money for Maaran's project, and he gets the money. In this scene, it shows that the working class is weak or poor, but each of them can stay together to fight against the capitalist or the oppression.

It presents the idea that the working class can stay together and fight against the powerful capitalist class. Here, it began to show that the weak can fight against the working class by working together and their co-operation makes them powerful to fight against all the oppression.

In a scene, the image of a farmer with a plough hanging on the wall is shown. It is the symbol used to invite the passenger to the flight. It represents the common class people.

and present the idea that the airline is for poor\commer. This particular symbol is pasted in walk. When a common man or a lower class individually struggles to achieve his dreams the capitalist to malicious plans to stop them, when Maaran plans to pilots for lower cost to run his flights Paresh uses his money power and pay higher amounts

He pays three times more then Maaran and spoils his plans. Even then he never loses his confidence he used his strength and use his failure as stepping stones for his success.

Maaran's determination to own an airline company never stops him from working level but his faith shakes only when his first attempt fails. He faces a drastic set back when his flight blast and exploded. Even though he could save the passengers, the society influenced Maaran. Here it is it is evidence that how the capitalist society, media and newspaper owned by them used their power to deliberately degrade Maaran or any working classes man. This attempt creates doubts even in his suppressions.

“Airplanes are for rich not for the peoples like us”

“Due to the safety issues Deccan Air Lines came to an end”

(MEDIA)

It is often believed that Air Line are of rich persons business. Maaran's airline crashed due to safety issues but he feels ditched when the media attacked him and his airlines. But here also there are lot of eyes behind him although he was mentally step back from his business his dream finds hope when a rich man belongs to the capitalist society approached Maaran to merge his airline with his own. This attempt can be seen as the capitalist attitude to control the poor on the working class. But the determined Maaran rejects the often and says

“sometime I get doubts about my airline’s success

But the way you’re lusting after it my doubt are all gone”

(MAARAN)

Here the capitalist or the rich man tries to shelter his faith by saying

“you can’t survive a day here without my support”

(BUSNISESSMAN)

Here we can see the confidence that capitalist lead towards a low-class people the capitalist they always marked as the superior power and the other want to be under them he known that Maaran idea will be a great success here he wants the profit from that business but here maaran replies that

“You are a socialite but I am socialist”

(MAARAN)

This indicate the motivates Maaran to go on with his dream and his ambition was to break the social barriers exist in the society. Here Maaran show the power of low-class man and the group behind them. On this dialogues Maaran compare the socialist and a capitalist what was Marx prove in his theory. The rebirth of working classes was discussed in this line.

Maaran says “I want to break the cost barriers and the caste barrier”

“if money was my preority I will have made millions ages ago and I wanted benefits of modern science to reach everyone”

(MAARAN)

Despite of all the obstacles fulfils his dream and make a poor fly in low cost when Maaran succeed in his airline business the so called poor tries to join his hand with the middle class for their profit the Paresh Goswami call rings Maaran to says

“can we meet I have a business propose for you , I will have secretary for appointment ok”

(PARESH)

But Maaran reject his offer and says

“Who are you to give me an appointment,

Farmers have flown and it will be continue”

(MAARAN)

The film uses different types of symbols to present the prevailing class difference in the society Black dress is one among that wedding is consider as the suspicious ceremony in Indian culture, wearing black dress in one’s wedding is not part of the costume. But in this film Maaran is wearing black dress, black is marked as the symbol of powerless people. Another symbol is in the photo frame of Dr BR Ambedkar the father of Indian constitution and a victim of racism, he fights against the in equality. Ambedkar photograph hanging in the stage during the wedding is a symbol of the race of low classes. The next symbol used in the film was at the middle part of the film the symbol of shaking hands. Shaking hands is the emblem of Maaran’s airlines which shows joining or a team of working classes people. In the same scene there are the presence of group of working-class people to support and co-operate with the protagonist. Through this the film tries to show the importance of group work co-operation and trust.

The Deccan Airline have the logo of sparrow, and the logo used by Jaz Airline is eagle, the sparrow represents the week and the working class, the eagle represent the strong or the people who are top of a society.

The film Soorai Potru pictures the struggles of a working class man and the obstacles he had to overcome to fulfil his dreams in a capitalist society. The movie put forward the message that even the poor can achieve their dreams if they are courageous enough to confront with the consequences.

## **Conclusion**

In the Marxist criticism Karl Marx explains about the class difference that exist in the society the working class is the centre of Marxist criticism. Marxism broadly treat the class conflict amongst the low classes and bourgeoisie. The low class is often projected as inferior and of low status and the bourgeoisie or capitalist as superior and powerful. This project is an attempt to analyse class difference existing in the film Soorai Potru

Sudha Kongara's film Soorai Potru portrays the emergence of a working classes man in a capitalist society the protagonist Maaran's efforts to break the shackles of the society marks the centre plot of the story. He strives hard to come out of the obstacles that block his path and emerges as a successful business man. Even though the film is set in the 21st century, the class difference is the one of the themes

Maaran the central character of the film who is from a middle classes family he is not a ordinary man but a representation of a middle class society. The film uses dialogue

as well as various symbols to shown the different levels, Maaran's struggles are not confined to his life but he is an epitome of whole working classes people.

Maaran is just a central character whose struggles are being portraed in the film other than him there are many other common people to motivate him to fight to reach his goal Kongaras's through this film clearly depicts the journey of a common man in a bourgeoisie society and his growth as an entrepreneur set an example that an ordinary man can also become successful if he has determination in life. Marxism is also dealt with the struggles and empowerment of working classes man in a capitalist society. In the Marxist reading of the film Soorairai Pottru is an example for the prevailing class difference in a society as well as the un equal treatment existing between the working classes and owner classes.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**RESISTANCE IN *AGNISAKSHI*: A POST COLONIAL FEMININE  
STUDY**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**EDWIN ALEX SAVIO**

**Register No: DB18AEGR042**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

MARCH 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project “**Resistance in *Agnisakshi: A Post Colonial Feminine Study***” is a bonafide work of Edwin Alex Savio, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Edwin Alex Savio, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**Resistance in Agnisakshi: A Post Colonial Feminine Study**” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Aswathi Krishna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

EDWIN ALEX SAVIO

DB18AEGR042

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EDWIN ALEX SAVIO

## Table of Contents

<b>Sl. No.</b>		<b>Page No.</b>
1.	Introduction	1
<b>2.</b>	<b>Chapter One</b>	<b>3</b>
	Postcolonial Feminism: A New Feather of Feminism	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Chapter Two</b>	<b>11</b>
	Women of Namboothiri Community: An Analysis of <i>Agnisakshi</i>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Chapter Three</b>	<b>21</b>
	Postcolonial Feminine Resistance in <i>Agnisakshi</i>	
5.	Conclusion	29
	Works Cited	31

## Introduction

The aim of this project is to study the complexities and effects of post colonial feminism in society. It aims at analyzing the post colonial feminism represented on the life of characters portrayed in the novel *Agnisakshi*. The work *Agnisakshi* is a novel by Lalithambika Antharjanam, an Indian author and a social reformer. Her writing reflects sensitivity to women's role in society. The central theme of this novel is also considered as a reflection of the writer's own life story. In the novel *Agnisakshi*, Lalithambika Antharjanam portrays women's sufferings and inequality towards them. The novel also reflects the inevitable changes that are in store for the community. The novel is an authentic and sensitive portrayal of the fears, hopes and dreams of a community of women who is on the threshold of a new birth and new life. The traditional concept of power is very oppressive and negative. The representations in the novel highlight a period of transition in the social and political arena. The project focuses on how the phenomenon of post colonial feminism is working on the social behaviour and social structure of early periods.

Postcolonial feminism or 'third world feminism' emerged in response to Western mainstream feminism. Postcolonial feminists object to portrayals of women of non-Western societies as passive and voiceless victims and the portrayal of Western women as modern, educated and empowered. Postcolonial feminists argue that oppression relating to the colonial experience, particularly racial, class, and ethnic oppression, have marginalized women in postcolonial societies. They challenge the assumption that gender oppression is the primary force of patriarchy.

This thesis tries to find out how the novel clearly depicts the experience of a women who is treated unequally based on the gender and tradition followed by the

Hindu society. It also aims to show how each character of the novel faces inequality and rights at some point of their lives. The present study, therefore, intends to go through the lives of the characters portrayed in *Agnisakshi*. It also makes an attempt to find out the condition of the lives of Hindu society and their rituals.

The project is divided into five chapters including the introduction chapter and the conclusion chapter. The introduction chapter introduces the main objective and relevance of the thesis. The first chapter traces post colonial feminism theory and the brief description about the phenomenon of the same. The second chapter analyses the novel *Agnisakshi*. Through this chapter, the study tries to hold up the major concepts and ideas in the novel. The third chapter studies the novel *Agnisakshi* by the application of the concept of post colonial feminism. . This chapter focuses on the problems and tragedies faced by the characters on the basis of their gender classification. It focuses on the struggles of a progressive Namboothiri (Brahmin) woman when she gets married to a highly conservative family. The last chapter is the conclusion chapter in which a conclusion is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out in the third chapter.

## Chapter one

### Postcolonial Feminism: A New Feather of Feminism

Post colonial feminism is a relatively novel wing of postcolonial feminine scholarship. Postcolonial feminism or 'third world feminism' emerged in response to western mainstream feminism. Western feminism has never been heedful to the differences pertaining to class, race, feelings and settings of women of once colonized territories. Post colonial feminism rejects western feminism on the ground of its utter 'eurocentrism'. It is fallacious to hope post colonial females to be valued, appreciated and justified by the western hands. Of course, the long western tendency to homogenize and universalize women and their experiences led to the emergence of 'postcolonial feminism'. It is a hopeful discourse that seeks peaceful solutions for all world marginalized women. Postcolonial feminists imagine a world in which differences are celebrated and enjoyed. They work for social, cultural, economic, and religious freedoms for women.

Before one discusses postcolonial feminism, it is better to know first what post colonialism is. Post colonialism or 'postcolonial critical theory' without doubt is an after-colonial development. It emerged around the closing years of the 80s. But it gained currency as a critical spade only in the '90s. It struggles to push back economic, social, cultural, psychological, and linguistic colonial left-overs. The term is generally applied 'to describe any kind of resistance, particularly against class, race, and gender oppression'. It does not approve of unjust power structures and relationships. This thought movement argues for 'social justice, emancipation, and democracy in order to oppose oppressive structures of racism, discrimination, and exploitation' by hiding off colonial dynamism. Colonial masters at colonial sites

applied intricate strategies to others at every footstep. Post colonialism is concerned with social, cultural, political, economic, moral, religious sites, literature, language etc. to fight back 'euro-centrism'.

Building on this, postcoloniality is defined as that condition in which colonized peoples seek to take their place, forcibly or otherwise, as historical subjects, postcolonial feminism sometimes also referred to as 'third world feminism' born out of the critique aimed towards Western feminism which is mainly a white discourse. Truly the history of Western feminism is predominantly covered by West European and North American women experiences. The author abhors using the nomenclature third world feminism because in Western discourses the term is used pejoratively and connotes at once social, cultural, and economic backwardness. If backwardness is taken for granted, no nation is immune to this phenomenon. The term 'third world' is no better than 'commonwealth'. It must allow meeting the destiny which commonwealth in the 90s met. Postcolonial feminism emerged out of the gendered history of colonialism. The history of colonialism is largely the history of exploitation of non-white, non-Western others. Colonized countries have been deeply affected by the exploitative racist nature of colonialism. Postcolonial feminists argue that colonial oppression particularly racial, class, and ethnic has in large part overlooked women in postcolonial societies.

Postcolonial feminism is a critique of the homogenizing tendencies of Western feminism. Contrary to Western feminism, 'postcolonial feminism' as a new feather, wishes to bring into light the typicality of problems of women of the Third world nations. This is mainly the initiative of those activists and academics who belong partially or fully to once colonized countries. They are working for the all-round amelioration in the lives of women of postcolonial origin. Feminism is a fabulous

field of study across the world. It is simplistic to believe that Western feminists can represent and justify the stand of women living in once colonized countries. Since lives, experiences and circumstances of postcolonial women differ utterly from that of Western women, so feminists of postcolonial origin should come forward and make differences visible and acceptable across cultures; otherwise get ready to take on colonized garbs of identity. If lives, experiences, and circumstances of women of postcolonial settings are divergent, they should be judged, evaluated, and treated as such hence 'postcolonial feminism' consolidated.

Postcolonial feminist brought the view of universal sisterhood under threat. Rajeswari Sunder Rajan and You-me Park once said that "Postcolonial feminism" cannot be regarded simply as a subset of postcolonial studies, or, alternatively, as another variety of feminism. Rather it is an intervention that is changing the configurations of both postcolonial and feminist studies. Postcolonial feminism is an exploration of and at the intersections of colonialism and neocolonialism with gender, nation, class, race, and sexualities in the different contexts of women's lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality, and rights" (Schwarz and Ray, 2005). It has never operated as a separate entity from post colonialism; rather it has directly inspired the forms and the force of postcolonial politics. Where its feminist focus is foregrounded, it comprises non-western feminism which negotiates the political demands of nationalism, socialist feminism, liberalism, and ecofeminism, alongside the social challenge of everyday patriarchy, typically supported by its institutional and legal discrimination: of domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape, honour killings, dowry deaths, female feticide, child abuse.

Feminism in a postcolonial frame begins with the situation of the ordinary woman in a particular place, while also thinking her situation through in relation to

broader issues to give her the more powerful basis of collectivity. It highlights the degree to which women are still working against a colonial legacy that was itself powerfully patriarchal - institutional, economic, political, and ideological. Feminism as a reactive discipline seeks to answer the question why women are treated as a second class citizen oppressed and enjoyed lesser opportunities than males. Feminism is consisted in variegated; colourful approaches hence better to call such approach 'feminisms'. It is culture based line. In multicultural countries, feminist approach looks highly fragmented and multivalent.

The forms and colors of feminism in Indian context are unique and surprising. Since India is the seat of cultures, feminine complexes are too much. As the belief, unity in diversity sustains in India, so there is some feminine virtues that exist here which are common to all Indian women having all the same differences. In India, all four kinds of feminisms broadly speaking- First world, Second world, Third world, and Forth world exists. Mostly, women in India honour their tradition and culture with all traditional feminine colours. Since the time women started questioning their subordinate status, got continuously fractured, divided and developed; it at present does not imply to a single and coherent trajectory of thought. In the course of development, especially with the fall of European colonies in Africa, South-East Asia, and Latin America, and the Caribbean islands, it was felt by feminists belonging to once-colonized territories in the eighties that much amount of time passed and it is nonsensical to continue to be represented by aliens; one should represent oneself in our own terms instead, hence postcolonial feminism.

Postcolonial feminists are critical of Western forms of feminism, especially radical and liberal forms of feminism and their habit to homogenize and universalize women experiences of the whole world. Primly, postcolonial feminism explores in

different contexts, women's lives, work, identity, sexuality, and rights in the light of colonialism and neo-colonialism with gender, nation, class, race, and sexualities. This field of study is mainly identified with the works of feminists of once-colonized nations. Chandra Talapade Mohanty, Gayatri Spivak, Uma Narayan, Sara Suleri, Lata Mani, Kumkum Sangari, are some of the few postcolonial feminist writers.

Postcolonial feminist writers are closely associated with Black feminists (Alice Walker, Angela Davis, Kimberla Crenshaw to name a few) because both strive for recognition not only by men in their own culture, but also by Western feminists.

Rajeswari Sunder Rajan and You-me Park identify two key issues for 'postcolonial feminism' - representation, and the questions of setting or locale. Mary Daly an American radical essentialist feminist in her 1978 book, *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*, like Simone de Beauvoir, argues that religion, law, and science all are just to benefit patriarchy and to define and delimit women.

In this book, she compares sati practice with European witch burning. Uma Narayan of postcolonial origin is critical of Daly's account on sati. Uma Narayan feels that Daly is not immune to the ways postcolonial women experiences are universalized and generalized. She thinks that Daly fails to give due attention to social and cultural contexts on sati. Hence, she stresses on the need of adequate knowledge of history to deprogramme and devalidate Eurocentrism. Uma Narayan argues that Colonial history is the terrain where the project of 'Western' culture's self-definition became a project heavily dependent upon its 'difference' from its 'Others' both internal and external. The contemporary self-definition of many Third-World cultures and communities are also in profound ways political responses to this history. Working together to develop a rich feminist account of this history that divides and connects us might well provide Western and Third-World feminists [with] some difficult but

interesting common ground, and be a project that is crucial and central to any truly 'international' feminist politics Narayan on the another instance writes justly, “Third World feminism is not a mindless mimicking of ‘western agendas’ in one clear and simple sense- Indian feminism is clearly a response to the issues specifically confronting many Indian women”.

Postcolonial feminists argue for women emancipation that is subalternized by social, cultural, or economic structures across the world. Having an insight into differences, they wish for global liberation. Post-colonial feminists entertain and attempt the indigenization of both form and content. Undoubtedly, it is an initiative of postcolonial origin but not restricted to postcolonial vision of postcolonial origin. Heterogeneity is the key theme of postcolonial feminism. Postcolonial feminine writers are not interested in dismantling family order, custom, and tradition. They seek for balance, mutual respect and harmony. On the other side, feminists in Western clothing are home-family-man haters. They do not have sense of keeping households safe and secure. They think all these secondary. Women in postcolonial settings, at least in India, want to rear family and family relations but not at the behest of their counterparts or co-partners. They prefer balance and harmony maintaining all the feminine differences visible. They do not take motherhood/ womanhood constrictive. The matter of fact is that they want to remove age-old constrictions laid on women's lives, and live on par with men. They expect emotional support from their partners. Frankly, it can be admitted that any attempt to theorize women experiences of social, cultural, and economic lives and services rendered by them look immediately short and impractical in at least postcolonial sites.

Women are most changeable almost like asterisks which change color and shining as acquires direction and light. They lead holographic life. Women's role and

status in the society are widely differing. No woman precisely speaking can be representative of other fellows. In India, educational reformation of women's lives is felt drastically among women activists. They prefer to many cases in which women do nothing substantively but talk of and dream for luxuries and other amenities. Women belonging to well-off family think and play roles differently altogether. But in the core, women whether they are rich, poor, strong, weak, educated, illiterate, want to live with respect, name and as a partner (not as a wife of olden days). Compromise more or less is found playing active roles in women's lives. Generally they go for compromise first, and males later on. After all, both are bound to make compromise. Today, women are right conscious enough and feel comparatively freer. All females remain docile and submissive till marriage but after it they fight for rights- social, cultural, economic getting radical if not possible through submission. Women want to live like men and if a woman is an earning lady, it is her extra attribute. In many cases, less educated women torture family members doing nothing for their betterment because they think that it is the responsibility of men to bear the brunt of the family. In some other cases, women are educated and conscious crave for self identity and liberation from patriarchal clutches. In such cases, true education is drastic need of the time. Mostly, women are perpetrated at women's hands. Thus, Postcolonial feminists engage more and more domestic spaces of women's lives.

To sum up, postcolonial feminists seek to devalidate Western feminists because they easily tend to universalize and homogenize women's issues, and moreover believe incorrectly that their texts represent women of the whole world. The prime objective of postcolonial feminists is to make differences (race, class, and setting) regarding women's lives visible and recognizable in the eyes of Western feminists in non-oppressive ways. They imagine a world where differences are not

detested, instead entertained and enjoyed, and moreover make space to thrive being immune to hierarchical structures of class, race, sexual and gender power. In short, 'postcolonial feminism' provides corrective measures to mainstream 'feminism'.

## Chapter Two

### Women of Namboothiri Community: An Analysis of *Agnisakshi*

Lalithambika Antharjanam was an Indian author and social reformer best known for her literary works in Malayalam language. She was influenced by Mahatma Gandhi and social reform movements among the Namboothiri caste led by V. T. Bhattathiripad. She wrote several works that comprises nine volumes of short stories, six collections of poems, two books for children, and a novel, *Agnisakshi* which won the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award and Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1977 and later it was made into a movie. Some of her works include a collection of short stories, *Adyathe Kathakal (First Stories)*, *Takarna Talamura (Ruined Generation)*, *Kilivadilude (Pigeon Hole)*, *Koddunkatil Ninnu (From a Whirlwind)*, *Mudupadathil (Behind the Veil)* and *Agni Pushpangal (Flowers of Fire)*. Her autobiography *Aathmakadhakkoru Aamukham (An Introduction to Autobiography)* is also considered a significant work in Malayalam literature.

Lalithambika was a writer who exposed the true conditions of women's lives in traditional upper caste Namboothiri culture in Kerala. She took 'Antharjanam' as her surname which means 'she who lives inside'. Antharjanam depicted the plight of Namboothiri women in Kerala while also shedding light on the effects of the Partition in Punjab and Bengal. She was a part of the most powerful landholding Brahmin caste of Kerala. She was not allowed to study in school, and could only get information about the outside world through male relatives who were kind enough to tell her about current affairs. Married to Narayanan Namboothiri, a farmer, Lalithambika found herself transplanted to a home of hard labour and lingering interior darkness, though she still managed to write. Lalithambika Antharjanam encountered almost all the

incidents from her own life experiences, especially the way she was treated in her Illom. Her life works fought against the violence and injustice by which women were treated in Namboothiri society. Their frustration and degradation moved Lalithambika to expose their plight in her celebrated Malayalam novel *Agnisakshi* (The Fire as Witness).

Her major work *Agnisakshi* is a telling of a woman's life and is depicted as glowing as though purified in the fire of sacrifice which says about the history of Kerala, life, customs, habits, and culture of the Namboothiri community. *Agnisakshi* is a novel that dared to question the dark practices and the subjugation of women in the Namboothiri community. It is the story of a Namboothiri woman's struggle to rise above the shackles of tradition and her journey towards self-realization. It chronicles the struggles of a progressive Namboothiri woman when she gets married to a highly conservative family. The story centers the deep and blind caste system and the practice of patriarchy of a Namboothiri household, which reveals the world of Namboothiri men and their rules and rituals which always avoided women from everywhere near their works. The novel was concerned with implied criticism of aspects of social structure and behaviour.

In the novel, the author explores the ideas of choice, detachment, renunciation, love and devotion through three of her main characters - two women Thethikutty, Thankam Nair and one man Unni Namboothiri. The plot revolves around Thethikutty and her trials and tribulations in the highly misogynist Namboothiri illoms and her journey towards liberation. The novel depicts her transformation into a revolutionary and later on her resigned life in an ashram. Other main characters include Thankam Nair and Unni Namboodiri, Thethikutty's husband. It offers a moving portrait of upper-class, upper-caste Kerala society just before and after Independence while

recounting a woman's struggle for social and political emancipation. The novel is set in the backdrop of early twentieth century Kerala. It also highlights a period of transition in the social and political arena. The story focuses mainly on the Namboothiri women in the illoms where the observation of certain rituals, conventions and beliefs are established by the man. But, unfortunately, the suppressed main female heroines, namely Thethikutty and Thankam resist oppression and liberate themselves from the deep-rooted patriarchal hegemonic traps and practices. The story is set in the pre-independent India when caste system, untouchability, traditional inequality were prevalent.

Agnisakshi main character Thethikutty is married to Unni Nambudiri of the well-known Brahmin family named Manampilly Illam. He is young, and loving but too orthodox to be the husband of a woman with Thethikutty's views. Feeling frustrated, Thethikutty leaves him once and forever and reaches her paternal home. Unni lives the life of devotion, is branded as an eccentric and dies. Thethikutty, meanwhile, finds no peace anywhere. At last, in the Himalayas, she meets her old friend and Unni's half-sister, the sixty-year-old Thankam. Thethikutty, wife of Unni Namboodiri, finds it difficult to adjust in the bigoted Manampally Illam. She was brought up on books, thoughts, opinions by her rebellious brother, who was himself fighting for the freedom of Namboodiri women and untouchables. However, her husband was brought up on religious scriptures and moral duties towards family and traditions. When these opposite poles come together, many displeasing situations arise. They love each other but dharma of Unni Namboothiri overpowers their love. Thethikutty yearns to read something except Sheelavathy and Ramayana (Brahmin women were expected only to read these) in her new home. This is when Thankam,

Unni's sister, born out of his father's sambhandam with a Nair woman, comes as a relief to Tethi. She provides her with books and magazines that her mother reads.

However, when Tethi's brother ends up in jail, the women in Tethi's husband's family checks her cupboards and finds and burn all her books and magazines. Unni's family also prohibits her from meeting her dying mother. Unni doesn't stand up for his wife against his family even though he loves her with whole heart. He had stood against his father once when Thankam wanted to go for higher studies instead of getting married. He knew he had failed his father then so he didn't wish to hurt his father for himself and Tethi. The couple separates. Unni lives for his mother and Tethi spend her life for the motherland. Thankam is left hopeless seeing the stubbornness of her brother and fate of her loving sister in law. Thankam is also sad about the fact that her father didn't forgive her for going against his will and studying further. Her sadness is also rooted in the fact that she never got to touch or embrace her father for the fear of polluting him, as she is considered a Shudra being born from a Nair woman. Tethi becomes everything that a Namboodhiri woman is not supposed to be. She goes out in open and fight for the freedom of women, riddance of caste system. She becomes part of Gandhiji's freedom struggle. Unni goes on with his religious rituals, Thankam and her mother leaves her father's house after his death as was the custom for the Nair women.

The first fact that has to be recorded is the love that all these three characters had for each other. Thankam worshipped her elder brother Unni and thinks of him as her protector. Unni Namboothiri also adores Thankam as his only sister and tries to stand by her in all her crises. Thethikutty is the outsider, the woman whom Unni marries. Unni loves her in his own way, but is not willing to give up his family traditions and rituals. His love for Tethi is more platonic than physical, however it

was an enduring one. When Tethi leaves him and goes away everyone including his mother and uncle persuades him to take a second wife, but, he refuses. In that respect, he reminds one of Srirama, Son of Dasaratha and husband of Sita.

Thankam adores her new sister in law, Tethi and tries to be a mediator between Unni and Tethi when they have differences of opinion. In Tethi, she finds a loving sister and an abiding friend. In other ideas, she tends to respect Tethi's freedom of thinking, but that does not diminish her love for her brother Unni. She would like them to remain married so that her own sense of security which emanates from them would not be fragmented. Tethi loves her wedded husband, but is irritated by his inability to stand by her and show his love for her. She has been brought up in a progressive household and is influenced by the ideas propagated by her revolutionary brother P.K. P. Namboothiri with regard to freedom for women and freedom for the country. Unni, while he is not a reactionary, is too much of a traditionalist to accept his wife's progressive ideas. Tethi loves Thankam and finds in her a soulmate to share her ideas and commiserate with her in her sense of oppression within the four walls of the traditional Namboothiri Illom.

In the beginning of the novel when she describes River Ganga's arrival to this world, the idea that takes firm root is that of a woman who feels compassionate towards a grieving king and enters this world to give redemption to his ancestors seeking release. In the physical aspect of a flowing river, the ideas that come to one's mind is that of the giver of water which is life's most needed element for sustenance. Without water people would die of thirst. The crops would wither; the earth would become dry and arid, there will be no cleaning of bodies. So, water in its ultimate life giving presence is already invoked. River Ganga has another significance also. That is the river in which people immerse themselves to wash away their sins. So, apart from

the life giving aspect it maintains a pacificator aspect also. Through all these ideas the all encompassing image of the compassionate mother emerges.

Antharjanam maintains this link with motherhood as the greatest gift of a woman throughout the book. Thankam Nair and Tethikutty take an oath that the children born to either one would be the child of the other too. So, Thankam Nair going in search of Sumitrananda, (transformation from Tethikutty) is also an act of going in search of the other "mother" of her children. When Antharjanam describes Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, she is again emphasising on the sanctity or legitimacy of motherhood. Finally when Appu, Thankam Nair's son prostrates before Sumitrananda. He addresses her as mother and the unfulfilled yearning for motherhood in Sumitrananda is satisfied. From all this, it is very clear that Antharjanam puts a great deal of emphasis on a woman's motherhood, the ability to have qualities of giving birth and nurturing children. In fact, the impression that one gets of detachment and renunciation is not a satisfying one as it does not fulfil the function of motherhood. This is the one aspect in which her idea of women power coincides somewhat with that of the feminists. Though feminists have decried the stereotyping and stultifying of motherhood as a burden to freedom loving women, the more moderates among them see this as a special gift given only to women. In fact, it is the quality of motherhood that gives strength and superiority to women. In this one aspect, patriarchy has no equivalent to offer as a redeeming quality for men. So, Antharjanam's emphasis on motherhood, though it has tinges of traditional beliefs, also gives her the benefit of an insight into the core quality of femininity. Traditional motherhood has its own shortcomings; it makes women take a possessive attitude to their children and expect absolute obedience from them. This has also been shown in this book through the character of Unni's mother. But she need not be taken as a role

model in womanhood. The more modern ideas of motherhood emerge through the characters of Thankam Nair and Sumitrananda. This is one of the more salutary aspects of this book with regard to women's rights and women's empowerment.

Antarjanam was a typical Namboothiri woman in spite of all her seemingly liberal ideas. This comes out in her emphasis on the value of Namboothiri rituals. Even when Sumitrananda rejected her former life and became a renounee, she could not erase from her mind the fire rituals and other such rituals of a traditional Namboothiri household. Even when she is thinking of a Guru, the figure that comes into her mind is that of her husband whom she had left. She is not able to give up the sanctity accorded to marriage and wifely qualities from her mind.

Again, Lalithambika Antharjanam who is supposed to be a liberal, Marxist and believer in Indian National Freedom, does not even by way of background, refer to the lower castes who suffered severe indignities in the hands of their upper caste masters. There is no reference to the abolishment of caste system. She cannot hide behind the argument that she was talking of a time when the lower castes were denied of all rights and therefore they do not figure in her scheme of the novel. She wrote the novel in 1979 by which time the Dalit movement had taken firm roots. The temple entry also had been brought in legally. There were movements to educate Dalit and given them suitable employment and even then why does she not refer to their plight in a caste ridden society before independence. There is only one reference to a Nair boy, son of one of the servants who was looked after and educated by Tethi. However the way in which he is described in the novel is like an abject and devoted lower caste man who is eternally grateful to the good deeds done by an upper caste man.

Antharjanam idea of beauty has colour connotations. She equates good looking to being fair complexioned. This may not have been intentional, but the

subliminal message is that of colour prejudice. One gets the impression that however liberated she was, she could not rise above colour and caste prejudices. Even her avoidance of any reference to the cast system reeks of an upper class mentality. The upper classes would if possible like to wish away the existence of lower classes and the injustices they had to suffer in their hands. All this gives us an idea that in her creative workher inner prejudices creep in, may be unconsciously.

Thethikutty, the heroine of the novel tries to battle with these traditional norms which she prohibited from all the pleasures and happiness of her life, especially after she got married off to Unni Namboothiri the one who's not a typical orthodox husband, but the one who grown up in those old systems. Tethi encountered with many obstacles to find out the real freedom, and she received the path of renunciation, the way she wanted to really live. There she found freedom and relief in every aspect especially breaking away all the rules and regulations of a typical Namboothiri women who's basically called 'Antharjanam' the one who is inside or 'Akathullol'.

In an article by Meera Kumar, scholar, with the focus on the concepts of desire and self-representation, presents a philosophical analysis of the Malayalam novelette *Agnisakshi* by Lalithambika Antharjanam, which narrates the customs and taboos that existed in the Namboothiri community in Kerala in the early twentieth century. The study brings forth the living conditions of Brahmin women in the Namboothiri society in Kerala and their self-representations, analysing the tensions between patriarchy and female individuality.

In another article, Neethu M. B., a scholar, centres round the blind belief-system of Namboothiri house–hold. It unravels the world of Namboothiri men and their practice of rituals and rites which excluded women from anywhere near their performance. Thethikutty, the heroine of the novel tries hard to endure the

traditional norms which prohibited her from enjoying the pleasure of asserting the self. Her husband, Unni blindly follows all those conventions which he thinks is the duty of a true Namboothiri. Thethikutty, with all her contempt towards the age-old systems lives silently for a long. The transformation of hers from a progressive girl married to an orthodox family to a revolutionary who plunges into the freedom struggle and finally to a penitent in a Himalayan ashram, portrays the role of women in contemporary India. It also depicts humiliation of women under the grab of patriarchy and traditional norms. In the flame of domestic oppression, the major character change in to a revolutionary and at the end realizes the inner self, which was hidden always.

The novel deals primarily with choices people made and the consequences of those choices. Thankam gave up ideas of higher studies and working for a career; instead she marries a man, becomes a housewife, takes care of her family and enjoys the life of a corporate wife till she grows old. Tethi chose to leave her home in order to find freedom, succeeds to some extent while she played the roles of Devaki Manampilli and Devi Bahen. But, these roles did not give her the happiness and the mental peace that she yearned for, so she renounces and becomes Sumitrananda. In spite of the severe penances and sacrifices that she undertakes, she does not find real peace or moksha. Memories of her past life haunted her and made her restless. With the appearance of Thankam on the scene she is not able to contain or control herself. She meets her and accepts the love and respect Thankam's son bestows on her. There is a hint in the novel that detachment and renunciation without love cannot give release to a person. Thankam even when is pursuing Tethi Edathi's new avatar, Sumitrananda does not crave for renunciation. In fact, she affirms this to her son. She does not regret the path she chose though she feels despondent about her neglect

towards Tethi. She seeks Tethi not to take her advice and follow a similar path, but to restore some of the love and affection that they bore for each other in their youth.

Unni sticks on to his ideas of traditional fulfilment of life and achieves the kind of life and release from life that he had aspired for. So, Unni and Thankam benefits from their choices and finds some kind of fulfilment in life while Tethi does not enjoy that kind of self fulfilment, however much she tried.

The reader gets a feeling that Lalithambika is a votary of human love and attachments and does not fully support renunciation without love and attachments. Her kind of women's perspective comes to a bloom when she explores these ideas. She examines the entire gamut of a woman's aspiration for freedom, self will, self awareness and release. Finally, she comes to the very womanly conclusion that detachment and renunciation, while they serve some purpose and sense of discipline, it is love which elevates a human being to spiritual heights and gives release. This is a proof that she gives in to the pull of emotions as vital to life. She does not think that any amount of giving up can be a substitute to love and this is why she could be called a feminist who acquires freedom without giving up fully her traditional ideas and identifies.

## Chapter Three

### Postcolonial Feminine Resistance in *Agnisakshi*

*Agnisakshi*, written by Lalithambika Antharjanam, explores the ideas of choice, detachment, renunciation, love and devotion through three of her main characters - Thethikutty, Thankam Nair and Unni Nambudiri. *Agnisakshi* is a telling account of a woman's life glowing as though purified in the 'fire of sacrifice'. Set against the history of Kerala and life, customs, habits and culture of the Namboothiri community, along with the fervent cries of the Indian National Freedom struggle, the characters act out their unforgettable roles: Tethi, the dazzling but disappointed bride who renounces worldly life; Unni Namboothiri whose adherence to the Vedic way of life destroys his personal happiness and Thankam, Unni's Nair cousin and the mighty Apphan Namboothir's daughter, seeking her own liberation from the past. The novel chronicles the struggles of a progressive Namboothiri (Brahmin) woman when she gets married to a highly conservative family. The plot revolves around Thettikutty and her trials and tribulations in the highly misogynist Namboothiri illoms (houses) and her journey towards liberation. The novel depicts her transformation into a revolutionary and later on her resigned life in an ashram.

One of the stories told about her birth, as recounted in her memoirs, Lalithambika Antharjanam, writer and social activist, tells of an incident that affected her very deeply over the years, "When her father, a learned man of progressive views, heard that a daughter had been born to him, he exclaimed angrily, "No, I will not live here any longer. I'll go away, maybe to Madras, become a Christian, and marry an English woman. Lalithambika's father's words underscore a father's helplessness at the suffering of a generation of Namboothiri women in Kerala, including foreseeing

the same for his own new-born daughter, at the turn of the last century. The Kerala Brahmin caste of Namboothiris in the 1900s were for the most part wealthy landowners whose influence extended to the royal houses of Travancore and Malabar, and who were widely regarded as ‘keepers’ of the Hindu scriptures, Brahminical learning, and the Hindu caste hierarchy since they occupied its topmost tier in the state. While Namboothiri men wielded a great deal of social, cultural, and personal power, the community lived by a strict patriarchal and patrilineal code of ritual seclusion for their women, often giving prepubescent girls in marriage to men fifty or sixty years older than them, consigning women exclusively to the kitchen at puberty, forbidding them from getting an education, prescribing rigorous ritual seclusion for widows, including child widows, prohibiting widow remarriage, and casting out or ostracising women from family and community if they dared to question, confront or reject any of the strictures placed upon them. The term “Antharjanam” is a Namboothiri caste name; it literally means “one who lives in the interiors.” A cognate is the gendered feminine form “Akathullol” or “one who is inside.”

One can find different aspects of post colonial feminism in Lalithambika Antharjanam’s *Agnisakshi*. Postcolonial feminism is a relatively novel wing of postcolonial feminine scholarship. Postcolonial feminism or ‘third world feminism’ emerged in response to Western mainstream feminism. Western feminism has never been heedful to the differences pertaining to class, race, feelings, and settings of women of once colonized territories. Postcolonial feminism is a critique of the homogenizing tendencies of Western feminism. Feminisms which negotiate the political demands of nationalism, socialist feminism, liberalism, and ecofeminism, alongside the social challenge of everyday patriarchy, typically supported by its institutional and legal discrimination: of domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape,

honour killings, dowry deaths, female foeticide, and child abuse. Feminism in a postcolonial frame begins with the situation of the ordinary woman in a particular place, while also thinking her situation through in relation to broader issues to give her the more powerful basis of collectivity.

This very idea of Postcolonial feminism is evident in the novel. It tells us of the significance of the existence of the female characters who retain the balance of the society while adhering to diverse rituals and practices. The role of the female characters thus becomes vital and significant. The reactionary women expose the deeds of men and hence the malpractices of society. The world of Namboothiri men and their rites and mode of worship estranged the female dispensation from anywhere near their performance. One sees that the heroine has left home and domesticity for a political undertaking and finally for a religious cover up. The Namboothiris were powerful feudal aristocrats famed for their stern adherence to tradition. Lalithambika Antharjanam gives us a glimpse of this Namboothiri world as she tells the story of two women who rebel in different ways against the soul-destroying restrictions of the life laid down by their tradition. Most of the women in the community are denied of higher education and hence left with no awareness of their rights.

Contrary to Western feminism, 'postcolonial feminism' as a new feather wishes to bring into light the typicality of problems of women of the Third world nations. This is mainly the initiative of those activists, and academics who belong partially or fully to once colonized countries. Lalithambika Antharjanam, being a victim to the colonization of the patriarchal society, had experienced the typical problems of women of the so-called called third world countries. Agnisakshi presents the mental trauma of women under traditional constraint through the words of Thethikutty: "My husband does not seem to know how to love anyone. He is afraid of

everyone and everything- of Father, of Mother, of custom- why, he's even afraid of God. Brother was right, if I live too long in this house, I might also lose my senses out of fear" (60). But as an Antharjanam, which means 'people who live inside', she is not expected to raise her voice in such a way. In and around her, she comes across nothing but tradition and victims of this tradition. Women in Namboothiri Illoms are bound by so many restrictions of tradition. Their travel was limited to the temples or to the house of their relatives or else they want to be accompanied by servant.

Postcolonial feminists argue for women emancipation that is subalternized by social, cultural, or economic structures across the world. Having an insight into differences, they wish for global liberation. Post-colonial feminists entertain and attempt the indigenization of both form and content. Undoubtedly, it is an initiative of postcolonial origin but not restricted to postcolonial vision of postcolonial origin. This postcolonial feminist vision is proved in the novel *Agnisakshi*.

Broadly, girl children moreover were always made to feel that they occupied only second place at home and in society. Lalithambika Antharjanam also had separate places for worship, and their rituals had restrictions placed on them. Women were not allowed to chant, and to do other ritual performances like those of males. From her teenage, a Namboothiri girl was not allowed to leave the Illom. She was not allowed to visit even close relatives. She was neither allowed to see men nor allowed to be seen by them. The morning ritual bath, chanting and work in the kitchen was the only activities of the Antharjanam that were allowed. The women were an absolutely neglected group in the Namboothiri community. The men treated them as creatures whose limited needs were believed to be only dressing, bathing and sleeping. Thethikutty, a prey to such practices, was even denied of the permission to see her dying mother because of her brother's revolutionary ideas against tradition. Thankam

breaks away from the bonds of tradition and practices through education and writings. Thethikutty is the first to begin her protest against the blind rules and regulations. She states about her husband: “one who is not good for worldly life will not be good for even heaven”. (42)

She finds nothing but criticism and accusations about her and her family. Because of her brother’s status as a freedom fighter, her family members are considered as outcasts. She is even denied the opportunity to go to her home, to visit her mother on her death bed as they are outcasts. Here nobody, not even her husband, is there to defend her cause. It is clear that the values of women differ very often from the values which have been made by the other sex. Women throughout centuries have experienced subjugation from patriarchal society. They have undergone several cruelty for not only being a woman but also being a Namboothiri woman. Cruel form of patriarchal oppression that robbed them not only of independence and education but even the simplest and most innocent of joys.

Rituals have a prominent role in the life of Namboothiris. Even the sexual desires were controlled by rituals in Namboothiri community. Unni’s mother says: “Namboothiri women were to restrict their entire lives to the kitchen and the prayer room. Their destiny was to read only the Ramayana and the Shiva Purana”. (24)

Postcolonial feminism argues that women started questioning their subordinate status, got continuously fractured, divided and developed; it at present does not imply to a single and coherent trajectory of thought. In the course of development, especially with the fall of European colonies in Africa, South-East Asia, and Latin America, and the Caribbean islands, it was felt by feminists belonging to once-colonized territories in the eighties that much amount of time passed and it is

nonsensical to continue to be represented by aliens; one should represent oneself in our own terms instead, hence postcolonial feminism.

The very notion is present in the novel, where the two female characters question their subordinate status and then decide to progress by their own. Thankam is very happy and stubborn when it comes to shaping her future. She insists upon going to college much against the wishes of her own father Apphan Namboothiri. This occurs when Tethi insists upon going to her house to visit her sick mother, which is objected to by Unni's family. Their objection is that Tethi's brother has been excommunicated because he had participated in the freedom struggle movement. Tethi decides to visit her mother despite these objections. This is both a turning point in the life of Tethi as it indicates her initial step towards liberating her state in search of her identity. Thus, post colonialism offers feminism the conceptual tool box to see multiple sites of oppression and to reject universalisms around gendered experiences of both men and women.

The novel also depicts how women of subordinate castes we're not allowed to touch even their father. "Don't touch your father with rheumatism, he cannot bath every time" (46). Thankam at that time, was born to Apphan thamburan and a Neythiyare Amma (a lower caste woman). As her mother was a Shudra, Thankam was never allowed to touch her father often. One can't fathom how it would have felt for that kid who could never expect her father to hug her, and if he did he had to cleanse himself.

The untouchability custom of that time was too horrible. The caste system in Kerala differed from that found in the rest of India. Lower caste people could use only separate paths and their houses were in places where they could not be seen.

Lower castes can pollute a Brahmin or Nair, not by mere touch but also coming within certain feet from them. In Kerala, anyone who was not a Namboothiri, was treated by the Namboothiris as an untouchable.

There were stark differences in the way girls and boys were raised in these illoms. Girls could only study until they could read the Puranas without making any mistake, while boys could study as long as they wished to. Postcolonial feminist theory exerts a pressure on mainstream postcolonial theory in its constant iteration of the necessity to consider gender issues. Gender apartheid is sustained and justified via traditional cultural beliefs reinforced by patriarchal-religious institutions. Feminism seeks to highlight the disastrous impact of patriarchy upon women's lives. The exploitation of women within a marriage reflects deeper structural inequalities within a male-dominated society. One of the conclusions one can arrive at, analyzing the tensions between patriarchy and female individuality, is that it is important to understand the psychological formation of desires and its philosophical transformations. The study depicts desire and self-representation as two important concepts, and the understanding of the relation between them as crucial, in the formation of personal identity. Indian history have tended to focus on what is broadly termed as the 'status of women', which in turn has led to a concentration of attention on a limited set of questions such as marriage law, property rights, and rights relating to religious practices, the process of caste, class and gender stratification, the three elements in the establishment of the social order in India shaping the formation of brahminical patriarchy. The general subordination of women assumed a particularly severe form in India through the powerful instrument of religious traditions which have shaped social practices. A marked feature of Hindu society is its legal sanction for an extreme expression of social stratification in which women and the lower castes

have been subjected to humiliating conditions of existence. Caste hierarchy and gender hierarchy are the organizing principles of the brahminical social order.

Patriarchy is a system of structures where the system of power application is mainly hierarchical in nature. In such a situation women always experience not only a state of subordination, but also they are victimized by various forms of discrimination, oppression, exploitation and humiliation. The nature of subordination of women differs on the basis of the society they belong to.

The prime objective of postcolonial feminists is to make differences (race, class, and setting) regarding women's lives visible and recognizable in the eyes of Western feminists in non-oppressive ways. They imagine a world where differences are not detested, instead entertained and enjoyed, and moreover make space to thrive being immune to hierarchical structure of class, race, sexual and gender power.

In the novel, *Lalithambika Antharjanam* makes it true, in which she gives the characters some sort of liberation in a world where their differences are not detested, but entertained and enjoyed, towards the end of their lives. She says: "The greatest symbol of fame is stamped on her forehead. It is because of that took her along with me during this journey" (91), by which *Antharjanam* means that the path that Thettikutty adopts brings liberation to her. Her ability with the freedom movement and consequent trip to Banaras influence her and she becomes a disciple of a Muni in an ashram and turns spiritual accepting the name of Sumitrananda. After the death of Muni, she herself becomes a sanyasini with several disciples. In short, 'postcolonial feminism' and *Agnisakshi* provides corrective measures to mainstream 'feminism'.

## Conclusion

The novel *Agnisakshi* was aimed to be studied with a post colonial feminist perspective. Postcolonial feminist theory is primarily concerned with the representation of women in once colonized countries and in western locations. Postcolonial feminism is a relatively novel wing of postcolonial feminine scholarship. Postcolonial feminism or 'third world feminism' emerged in response to Western mainstream feminism postcolonial feminists argue that oppression relating to the colonial experience, particularly racial, class, and ethnic oppression, has marginalized women in postcolonial societies. They challenge the assumption that gender oppression is the primary force of patriarchy. Postcolonial feminists object to portrayals of women of non-Western societies as passive and voiceless victims and the portrayal of Western women as modern, educated and empowered.

The very notion of postcolonial feminism is proved in the novel *Agnisakshi* that portrays that caste hierarchy and gender hierarchy are the organizing principles of the Brahminical social order (found in India, a third world country) and are closely interconnected In Kerala (one of the states of India). There are tiny bits inside people who think that women are to be oppressed. Namboothiri women of that period, without many accesses to freedom, have initiated to make changes in a way or the other. Even though women of 21st century have access to all sources, they are still been subjugated.

Lalithambika Antharjanam makes it true by bringing up the post Colonial ideas and notions into her excellent novel *Agnisakshi*. She provides an account of how women are subjugated on the basis of their gender, class, caste and

race and how pathetic conditions of women have relation with male domination and upper caste, and the many ways in which its ideas were deployed to keep women dually subjugated.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**A STUDY OF SUBALTERN DISCOURSE IN PERUMAL  
MURUGAN'S *SEASONS OF THE PALM***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement  
for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**JOJO K J**

**Register No: DB18AEGR043**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

March 2021

**Kannur University****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “**A Study of Subaltern Discourse in Perumal Murugan’s *Seasons Of The Palm***” is a bonafide work of **Jojo K J**, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Department in charge

Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

Project Supervisor

## **Declaration**

I, Jojo K J, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**A Study of Subaltern Discourse in Perumal Murugan’s *Seasons Of The Palm***” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Aswathi Krishna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

**JOJO K J**

**DB18AEGR043**

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**JOJO K J**

## Table of Contents

<b>Sl. No.</b>		<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>2. Chapter One</b>		<b>3</b>
	Post Colonialism: An Analysis of Subaltern Discourse	
<b>3. Chapter Two</b>		<b>10</b>
	Perumal Murugan: A Voice for the Downtrodden	
<b>4. Chapter Three</b>		<b>15</b>
	<i>Seasons of the Palm</i> : A Study of Subaltern Discourse	
<b>5. Conclusion</b>		<b>21</b>
	<b>Works Cited</b>	<b>22</b>

## Introduction

Subalternity is a very popular theory and is discussed very often. The term subalternity refers to a condition of subordination brought about by colonization and other forms of social, economic, linguistic, racial and or cultural dominance. Subaltern studies are therefore study of power. 'Subaltern' is not just a classy word for oppressed or somebody who is not getting a piece of the pie. In postcolonial terms, everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern, a space of difference. In Marxist theory, the civil sense of the term subaltern was first used by Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and later by Gayathri Spivak who said that she used the word as a synonym for the proletariat, but contemporary evidence indicates that the term was a novel concept in Gramsci's political theory.

The main objective of the thesis is to study the idea of subalternity in the novel *Seasons Of The Palm* by Perumal Murugan. It aims at analysing how the characters depict the same idea. The thesis tries also to analyse the atrocities and other social problems faced by the subaltern characters. In order to carry out the study, the thesis adopts several ideas from the subaltern theory into the novel *Seasons of the Palm*.

*Seasons Of The Palm* is a novel written by Perumal Murugan. Perumal Murugan is an Indian author and highly educated literary chronicler. Ten novels, five collections of short stories and four anthologies of poetry were born from him. Out of his ten novels, five of them were translated into English. For instance, *Current show*, *Poonachi*, *One Part Woman*, *Pookuzhi* and *Seasons Of The Palm* which was shortlisted for the Kiriyaama Prize in 2005. He was also a Tamil professor at Government Arts College in Namakkal. *Seasons Of The*

*Palm* is Perumal Murugan's one of the most famous novels.

There are many studies done on this novel. For instance, "Warped Child

Psyche: An Unearthing Through Perumal Murugan's *Seasons Of The Palm*"

by S, Shilpa, Chetas Shiva R and Aishwarya Lakshmi. This study shows the influence of psychology and literature to reveal the effects of social injustice and discrimination on the child psyche which is likely to be damaged and fragile. Another study "Dalit Protagonists: Deconstructing Mulk Raj Anandh's *Untouchable* and Perumal Murugan's *Seasons Of The Palm*" by Velarasan K shows that Dalit community has been facing discrimination from the early age and it is still present. When compared to all these theoretical studies, this thesis seeks to investigate the novel with a different perspective. The thesis focuses on the notion of 'subalternity' in Perumal Murugan's *Season Of The Palm*. It tries to examine how lives of the subaltern characters in the novel are presented and to study the social issues that the subaltern faces in a society.

The thesis consists of five chapters including an introduction chapter and a conclusion chapter. The introduction explains the main objective of the thesis and the study that is going to be carried in the novel *Seasons of the Palm*. The first chapter is about the theory subalternity. It explains the notion of subalternity. The second chapter is an analysis chapter in which the novel is analysed and studied with different perspectives. Also, the author Perumal Murugan, his views and perspectives are explained in detail. The third chapter is the application chapter. It tries to apply the subaltern theory in the novel and studies the characters said to be subaltern. The last chapter is the conclusion chapter in which a conclusion is derived based on the study carried out in the application chapter.

## **Chapter one**

### **Post Colonialism: An Analysis of Subaltern Discourse**

Subaltern as a concept is related to issues of domination and power, democracy and citizenship, resistance and transformation. Subalternity is a position without identity, a position “where social lines of mobility, being elsewhere, do not permit the formation of a recognizable basis of action.” The concept originally is used from a strong political perspective against subordination, to understand the mechanisms of subordination better, rewrite history so that subaltern groups are seen to be part of it, and contribute to the development of strategies to further a post subaltern society or at least to outline the conditions under which subaltern studies can avoid a too strong or naive use of them by hegemonic powers.

The intellectual history of subalternity has emerged outside and in opposition to Subaltern Studies as much as inside it. Academic work on subaltern themes quickly detached subalternity from its various inventors. Subaltern Studies joined debates about insurgency and nationality at the breach between popular unrest and state power. Migrations of reading dispersed research on subaltern themes connected by circulating terminologies, arguments, and texts. Its internal coherence has been less intellectual than personal and more formal than substantive. Intellectual cohesiveness has never been a project priority, as the leaders often say, and it has appeared primarily in solidarity against critics. Outsiders have built outer walls for Subaltern Studies and landscaped its environment to dramatize its distinctiveness by 1979, women’s history was popular enough in the U.S. to merit source books and guides to research. In 1982, Eric Wolf published what can be called the first global

history from below. In South Asia, the history of subaltern groups was thriving, though they were not called that then.

There is no one intellectual history of subalternity and never could be, because it lives on local ground in disparate readings. Geographical patterns may exist, however, because, in the world of globalisation that makes Subaltern Studies what it is today, disparities have patterns. South Asian sites are extremely diverse and diverge along national lines. Readers in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka might tend to read Subaltern Studies as an Indian national project, not their own. South Asian readers far from big city universities and research centres might feel most distant from the global academy and might tend to value the project's global success inversely to its local credibility. In the global academy, moreover, venerable ideas constitute India as a singular, unitary, South Asian space, so readers can imagine the national "fragments" in Subaltern Studies quite literally, because debates in South Asia about multiple, shifting, contested nationalities do not interfere with this reading. Globally, India also has a theoretical location inside binary oppositions between West and East, First and Third World, Europe and Non Europe, modernity and tradition, colonizers and colonized, rich and poor, developed and under-developed, privileged and downtrodden, and soon. Because India stands for South Asia in the second term in each binary pair, Subaltern Studies fit neatly into prevalent ideas about India's place in the world. Indian subalterns can thus represent India metonymically. Readers who identify strongly with the first term in each binary pair might tend to embrace the claim that someone from the other side can speak for it. Speaking for (Indian) subalternity as (Indian) subaltern could thus become a professional academic niche.

In the last forty years, scholars have produced countless studies of societies, histories, and cultures “from below” which have dispersed terms, methods, and bits of theory used in Subaltern Studies among countless academic sites. Reflecting this trend, the 1993 edition of *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* included “history” for the first time as a context for defining “subaltern.” The word has a long past. In late-medieval English, it applied to vassals and peasants. By 1700, it denoted lower ranks in the military, suggesting peasant origins. By 1800, authors writing “from a subaltern perspective” published novels and histories about military campaigns in India and America; and G.R. Gleig (1796-1888), who wrote biographies of Robert Clive, Warren Hastings, and Thomas Munro, mastered this genre. The Great War provoked popular accounts of subaltern life in published memoirs and diaries; and soon after the Russian Revolution, Antonio Gramsci (1891- 1937) began to weave ideas about subaltern identity into theories of class struggle. Gramsci was not influential in the English-reading world, however, until Raymond Williams promoted his theory in 1977, well after translations of *The Modern Prince* (1957) and *Prison Notebooks* (1966) had appeared.<sup>14</sup> By 1982, Gramsci’s ideas were in wide circulation. Ironically, though Gramsci himself was a Communist activist whose prison notes were smuggled to Moscow for publication and translation, scholars outside or opposed to Communist parties (and to Marxism) have most ardently embraced his English books (as well as those of the Frankfurt School). Subaltern Studies deployed some of Gramsci’s ideas at a critical juncture in historical studies. By the late 1970s, a rapid decline in state-centred historical research had already occurred and social history “from below” was flourishing.

As used by Gramsci, the term subaltern referred to those excluded from state power. “The subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until

they are able to become a ‘State’,” but the term was commonly assumed to refer specifically to workers and peasants. Yet, in the essay in which he introduced subaltern studies to the world, Ranajit Guha defined the subaltern simply as those who were not among the elite, specifically, as the “demographic difference between the total Indian population” and the dominant indigenous and foreign elite. This capacious formulation opened up the possibility of bringing to the center those who had been excluded and marginalized—on the basis not just of class, but also of caste, gender, and indeed office. In widening the scope of subalternity, Guha facilitated the theorization of multiple forms of domination in ways that were not reducible either to pluralism or economistic Marxism

The origin and development of the concept of the subaltern in the work of Gramsci has been reconstructed and analysed by several authors. One could add the contributions of the School of Subaltern Studies in India, which has helped with the dissemination of the concept, were it not that its work has confused rather than clarified the consistency and reach of the term. One can refer to its use of the concept as ‘subalternism’, since it has ended in an essential approach to a subjectivity locked into subalternity with praise for an autonomous, active, conscious and rebellious subaltern: that is, a subaltern that is not a subaltern.

The concept of the subaltern moved to a further more complex theoretical debate with the intervention of the Indian-American post-colonial feminist critic, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who was criticized in her ground-breaking essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988). The complexity of Spivak’s stance might be attributed to her erudite and skilful, but sometimes, unclear implementation of structuralist and post-structuralist theories, particularly deconstructionist strategies of reading, in colonial and post-colonial spaces of divergence and inversion. In her

seminal essay, Spivak reconsidered the problems of subalternity within new historical developments as brought by capitalistic politics of undermining revolutionary voice and divisions of labour in a globalized world. She disapproved the first place of Gramsci's assertion of the autonomy of the subaltern groups. Her justification of this rejection of Gramscian view is based on her view that this autonomy results in homogeneity of the subaltern group and subaltern subjective identity. Spivak's second criticism of Subaltern Studies Group lies in her belief that no methodology, even the most ambitious Marxist one, can avoid a sort of essentialism in its attempt to define who or what may constitute the subaltern group. Consequently, Spivak chooses to adopt the notion of the subaltern essentially because it is truly situational.

Spivak, faced with this difficulty of specifying the realm of subalternity, shifts to reconsider the issues of the subaltern groups by dealing with the problems of gender and particularly Indian women during colonial times. She reflected on the status of Indian women relying on her analysis of a case of Sati women practices under the British colonial rule. Sati women as a subaltern group, Spivak's arguments were lost between two polarities: the British humanist discourse calling for individual freedom of Sati women and the Hindu native policy calling for voluntary participation in the ritual. The conflict between these two positions produced two different discourses with no possible solution; one postulates that, "white man [are] saving brown women from brown men," the other maintains that, "the woman actually wanted to die" (Spivak, 1991). Here, it becomes clear that the Hindu woman loses their voice in such a contradictory position between two antagonistic poles that constantly teases her to make a conscious decision. The voice of the Hindu woman herself disappeared while these two discursive groups tried to give her a voice; the representation of Sati women contributes so much to a certain appropriation of their

own free will to decide and deprived them of their subjectivity and a space to speak from – “Finally, the Hindu woman disappeared, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling, which is the displaced figuration of the third-world woman caught between tradition and modernization” (Spivak, 1991).

Spivak came to conclude by the end that the subaltern cannot speak. This last declaration that she made in her essay was controversially interpreted a statement which affirmed the fact that the subaltern as a distinctly conscious subjectivity only possessed a dominant language or a dominant voice to be heard. From this stance, one may go further to assume that the whole discourse of post-colonial theory itself is to be considered as a speaking for the voiceless and politically marginalized groups by their intellectual representatives. By excavating the history of deprived women, Spivak managed to elaborate on the original demarcation of the notion of the subaltern through her fundamental exploration of the experiences and struggles of women in general, either from the upper middle class or the peasantry and sub-proletariat class. She stands for women as a differentiated gender because of the outrageous exclusion of their participation in anti-colonial history. Spivak contends, “The question is not of female participation in insurgency, or the ground rules of the sexual division of labour, for both of which there is evidence”; rather, both were used as object of colonialist historiography and as a subject of insurgency, though the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is “even more deeply in shadow” (Spivak, 1988).

Hence, one could expect Subaltern Studies to attain authority as an authentic voice of the post-colonial East in self-consciously Western academic localities which have been shaped intellectually by orientalism, area studies, and Cold War anti-

communism, when scholars mobilize to oppose colonial forms of knowledge with post-orientalist critical theory, global cultural studies, and post-Marxist, post-colonial literary criticism. In years to come, we can expect a continued profusion of reading disparities in diverging local circumstances.

## Chapter Two

### ***Seasons of the Palm: A Voice for the Downtrodden***

Perumal Murugan, born in 1966 to a family of farmers, is an Indian author and highly educated literary chronicler. He was also a Tamil professor at Government Arts College in Namakkal. Murugan began his writing career by publishing several short stories between 1988 and 1991. He wrote ten novels, five collections of short stories and four anthologies of poetry. Out of his ten novels, five of them were translated into English and those are *Current show*, *Poonachi*, *One Part Woman*, *Pookuzhi* and *Seasons Of The Palm* which was shortlisted for the Kiriyaama Prize in 2005. His debut novel *EruVeyyil* was published in 1991 and dealt with the problems that a family faced when their land was bought for the construction of a housing colony, involving with themes of family, greed and corruption.

*Koolamadari*, published in 2000, is his third novel that was translated into English by V Geetha under the title *Seasons Of The Palm*. The book deals with the life and travails of its protagonist Shorty, a young goatherd of the Chakkili caste, who was bonded to work in a Gounder caste family to repay his father's debts. The book focuses on the theme of childhood, autonomy and freedom. Perumal Murugan's *Seasons Of the Palm* is the story of a bunch of people who are destined to be trapped in a rut hole, but in their case their lives itself is the rut hole. Bonded labour is a thing that the society has not been completely able to remove from the society. Even in this day and age, there are things and touchy topics that one conveniently ignores after one's social science class. Shorty and his friends belong to the untouchable class, they are sent to work in farms and other house hold works of the high cast landowners just like their fathers, they live like slaves and they don't get the salary or

respect they deserve. Even in their small age, they are burdened with huge loads of work and punishments. They are malnourished and the happiness that they should enjoy in their childhood is taken away from them. They are considered untouchables and are forced to do anything that their masters command.

In the beginning everything is explained in detail just like how shorty sees his world and that is present around him, the sheep, the cattle, the children and the masters are his world where he is forced to live where there is no joy for him in this world yet he has to take this cause he has not got a choice. There are five characters present in this book, all children of different ages uniquely named Shorty, Belly, Stonedeaf, Stumpleg and Tallfellow. Shorty the main protagonist of the story lives with sheep like a family, away from his own family. All of them work as shepherds. In addition, the primary work of tall fellow is to clean the shit of his old master whose family doesn't take care of him. Stonedeaf carries the baby of a high society woman as the baby's mother could not take care of her because of her poor health. In a nut shell, they are all like children who are trying to squeeze out some childhood in severely punishing circumstances from which they have no exit and if anyone tried to get out of this bondage will eventually return their own thinking about the debts of their parents or knowing that household works are easily replaceable by their own siblings sometimes they are even brought back by the landlords or even killed.

The author shows the contrast by bringing by bringing the landlords son Selvan into the book, who despite their age, the reader will feel how much they have imbibed the authoritarian and castiest attitude of their parents. There is a lot of verbal abuses going on, the grounders calling the Chakkili dogs, thieves, fuckers and many other abuses. The Chakkili simply accept that language and respond with "Master" to their abusers. "Leftover eating dog" is one of the labels that they get

often from their master. They don't question their world, they simply cope. They are trapped in their lives with no hope and never-ending hard work, little food and face massive abuses both verbally and physically by all others of authority and continuous brutal injustice, they have resigned themselves to the very simple pleasures of life: feeling the rain that falls on their skin, watching the stars at night, sharing the white flesh of the stolen coconut with their friends who are all in the same situation, or when they are holding a baby goat in their arms. "His (Shortys) ears appeared to have shut themselves off from the world. Just as how his body had drawn itself into a tight knot, waiting to be kicked at anytime": these lines come in the final chapters when Shorty starts asking questions about the extremely wicked or cruel acts to his father and starts calculating the money he earns and owes the master. His beatings made him reason out a fact which earlier he took for granted.

Murugan doesn't put them in the strict categories of oppressor or oppressed. Shorty does run away a few days and his master accepts it as fate. In the same way, his master leaves his sheep and cow free in the harvest day and exclaims them as poor creatures who work for the whole year. This care and compassion shown for the animals show a more biased picture of caste discrimination and Casteism and is so rampant and obvious that even a caring heart practices it without being so ruthless. One can understand that the book fails to give a proper ending but the book clearly shows the portrait of a cast drawn society, oppression and feudalism that exist in Tamilnadu. The main protagonist of the story Shorty and other characters like Stonedeaf, Tallfellow, Belly, Stumpleg are all living a subaltern life. Perumal Murugan was very well able to portrait subalternity in *Seasons Of The Palm*.

In an article "Warped Child Psyche: An Unearthing through Perumal Murugan's *Seasons Of The Palm* by Silpa. S, Chethas Shiva and Aishwarya

Lakshmi says in Perumal Murugan's *Season Of The Palm* he has explored the area of the coexisting influence of psychology and literature to show the effect of discrimination and social injustice on child psyche which is exquisite and easily vulnerable to damage. It gives us a clear picture of the superior attitude of the so called "upper castes" towards the "lower ones", who are taken for granted, through the eyes of a child. In a society where children are given least priority when it comes to matters of oppression, Murugan acts as a spokesperson to convey the feelings of the neglected childhood. The representation of this feeling of negligence and oppression is evident in the animal like treatment of the children on the basis of the constraining and irrational systems established by the society named caste system.

The novel also reveals aspect of narrativisation that inevitably foregrounds the author and brings him under the scanner; the manner and degree of representation, the nature of its politics, and estimations or valuations of authenticity and truthfulness are worked out against the historical, political, social and individual personhood of the writer. Here lies the question of conferring or denying narrational authority: who may be deemed the most appropriate to speak, how, on what, and for whom. Such questions elicit concern and rightly so, with regards representations of the marginalized and the oppressed. Perumal Murugan, a contemporary non-Dalit poet and novelist, writes within this conflict riddled space; his writing aims to articulate the experience of the marginalized and to represent, examine and critique the oppression faced by Dalit communities in contemporary rural and urban Tamil Nadu.

Perumal Murugan's writing meanders on, moving from scene to scene, from character to character, from story to story, from thoughts to reflections to observations, even as it constantly shuttles between the past and the present, bordering the thin line between reality and fictionality. His writing flows with a

certain ease, whether it is painstakingly sketching the history of, and detailing the traditions and customs around a particular god, locality or ritual or carefully shadowing, and faithfully capturing, a characters thoughts and sentiments as it moves from despair to joy to fear to hope to resignation. The perceived authenticity of a particular narrative is contingent upon the manner in which one determines the validity of the particular vantage point of the narrator, and although Murugan's representation of Dalit in his works have mostly invited praise, the fact of his birth as a non Dalit might be discomfiting to some of the fairly non dramatic nature of his narratives, robbed in the unaffected simplicity of its linguistic expression, is occasionally contrasted with instances of terrifying law honesty that hits its readers with the force of its expression, deeply unsettling them.

## Chapter Three

### *Seasons of the Palm: A Study of Subaltern Discourse*

*Seasons Of the Palm*, written by Perumal Murugan, is about the journey of Shorty and his group of untouchable kids who work as household help to different high caste landlords in Tamil Nadu. Five characters, all children of different age, uniquely named, Shorty, Stumpleg, Belly, Tallfellow and Stonedeaf, have been called with the choices of abuses directed towards their caste by their landlords. Shorty, the protagonist, lives with sheep like a family, away from his own family, as he calls/recalls the sheep with the names and their personalities, which he has given to them. All of them work as shepherd. In addition, the primary work of Tallfellow is to clean shit of his old master whose family doesn't take care of him. Stonedeaf carries the baby of a high society woman around as she couldn't take care of her because of her health. In a nutshell, they all are like kids who are trying to squeeze out some childhood in severely punishing circumstances from where there seemed to no exit. Anyone who tried to get out of the bondage returns on their own or brought back by their landlords or killed. The author shows the contrast by bringing the landlords' sons into the book, who despite their age, the reader will feel how much they have imbibed the authoritarian and castiest attitude of their parents.

Central to the Subaltern Studies project was the Gramscian figure of the subaltern. As used by Gramsci, the term subaltern referred to those excluded from state power. "The subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a 'State'," but the term was commonly assumed to refer specifically to workers and peasants. Yet, in another essay in which he introduced subaltern studies to the world, Ranajit Guha defines 'subaltern' simply as those who were not among the elite, specifically, as the demographic difference between the

total Indian population and the dominant indigenous and foreign elite. This capacious formulation opened up the possibility of bringing to the centre those who had been excluded and marginalized—on the basis not just of class, but also of caste, gender, and indeed office.

One can evidently find the atrocities faced by the so called subaltern characters. Shorty was severely punished and never got any concern from his master even being a child. He was used to abuses and had to hear them with his face down or with a calm manner. He didn't get any proper food, clothing, salary or a better place to sleep. He didn't get any education and was forced to work whenever they wanted. His whole life was like a rut hole, to be precise his life itself is the rut hole. There are many situations in the novel where one can see subalternity.

“Here I am, yelling my throat dry! And you continue to sleep! A young lad like you should get up once! I should starve you and then you will know. You will be up when I call for you. You have become lazy, that's what it is...” (25)

Shorty had been beaten, beaten into a froth. Whipped on the sole of his foot! Shorty's eyes had filled with tears, but helpless and hopeless, Shorty gets ready for work. This happened a few times. *Seasons Of The Palm* is merciless in its portrayal of the daily humiliations of untouchability. It also evokes the grace with which the oppressed came to terms with their dark fate. Shorty, the central character of Perumal Murugan's *Season Of The Palm* is one such young untouchable who is in bondage to a powerful landlord: “The mistress never gives him more than two balls. One for the morning, one for the evening, is probably her reasoning. He must have more, at least four. Two for each meal. This year, when his father comes to claim his dues from the master, he must make sure that they talk this out. If he asks for four he

might get at least three.” From these lines one can understand the situation that Shorty is going through. He is nothing more than a paid slave. His days are like empty bowls. *Seasons of the Palm* shows us the life of Shorty and his friends through their own perspectives. It shows that a meal consisting of rice is almost divine compared to the stale leftovers that they normally eat. Shorty’s world has animals which need to eat to full stomachs and children can be deprived of nutrition. A world, where even serving food is to be done without touching the untouchable child or his plate. The world, where everyday Shorty loses a little bit of his innocence.

However, other scholars represented the subaltern as possessing a more contradictory consciousness. The loose definition of the subaltern permitted a reconceptualization of different modes of power, notably religious, colonial, caste-based, and the power of marginal groups. Just as subaltern studies scholars documented multiple forms of domination, so too they documented multiple forms of resistance. In analysing grain riots, small-scale peasant insurgencies, and the uprising of hill peoples studies—especially in the early volumes of *Subaltern Studies*—revealed the multiple workings of non-hegemonic cultural forms in shaping resistance. Simultaneously, this work reconceptualised resistant agency, holding that resistance was possible not only through violent conflict but also through cultural negation and inversion.

There are many instances where one can see such subaltern situations. Even for the mistakes did by Selvan Shorty was punished, even though Selvan tried to save shorty he could not. There were situations where Shorty was named thief and was punished severely without even considering his age. Even his parents could not do anything about it. We can also see in many instances that Selvan also saw shorty as

his servant and not as his friend. Selvan used to call shorty many things like 'you untouchable dog' and so on. Even in the end when shorty unknowingly pushes Selvan into the well he has a chance to escape, when Tallfellow says shorty to run he doesn't run instead he also jumps into the well, he doesn't resist the water, he goes down quietly. "His eyes search well. He is in white water now, white from the soft earth now and a few moments later, all is dark, the water is black and cool. Now he can see things very clearly. The walls are there, as always, and they seem to invite him. He cannot stop. No, he must go deeper. Further than anyone has ever gone. To the end, where there is only thick darkness. Where he cannot see any more, where he cannot see know how deep it is." These lines reveal how the lives of the Dalit are on real, how their lives are filled in darkness.

The novel also considers the Dalit and how they have a long history of sufferings. They even face discrimination now and untouchability is still practised in this age. Dalit literature provided a freedom to the Dalit writers to express themselves in writing. Though today Dalit writers express their disappointment through their writing, Non-Dalit writers in the past and as well as in the present also continue writing up about Dalit struggles in the society. Perumal Murugan's novels also deal with Dalit struggles and their identities. Their Dalit identities may differ from each other but they are the ones who experience through the same kind of struggle though in the respective times they belong.

The touch of the Dalit is simply polluting and disgusting to the upper caste. Landlords who believe in the superiority discourse. The strange notion of pollution and sanctity is hypocritical and questionable. The acts of the son of Stonedeaf's master reveal the urge of the high caste men to conquer the body of the Subaltern

women even though it is 'highly Polluting.' It is ironical that even when the sheep tended by an outcaste could be Sacred, the shepherd is polluting. The Grove where the slaughtering ceremony of goats is carried out is considered sacred and the subaltern is debarred from entering It; but when there is no ceremony, the Chakkili children make it their playground. The subalterns are considered as despicable creatures, or in other words, they are the dregs of humanity. The upper caste people disregard the fact that they thrive on the sweat of the so called Untouchables. They need them for carrying out all menial tasks from the tidying of cowsheds to the cleaning of latrines. Tallfellow, apart from taking care of the sheep, has to look after the bed ridden old Master. The old Master, though utterly dependent on the chakkili, does not waste any opportunity to shower insults on him. Similarly, Stonedeaf has to look after the child of her sickly mistress. Thus the lives of these masters depend on the labour of the chakkili, but they do not acknowledge It.

Spivak's declaration that subaltern cannot speak unless and until he or she raises voice for his or her right, comes true. This is well depicted by Perumal in the novel. The social conditions of this village are not unusual. During the temple festival, these untouchable boys have to stand outside. Murugan also gives an account of how they come to this temple during the rest of the year when no one is around and play with the idols freely. There is a progress which Shorty makes as the story moves forward, he is described as this young boy who is fearful and sensitive in the initial chapters but in the end, he has become unwary of his surroundings. Murugan describes this as : "His (Shorty's)ears appeared to have shut themselves off from the world. Just as how his body had drawn itself into a tight knot, waiting to be kicked at anytime." (56). These lines come in the final chapters when Shorty starts asking questions about this atrocity to his father and starts calculating the money he

earns and owes the Master. His beatings made him reason out a phenomenon which earlier he took for granted. As mentioned earlier, Murugan doesn't put them in the strict categories of Oppressor and Oppressed. Shorty does run away for a few days and his Master accepts it as fate. In the same way, his Master leaves his sheep and cow free on the Harvest day and exclaim them as poor beings who work throughout the year. This care and compassion for the animals show a more skewed picture of caste discrimination. Casteism is so rampant and obvious that even a caring heart practices it without actually being so ruthless. In the novel, each member who belongs to the downtrodden section of society has docilely accepted the 'laws of fate,' or the myth regarding their inferior social status. Because of the psychological subordination and acceptance of hegemony, they passively accept their abject, stark predicament subserviently without questioning. Shorty and his friends express their antipathy to this system when they are together. But they do not have the audacity to question their masters, demand a decent wage, or fight for their legitimate rights. They have internalized the myth regarding their inferiority and have ungrudgingly accepted their secondary social status. Shorty, for example, is haunted by a paranoid dread about the punishments he will get from his master for each and every thing.

## Conclusion

Perumal Murugan's internationally acclaimed novel *Seasons Of the Palm* undeniably relies upon the concept of 'subalternity'. Undoubtedly, the concept is presented through the deeply rooted characters of the novel *Season of the Palm*. The novel introduces all the characters as deeply drowned in subalternity. Five characters, all children of different age, uniquely named, Shorty, Stumpleg, Belly, Tallfellow and Stonedeaf, had been called with the choices of abuses directed towards their caste by their landlords. In a nutshell, they all are like kids who are trying to squeeze out some childhood in severely punishing circumstances from where there seemed to no exit. Anyone who tried to get out of the bondage returns on their own or brought back by their landlords or killed. The author shows the contrast by bringing the landlords' sons into the book, who despite their age, the reader will feel how much they have imbibed the authoritarian and castiest attitude of their parents.

The novel also proves Spivak's declaration that subaltern cannot speak until they raise their voice. The characters of the novel pave ways for this declaration. They try to defend their actions against the landlords. Perumal Murugan depicts the hapless existence of the 'chakkili' children who are trapped in the vicious cycle of bonded labour, thus bringing to light the voices suppressed by the dominant power structures. Through this novel, he tries to give voice to their subdued cries and vehemently condemns the upholders of the brutal caste system. Just as Spivak declared that the Subalterns cannot speak, Perumal Murugan has tried to show how these people categorized as 'subalterns' who cannot speak, finally try to speak. From all these characters and the instances in the novel, one can undoubtedly say that the theory of subalternity applies to this novel *Seasons Of The Palm* by Perumal Murugan.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKADAVU**

**EXPLORING THE ROAD TO THE SELF: A TRAUMATIC  
TREK THROUGH MCCARTHY'S *THE ROAD***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Arts

**NEVIN SHAJI**

**Register No: DB18AEGR044**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Mr. Jince Joseph

June 2021

**KANNUR UNIVERSITY****Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Exploring the Road to the Self: A Traumatic Trek through McCarthy’s *The Road*” is a bonafide work of Mr. Nevin Shaji, who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan  
Head of the Department

Mr. Jince Joseph  
Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Nevin Shaji, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Exploring the Road to the Self: A Traumatic Trek through McCarthy’s *The Road*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Jince Joseph of the Department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College. I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

08 June 2021

Nevin Shaji

DB18AEGR044

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Nevin Shaji

## Table of Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	1
Chapter One: A Deep Dive in Trauma Theory	3
Chapter Two: Weaving the Lines of the Novel	10
Chapter Three: Exploring the Road to the Self : A Traumatic Trek through McCarthy's <i>The Road</i>	22
Conclusion	30
Works Cited	32

## Introduction

While many books can be enjoyed for their basic stories, there are often deeper literary meaning interwoven in these texts. It is capable of giving life and form to all ideas, practical and emotional. A searing psychological novel destined to become Cormac McCarthy's masterpiece. The common problem of the society is being portrayed through the novel. Despite McCarthy's unique prose style, diction, and other choices, many readers and critics strive to pigeonhole his works into particular genres. The book details the gruelling journey of a father and his young son over a period of several months across a landscape blasted by an unspecified cataclysm that has destroyed industrial civilization and almost all life.

The book is also apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction, which deals with the subgenres of science fiction that are set in a time period where the earth as we know it is coming to an end.

The first chapter of this project deals with different aspects of the trauma theory, which is an emerging branch of study. The origin, various theoreticians, their contributions, development phases of the theory and so on are discussed. It comprises of the information regarding the theory, the plot and critical overview of the text.

The second chapter depicts the relevance of the text *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. It comprises of the information regarding the renowned author, the plot and critical overview of the text. In McCarthy's *The Road*, the main protagonist and his son are cursed to wander the savage landscape. This book is truly different; it is absorbing, mystifying and completely harrowing. It's a brave narrative device and also articulates much about the psychological states of man and the boy.

The third chapter details how the theory of psychoanalytic trauma has taken a deep dive into the novel. Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* the main protagonist and his son are cursed to wander the savage landscape of a post-apocalyptic world in which most of the world's population has been killed.

These metaphorical networks are significant of a latent inner reality. They point at an obsession just as dreams can do. The last phase consists in linking the writer's literary creation to his own personal life.

## Chapter One

### A Deep Dive in Trauma Theory

The word 'trauma' is used to describe experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that overwhelm people's ability to cope, leaving them powerless. Trauma has sometimes been defined in references to circumstances that are outside the realm of human experience. Unfortunately, this definition does not always hold true. For some group of people, trauma can occur frequently and become part of the common human experience.

A traumatic experience may of course be on the macro scale, but is more often a synergetic accumulation of repeated traumatic micro experiences. These cumulative traumatic micro experiences lead to the symptom, which may also take the form of a dysfunction of the capacity to think or to experience emotions. The problem is always a matter of the proportion or disproportion between the quantities of sense data and proto-emotions to which an experience give rise and the capacity or incapacity of the instruments available for transforming the inputs received into thinkable experiences. What is not thinkable is either evacuated or encysted pending thinkability. Trauma can be caused by a wide variety of events, but there are a few common aspects of the person's familiar ideas about the world and their human rights, putting the person in a state of extreme confusion and insecurity. This is also seen when institutions are depended on for survival, violate or betray or disillusion the person in some unforeseen way. Psychologically traumatic experiences often involves physical trauma that threatens one's survival and sense of security. Typical causes and dangers of psychological trauma include harassment, sexual abuse, employment discrimination, police brutality, bullying, domestic violence, indoctrination, being the victim of

alcoholic parent, the threat of either, or the witnessing of either, particularly in childhood, life threatening medical conditions, medication-induced trauma.

Catastrophic nature disaster such as earth quacks and volcanic eruption, war or other mass violence can also cause psychological trauma.

Long-term exposure to situations such as extreme poverty or milder forms of abuse, such as verbal abuse, exist independently of physical trauma but still generate psychological trauma. However, the definition of trauma differs among individuals by their subjective experiences, not the objective facts. People will react to similar events differently. This discrepancy in risk rate can be attributing to protective factors some individuals may have that enable them to cope with trauma. Some examples are mild exposure to stress early in life, resilience characteristics, and active seeking of help.

Some theories suggest childhood trauma can increase one's risk for psychological disorders including PTSD, depression, and substance abuse. Childhood abuse tends to have the most complication with long-term effects out of all forms of trauma because it occurs during the most sensitive and critical stages of psychological development. It could also lead to violent behaviour, possibly as extreme as serial murder. For example, Hickey's Trauma-control Model suggests that People who go through these types of extremely traumatic experiences often have certain symptoms and problems afterward. How serves these symptoms are depends on the person, the type of trauma involved, and the emotional support they receive from others. Reactions to and symptoms of trauma can be wide and varied, and differ in severity from person to person. A traumatized individual may experience one or several of them. After a traumatic experience, a person may re-experience the trauma mentally and physically, hence avoiding trauma reminders, also called triggers, as this can be uncomfortable and even painful. They may turn to psychoactive substances including alcohol to try to

escape the feelings. Re-experiencing symptoms are a sign that body and mind are actively struggling to cope with the traumatic experience.

Triggers and cues act as reminders of the trauma, and can cause anxiety and other associated emotions. Often the person can be completely unaware of what these triggers are. In many cases this may lead a person suffering from traumatic disorders to engage in disruptive or self-destructive coping mechanisms, often without being fully aware of the nature or causes of their own actions. Panic attacks are an example of psychosomatic response to such emotional triggers, which can sometimes lead to severe psychosis. Consequently, intense feelings or anger may frequently surface, sometimes in inappropriate or unexpected situations, as danger may always seem to be present, as much as it is actual present and experienced from past events. Unsettling memories such as images, thoughts, or flashbacks may haunt the person, and nightmares may be frequent.

Insomnia may occur lurking fears and insecurity keep the person vigilant and on the lookout for danger, both day and night. Trauma does not only cause changes in one's daily functions but could also lead to morphological changes. Such epigenetic changes can be passed on to the next generations, thus making genetics as one of the components of the cause of psychological trauma. However, some people born or later develop protective factors such as genetics and sex that help lower their risk of psychological trauma.

The person may not remember what actually happened, while emotions experienced during the trauma may be re-experienced without the person understanding why. This can lead to the traumatic events being constantly experienced as if they were happening in the present, preventing the subject from gaining perspective on the

experience. This can produce a pattern of prolonged periods of acute arousal punctuated by periods of physical and mental exhaustion. In time, emotional exhaustion may set in, leading to distraction, and clear thinking may be difficult or impossible. Emotional detachment, as well as dissociation or ‘numbing out’, can frequently occur. Dissociating from the painful emotion includes numbing all emotion, and may seem emotionally flat, preoccupied, distant, or cold. The person can become confused in ordinary situations and have memory problems. Some traumatized people may feel permanently damaged when trauma symptoms do not go away and they do not believe their situation will improve. This can lead to feelings of despair, loss of self-esteem, and frequently depression.

If important aspects of the person’s self and world understanding have been violated, the person may call their own identity into question. Often despite their best efforts, traumatized parents may have difficulty in assisting their child with emotion regulation, attribution of meaning, and containment of post-traumatic fear in the wake of the child’s traumatisation, leading to adverse consequences for the child. In such instances, it is in the interest of the parents and child for the parents to seek consultation as well as to their child receive appropriate mental health services.

Trauma of a society is based on the experiences of the society not only focused to an individual but also focused to a number of individuals. Trauma of the society in addition to terrifying events such as violence and assault, suggest that relatively more subtle and insidious forms of trauma- such as discrimination, racism, oppression and poverty are pervasive and, when experienced chronically, have a cumulative impact that can fundamentally life altering. Particular forms of trauma, such as intentional violence and/or witnessing violence, sustained discrimination, poverty, and ensuing chaotic life conditions are directly related to chronic fear and anxiety, with serious

long-term effects on health and other life outcomes. In a society the victims of wars, clashes etc, in the case of South Africa the people were victims of five major wars. In their mind war is dangerous and human demolishing thing so the hate weapons, military coops etc, they stay away from the irregular behaviour of the society.

The trauma of the society is that, they learned so many things from their childhood experiences and the persons have different viewpoints about the same issue. There are so many different personality in the society, so they all taking decisions in their own thinking perspective. The relationship between traumatic childhood experiences and physical and emotional health outcomes in adult life is at the core of the landmark adverse childhood experience.

The brains of children who are exposed to chronic trauma and stress and wired differently than children whose experiences have been more secure. When experiencing stress or threat, the brains 'fight or flight' response is activated through increased production of the powerful hormone cortisol. While cortisol production can be protective in emergencies, in situations of chronic stress its level is toxic and can damage or kill neurons in critical region of the brain. Especially damaging is the experience of stressor that occurs in an unpredictable fashion (e.g. community violence, domestic violence). In extreme cases, this chronic exposure to trauma causes a state of hyper arousal or disassociation. Hyper arousal is characterized by an elevated heart rate, slightly elevated body temperature, and constant anxiety. Disassociation involves an internalized response in which the child shut down, detaches, or freezes as a maladaptive way of managing overwhelming emotions or situations. The younger the child is, the more likely he/she will respond with disassociation. Children are more susceptible to post-traumatic stress because in most situations they are helpless and incapable of either fight or flight. A state of learned helplessness can pervade children's

development as they learn, through the repeated experience of overwhelming stress, to abandon the notion that they can impact the course of their lives in a positive way.

When trauma or neglect happens early in life and is left untreated, the injuries sustained reverberate to all ensuing developmental stages.

During adolescence, the brain goes through a critical period of pruning and recognizing that may be characterized by the phrase ‘use it or lose it.’ Functions that are being used and stimulated regularly are strengthened and ‘hard-wired’ and functions that are not used are pruned away. This massive re-modelling occurs in the cortex, the highest functioning part of the brain that is needed for good judgment, planning and other essential functions of adulthood. The frustrating and often baffling behaviour of teens can be better understood in the context of what is going on in the adolescent brain.

Asking teens to do more than one task at a time can overwhelm, as they are just developing brain functions needed to prioritise issues, sort through problems, and set goals for the future. Because the cortex is under construction, teens use more primitive parts of the brain to manage their emotions, thus they are more likely to react versus think and to operate from their gut response versus reasoning. They are more likely to misinterpret body language and are generally more vulnerable to stress at this time. They also require more sleep because the work of their brain is doing to facilitate all of this growth and change.

While this brain reconstruction is going on, adolescents are also experiencing puberty. They are developing sexually before their brain is mature, and thus are most vulnerable to making poor choices about sex and relationships. Chemical changes in the brain make adolescence more prone to risky behaviours, such as alcohol and drug

use. Compounding these risk factors is the normal adolescent need and drive to identify, belong to fit in with a peer group and to separate from their parents as their transition to adulthood.

## Chapter Two

### Weaving the Lines of the Novel

*The Road* is a post-apocalyptic novel written by a prominent American author Cormac McCarthy in 2006. It depicts the world destroyed by a global disaster, the horrific activities of survivors, violence, and the unexpected love of the father and son traveling through from the country to the sea. This is the story of lost humanity and the offensive side of human nature, on the one hand, and self-sacrifice, compassion, and hope, on the other. In this work *The Road* will be reviewed with the summary provided, the description of the main characters and themes of the novel, and personal opinion. McCarthy was awarded the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for fiction, the Believer Book Award, and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction. On April 16, 2007, the novel received the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. In 2012, it was shortlisted for the Best of the James Tait Black award.

In an interview with Oprah Winfrey, McCarthy said the inspiration for the book came during a 2003 visit to El Paso, Texas, with his young son. Imagining what the city would be like 50 to 100 years in the future, he imagined "fires on the hill" and thought of his son. He took some initial notes, but did not come back to the idea until a few years later, while he was in Ireland. So the novel came quickly to her and she dedicated it to his son, John Francis McCarthy. In an interview with John Jurgensen of The Wall Street Journal, McCarthy talks about the conversations he and his brother would have about different apocalypse scenarios. One of the scenarios involved survivors who resorted to cannibalism when everything is gone. The film adaptation of the novel, directed by John Hillcoat and written by Joe Penhall, which was released in theatres on November 25, 2009. The movie stars Viggo Mortensen and Kodi Smit-McPhee as the

man and the boy. The production took place in Louisiana, Oregon, and various locations in Pennsylvania.

At the beginning of the novel, an unnamed man wakes up from a dream to see his son sleeping next to him. He is concerned that there is a chance that they will not survive the winter, which means that they will die as a result of the bad weather that seems to follow them at every turn. As soon as the first ray of sunlight tries to break through the gray sky, the old man, along with his son, wakes up and begins to investigate the terrain to find out which roads go south. During their journey, they often lose track of time, space, and who they are as individuals. The father frequently questions himself and his decisions. The only possessions they have are two backpacks and a shopping cart that was customized for the long haul. On the way, they stop at a gas station that seems abandoned, but they still decided to check it, in case there was any food left. It is obvious that both of them are literally starving and that their food supply is decreasing every day. Everything is described through a gray mist that covered the world after an unknown apocalyptic event. From that moment on, they had begun to value everything that previously seemed unimportant. Once they finish checking the station and conclude that they are alone, the father takes all the bottles of oil that he finds to use at night to light the lamp. He cannot be omitted or left nothing. Anything can be useful, anything can be used in these difficult times.

Due to a storm that starts outside, the two decide to rest until the next morning. During their discussion, the reader discovers that the two of them are heading south because they believe that the climate will be warmer and that they will be able to last the winter there. Meanwhile, the boy expresses signs of fear, after asking his father if he thinks they are going to die. The man does not give any direct answer, but comforts him by saying no at the moment. The children's question worries his father, who

blames God for the disaster around them. As soon as they wake up, they continue their journey. They stop at a farmhouse where they manage to find a can of Coca-Cola that the father gives to his son. It seems that the son is too young to remember the taste of the soda, so they linger there for a few moments and enjoy a taste that they will probably never experience again. After that, they continue until they reach the father's old house. The boy hesitates to enter the building but, in the end, his father convinces him. Everything has not changed, the same rooms, the same cast iron in the fireplace and the untouched patio with even the hedge in the same way.

Despite the fact that his father enjoys remembering his past, the boy gets too scared and convinces his father to leave the place. They spend the following days in another house they find on the South Highway. On their journey south, the two protagonists finally notice that there are signs of fire somewhere far away. As soon as they get closer to the area, they find footprints made on the ground and decide to follow it, to find out what happened. They see a man emerge from the forest, his body burned by lightning. The boy's humanity, what differentiates him from his father, becomes more apparent when he continually asked. The old man is more rational than his son and convinces him to go on his way without looking back for the possible consequences that can arise from interfering with strangers. The author introduces a series of flashbacks, making the reader aware of the man's past and also of what happened in the world in the moments leading up to the event.

Meanwhile, the fate of the boy's mother is revealed in one of his father's memories. As the world faded, he knew that she was getting closer and closer to losing her humanity or being taken away by other survivors. Due to this constant and unbearable pain, he takes his life with a piece of obsidian, refusing to say goodbye to his son because, in his opinion, those moments are a source of weakness and that is the

last thing the child needs him being exposed in this cruel world. As soon as the child realizes that they are leaving home without his mother, he does not ask for an explanation as he already knew the truth. The father wakes up one morning, alarmed to hear the sound of an approaching truck. Seeing armed and masked men walking alongside him, his father and son hide until they come across one of the gang, dressed in a biohazard suit, sharpening his knife. The father threatens him with his gun, but the stranger does not seem scared, instead he looks at the father and the child in a predatory way. He grabs the boy and puts the knife to his throat to intimidate the father into dropping the gun on him. In a moment of panic, the father shoots the stranger and escapes with his son to avoid being caught by the other members of the group. After shooting the stranger, the father and son desperately search for their car that they hid when they first heard from the other survivors. They soon find him in the forest, but realize that someone has gone through his things and taken all the useful items.

The father goes to check the area where the others camped, to see if they managed to find anything useful. This part of the novel is where cannibalism is best represented. The father soon finds boiled bones, suggesting that the survivors were also starving, but reached the critical and monstrous point where they began to feed on other humans. The whole situation makes everything even scarier and reinforces his opinion that they should try to avoid interacting with any unfamiliar person or group. After camping out of sight, they continue their journey south. As they walk, they begin to discuss who the 'bad guys' are, as well as the good guys. The child is confused because in his mind it is difficult to differentiate the two groups. The man explains that they are not the villains saying yes. They are still the good guys. And they always will be. Soon they arrive in a desolate town where the boy realizes that another boy is hiding inside a house. The boy hopes that his father will be more forgiving this time and allow the

other survivor to join them. He begins to argue in favour of the children. This shows that despite everything, the child realizes the importance of his father and the support that the Father does not give many counterarguments but tells his son that they cannot take him away, the danger is too much and too much real. He consolidates his argument by stating that they carry the fire. Fire is a symbol of humanity and the metaphor has the role of delineating the fact that each of them carries the will and desire to live and they need to keep the flame burning. Father's condition began to get worse every day. He can no longer carry his son through the cold snow and he needs to stop frequently. During the night, he wakes up coughing, tasting blood in his mouth, but tries to hide it from his son to keep his spirits high.

After several days of wandering through the harsh conditions and not knowing where they are, they stumble upon an old house that still retains some of its former glory. After forcing a door that initially appeared to be locked, they discover a group of people, slumped over and hiding in the dark. They are huddled against the wall and whisper to the man for help. Scared by the possible outcomes, the man took his son and ran as far away from that place as possible. They soon discover that the entire building was nothing more than an elaborate mousetrap. Those people in the dark, they stayed there against their will and used as a source of food by the other survivors who have resorted to cannibalism. The next day, they find a barn that the father decides to investigate while the child sleeps. Inside it he finds a source of water and several blocks, the child becomes more aware of the intentions of the survivor and the horrible role that the prisoners play. He asks his father that they are going to kill those people. Because he already knew what the destination was one of those slaves. He is scared that maybe one day they will have to do the same. Their humanity prevents itself from

taking such actions but fears that one day, when there will be nothing left for them, they will become one of the bad guys.

The father and son soon arrive in a small town with a billboard, on that someone has scribbled warnings for intruders. There they find another cabin and, in the garden, a secret room, hidden in a bunker, under the grass and the ground. The child is afraid when the father decides to open the door because he thinks that they may find another group of condemned slaves. This is a continuous fear for the child, imagining that behind each closed door, death awaits. To his amazement, the secret room under the floor is actually a kind of panic room or bunker, presumably belonging to the previous occupants who, for some reason, we were never able to use it. The bunker is full of food, soap, and gasoline as well as bedding and loose clothing. In an almost strange way, that bunker which was designed to be used only in critical and desperate situations, now represents a paradise for both of us. The boy finally tries ham and coffee, both products that are obviously hard to find on the road.

However, he still feels guilty remembering that all these things could have been prepared for someone else and now they were being taken advantage of. The father comforts him by telling him that these people are probably dead, but his only question is Do you think we should thank the people? They pray for those who built the bunker before falling asleep. They spend the next few days in the bunker, but eventually the father decides that it is no longer safe and they get back on the road, fill their car with everything they might need and head south. This section ends with the child enquiring their long-term goals. The question worries the father because he does not have an exact answer. He knows that in the short term they need to keep traveling south to find shelter in a warmer area, but after that, the future is unpredictable. A significant scene in this segment is the moment when the two meet a dirty old man. At first they are

cautious, taking everything into consideration, including the possibility that everything is set to be an ambush like the one they lived in the house with the prisoners. The boy is the only one who believes that there is nothing wrong with the stranger and convinces his father to feed him. When he is asked for his name, the old man responds by saying that it is Ely, but soon the father discovers that he was lying. The stranger believes that personal information should be kept private. When he asks why he gave them a false name, he tells the father that could not trust him. He did not want anyone to talk about him. To say where he was or what he said when he was there. While the stranger and the father talk about the child, the father describes his son as almost a god, because his goodwill is inappropriate for the new private word.

However, the man believes that this trait will not last long, because in his opinion, where men cannot live, gods are no better. He also states that trying to protect such a person can be a burden, as it is a vulnerable place for someone struggling to survive through the unknown. They leave the old man behind and continue their journey. When they stop to rest, the father realizes that they have no more oil to heat the stove, because when the boy shared the lunch with Ely, he forgot to close the valves. The son feels guilty and understands that his carelessness will have drastic consequences. The father's compassion is shown once again here, he does not want his son to feel worthless and guilty about what happened and he tells her that it is not her fault. But, he should have checked. Meanwhile, the father's medical condition continues to deteriorate. He starts coughing harder, producing more blood. During one of the nights, he also develops a nasty fever that takes all his strength away from him. After several days of enduring these symptoms, the father begins to feel a little better, so they can continue south. The couple reach a part of the road that is littered with corpses, all covered in ash. It is one of the scenes in which McCarthy describes the apocalyptic

event as possibly a fire that burned everything in its path. Most of the bodies are so disfigured that it is difficult to know that they were ever human. The father's first reaction is to protect his son from horror and protect him from his sight, however, to his amazement, the boy looks around him without crying. This is a sign that the child is beginning to understand the world in which he lives.

During a rest stop, the father suddenly notices that there are other people around. After taking a closer look, he observes three men along with a pregnant woman, who have lit a fire somewhere in the distance. As soon as the strangers leave, his father and son go to investigate their camp and surprisingly discover the body of a baby on fire. The father knows that this really leaves a mark on his son and avoids arguing about it.

As they continue their journey, they notice another abandoned house. The boy, influenced by his previous experience, is afraid to go inside, but his father convinces him by telling him that they need new blankets and something to eat. As they wander from room to room, they manage to find some dusty cans of food. They spent the following days in the abandoned house to regain strength. Finally, after spending more days on the road, they finally reach the ocean. Instead of being happy to finally get something they wanted, to achieve a goal, they only feel disappointment, the ocean is different from the way their father remembered it. . The best description of how it all looked is represented by the following. Beyond that, the ocean is vast and cold and drifts heavily like a slowly churning tub of slag and then the gray line of ash squall. They camp on the beach and the boy runs into the ocean, exploring it for the first time despite the harsh weather and freezing water. While exploring the beach, they found a half-destroyed boat in the water. After making sure there are no other survivors around, the man swims to the boat to search for some useful items while he leaves the boy,

armed with the gun, on the beach. The boat seemed destroyed by the waves and there are no signs of life there.

Despite the condition of the ship, Father manages to find some useful things like a bottle of gasoline, a flare gun, some new clothes, an inflatable boat, and also a first aid kit. When he returns to the beach, he realizes that the boy has lost the gun. They returned to the part of the beach where the boat was and began to look for it. Eventually, they find him, but the boy begins to cry because he feels that he has failed his father once again. The man knows that it is not the child's duty to deal with these kinds of things and he comforts him by saying that he is the one who is supposed to make sure they have the gun and he did not. The next day, the father begins to cough up more and more blood and notices that his condition is not improving. He is closer to death and knows that his time with his son is limited. He tells himself every day is a lie. But you are dying. That is not a lie. The Father is aware that he has told many lies to his son to motivate him, despite the fact that the child was suspicious each time and He kept asking if he was telling the son the truth. At this point, the only truth is that he is going to pass away soon and his son must be prepared to endure that tragedy alone.

The next morning, an unexpected illness strikes the boy who wakes up nauseated and feverish. The father panics and gives him expired antibiotics from the medicine box he found on the ship. The father is disappointed and melancholy when he remembers his promise that he will do what he promised. It does not matter that. He will not send you alone into the dark. No matter how heavy his son is, the father is motivated not to leave him behind and offer protection when he needs it. Once the boy feels better, they continue on the road to find a place Sure, a community built by survivors like themselves. They do not know where they should go, or even if that place really exists, but they are aware that staying in one place is not a smart choice.

They observe footprints in the sand, and when they return to the shopping cart after looking around, they realize that all their useful belongings have been stolen. They followed the tracks and catch up with the thief on the road. The father immediately takes his shot and threatens the other survivor. This scares the child that begs his father not to hurt him. In the end, the father asks the thief to take off all his clothes and put them in the cart and they leave him there, naked, in the middle of the road. The boy continues to judge the way he acts are from his father, but the father replies: You are not the one who has to worry about everything. The father is now aware that he cannot allow the child to control his actions since, in the end, he is his leader and should act as such. Guilt overwhelms the father, realizing that his son might be right. So, they return to the place where they left the thief but find no trace of him. They leave a pair of shoes and some clothes before continuing their journey. The pair eventually reach the edge of a city, but are suddenly attacked by an archer, hiding in one of the houses. The father is hit in the leg with an arrow and immediately retaliates, firing the flare gun through the window and hitting the archer. After that, he enters the house to check who he was and is surprised to find a woman, cradling the body of the man who had shot the arrow.

Desolate and angry, she curses the father, rejecting the idea that they were following the protagonists, arguing that father and son were the ones following them. The father realizes that she offers no real threat, so he takes her son and continues on his way. After a few more days on the road, the father's condition worsens so much that he can no longer walk. His cough worsens and he can no longer travel. They arrive at a place in the forest and set up camp. Knowing that his father is going to die, the boy begs to take him with father. He refuses, knowing that he will never be able to kill his own son. A few moments later, the father falls asleep and the boy realizes that he is gone. The boy takes his only inheritance, the gun, and begins to return to the road, but

almost immediately runs into another man. The stranger invites the boy to join him and his children. The boy agrees, but before leaving with him, he asks to cover his father with blankets and spend one last moment with him. The boy tried to hand him the gun, but he did not want it. Here the audience sees that the new stranger has no bad intentions. He allows the boy to see his father one more time and then they leave together.

They meet the children and the wife of the stranger, who hugs him. She tries to ease his pain by talking about God, but the boy prefers to talk about his father because he was the closest thing to a God he had ever known. The author ends his book with a description of the trout that lived in the streams. The main characters in *The Road* are a father and his son, whose names are unknown. The father is a brave and self-sacrificing man, but he suffers from a serious illness and coughs up blood.

Despite his condition, he dedicates his life to saving his son after the apocalypse. He is continually looking for supplies and nursing the child. He instructs the son on how to use a weapon against marauders, assuring him that they are good people who will die at some point. The boy spends his entire life with his father in a devastated land. His mother was pregnant at the time of the calamity and committed suicide several years before the beginning of this story. Supposedly she preferred to end her life in order not to accept the horrible circumstances of the changing world. At the beginning of the novel, the boy is scared and depressed, although towards the end he becomes more confident and strong. He does not forget his father after his death. He talks to his son every day. And he will not forget it. Whatever happens, he whispers, and continues to speak to him in prayers. He continues his journey with his potential new family as his father wanted.

In his novel, the author colourfully describes all the horrors of the post-apocalyptic world where lack of food and comfort, endless winter, and numerous deaths turn few survivors into marauders, thieves, murders, and cannibals. This book invokes awareness of global environmental security and international conflicts between states, which can lead to the same catastrophe. The absence of governance and law uncovers the worst aspects of human nature. Survival, of course, becomes the sole purpose of every person. Although even in the cruel world there is a place for love, and in opposition to inconceivable violence, Cormac McCarthy tells the story of the tender love between father and son. The main characters care for each other with compassion and devotion to themselves. The isolation, inhumanity and indifference around him make his love all the more precious. The author strives to show the development of a human character through the main protagonists. The son transforms from a scared child into a brave young man through all the struggles he has experienced.

## Chapter Three

### Exploring the Road to the Self: A Traumatic Trek

#### Through McCarthy's *The Road*

Cormac McCarthy's 2006 novel *The Road* tells the story of a father and a son who, after surviving an apocalyptic event that has destroyed almost all signs of life, travel to the south of the United States in search of better living conditions. Although there are hints that a nuclear holocaust might have taken place, the cause of the disaster remains unknown to readers, and the emphasis is laid instead on the protagonists' struggle to survive in a post-apocalyptic world where violence is ubiquitous. Their wish to go on and not to give up strongly contrasts with the attitude adopted by the mother of the boy and wife to the man, who commits suicide at an early stage in the story, fearing that they might be raped or attacked by other survivors who have seen in cannibalism the only possibility to survive.

By individual trauma I mean a blow to the psyche that breaks through one's defenses so suddenly and with such brutal force that one cannot react to it effectively. By collective trauma, on the other hand, I mean a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality. (Erikson, 153-54)

The lines are given voice by Erikson who was a German-American developmental psychologist and psychoanalyst known for his theory on psychological development of human beings. These definitions are very useful to differentiate between the two different kinds of trauma that one can find in McCarthy's novel. Over

the last decades, trauma studies has become one of the most relevant frameworks for the analysis of works of fiction. The upsurge of trauma studies coincided with a renewed interest in ethics in the 1980s, a time when the critical perspectives provided by post structuralism and deconstruction were being accused of not paying sufficient attention to history, politics and ethics. Although the critical framework provided by trauma studies has been very popular among academics in the last two decades, only a minority of the critics who have analysed *The Road* so far has made trauma the central focus of their analysis, which is surprising, in view of the important role played by trauma in the novel.

When reading the novel, both the style and the themes dealt with point to the fact that an analysis from this perspective seems both appropriate and necessary. As mentioned earlier, McCarthy is most interested in the consequences of the event for the protagonists, and the trauma they suffer as a result of the cataclysm is, in fact, one of the main issues dealt with in the novel. One can find at least two different types of trauma in the novel: on the one hand, the father and the son-and, one could say, every survivor of the catastrophe-suffer from individual or psychological trauma. On the other hand, the catastrophe has given rise to a collective trauma. Although both of these types of traumas arise directly or indirectly as a result of the same event, each of them has its own particularities. In his 1976 work, *Everything in Its Path*, Kai Erikson used the argument to conceptualize the difference between individual and collective trauma. Craps refers to trauma theory as an important sub-strand of the ethical turn and names Cathy Caruth (1995), and Dominick LaCapra (1996) as some of the most prominent representatives of this new significant paradigm.

Although in the novel, one can find many characters who are psychologically traumatized-for instance, Ely, the old man the protagonists find on the road-McCarthy

lays the emphasis on the psychological traumas of the father and the son. The father, on his part, has a number of reasons to be traumatized. To begin with, he has been a direct witness to the decay of the world: he has seen how, from one day to the next, both the natural world and civilization have been almost destroyed, with the remaining life entering a progressive process of utter extinction. Besides, he has lost his wife in this ravaged world where violence is ubiquitous, the father is left to live without knowing if he and his young and only son will be alive the following day. At one point in the novel one can find him guessing when death will arrive. These definitions are very useful to differentiate between the two different kinds of trauma that one can find in McCarthy's novel.

Regarding collective trauma, although Erikson is talking metaphorically, one could say that in *The Road* the metaphor becomes a fact, as all social structures and signs of civilization are literally destroyed by the unknown catastrophe. The few people who remain are left to live in a world where surviving seems to be the end that justifies the means and where there are no legal institutions to state what is wrong and what is right. In this way, all survivors are left to wander on their own in a territory in which the sense of community has turned into a fight for survival, a space where there are no values anymore and where nobody can trust anybody else: the legal system has been replaced by the old naturalistic (anti-)law of the fittest.

The son, on his part, is also psychologically traumatized. Because he was born just after the unknown disaster took place, he did not get to know the civilized world. Furthermore, his mother committed suicide soon after he was born, leaving him to face the perils of growing up motherless in such a bleak world.

On his part, his father, aware of the pointlessness of providing his son with glimpses of those long-gone days, avoids making references to both the previous order of things and his wife's death, his silence further adding to his son's troubled psychological condition. In this respect, several critics have engaged in their works with the intergenerational transmission of trauma, many of them providing evidence that unspoken memories and traumatic events of one generation can haunt the next generation. Additionally, the situation the son is living through is critical. All throughout the story the boy witnesses very violent and traumatizing events derived from the pervasive lack of ethical values.

In short, the protagonists are left to live in a world which has turned into an increasingly hostile place, with gangs of cannibals wandering around in search of survivors to use them as food. Readers have to cope with a world where ethics does not matter anymore, and where people are kept as prisoners and progressively dismembered, children are roasted on spits, and young boys are raped.

Although the trauma of the main characters is not just the result of a shattering initial experience, as Caruth suggests, but also, as hinted at above, of a constant, a world in which all social structures and signs of civilization have collapsed, many of the symptoms to which Caruth makes reference can be traced in the story of *The Road*.

On the one hand, the father has recurrent dreams of the pre-apocalyptic world. This recollection in dreams of the irretrievable past points to his incapacity to assimilate what has happened and to his traumatized condition. Besides, he has flashbacks to some disturbing moments of his former life, such as the conversation he had with his wife just before she committed suicide, in which she explains her reasons for wanting to do so: sooner or later they will catch us and they will kill us. They will

rape me. The boy, on his part, also shows some of the symptoms which are commonly associated to trauma victims. Thus, he keeps having nightmares at night. As he states I don't have good dreams anyway. They are always about something bad happening. In addition, the man is conscious that if they were to be found by cannibals, he would probably have to kill his own son to prevent him from suffering, and he is repeatedly visited by the intrusive thought of whether he would be able to do it-another manifestation of his psychological trauma. Trauma narratives tend to show a particular set of stylistic features which mirror the psychological fragmentation of the characters.

In the book, *Introduction to Trauma Fiction*, states that novelists have frequently found that the impact of trauma can only adequately be represented by mimicking its forms and symptoms, so that temporality and chronology collapse, and narratives are characterized by repetition and indirection. From her point of view, if trauma fiction is effective, it cannot avoid registering the shocking and unassimilable nature of its subject matter in formal terms. She suggests the presence of three characteristic features in trauma narratives whose presence in *The Road* is also recognizable: intertextuality, repetition (at the levels of language, imagery or plot) and a dispersed or fragmented narrative voice.

All throughout the novel, as the examples above show, one can find dreams, flashbacks, repetitions, and intrusive memories, which are proof of the fact that McCarthy drew his main characters as suffering victims of a traumatized psychological condition. It is also worth noticing that the novel is not divided into different separate chapters but constituted instead by a succession of short paragraphs which also seem to reflect the psychological distress and traumatized memories of the protagonists, especially the father's.

In addition, McCarthy uses in *The Road* a narrative technique which, according to Collado-Rodríguez, functions to bring the character's emotions-and therefore his symptomatic condition-closer to the readers, forcing us to take up the role of witnesses of the violent and traumatizing events the protagonists endure. This technique is the narrated monologue-also known as free indirect style-a mode in which "the protagonist's perspective mixes (till his death) with the narrator's. Collado- Rodríguez concludes that the combination of these experimental strategies reflects the chaotic condition of a traumatized mind that cannot express itself with sufficient coherence, a claim that seems to validate Whitehead's contention. The fact that all throughout the novel the protagonists show symptoms of being traumatized reveals that they are still, in Dominick LaCapra's words, stuck in the process of acting out, and that there is no progress towards the working through stage .

LaCapra was the first critic to take the terms 'acting out' and working through from Freudian psychoanalytic theory and use them to refer to the different stages in the traumatic experience. According to him, In order to recover from trauma, victims should evolve from the acting out stage to the working through stage. In the novel, McCarthy points to the fact that the atmosphere of constant violence and desolation that surrounds the protagonists is what impedes them from moving on to the working through stage and, thus, recovering from their psychological traumas.

Living in the post-apocalyptic world of McCarthy's novel is indeed a collective traumatic experience; no survivors can escape from the continuous threatening conditions of daily life in such context. Consequently, the two main characters in the story are often confronted with the feeling that life is not worth living. Thus, at some point the son refuses to tell his father a story because his stories are not happy stories, they are more like real life and, therefore, not worth telling:

You always tell happy stories. You don't have any happy ones?  
 They're more like real life. Real life is pretty bad? What do you  
 think? Well, I think we're still here. A lot of bad things have  
 happened but we're still here. Yeah. You don't think that's so  
 great. It's okay. (287-88)

Furthermore, although most of the time the father shows his will to live, as will be explained later on in more detail, there are moments when he also considers giving up and committing suicide. This can be perceived in the following quotation from the novel, when he concludes that he would have killed himself a long time ago if he had not had his son to look after, "but he knew that if he were a good father still it might well be as she had said. That the boy was all that stood between him and death" (29).

On the other, between structural and historical trauma. For one, losses are specific and involve particular events-and are, therefore, related to historical trauma-while absence applies to ultimate foundations in general, notably to metaphysical grounds. For one, structural trauma is associated with absence in the sense that it is related to a gap in existence and it may not be simply reduced to a dated historical event or derived from one. Nevertheless, then argues that the distinction between these two categories, absence and loss cannot be construed as a simple binary because the two do interact in complex ways in any concrete situation, and the temptation is great to conflate one with the other, particularly in post-traumatic situations or periods experienced in terms of crisis. Thus, the constant violence to which the protagonists of *The Road* are subjected leads them to live in a continuous state of anxiety and melancholia, ultimately increasing their awareness of the meaninglessness of life and, consequently, their structural traumas.

The close connection between structural trauma and existentialist philosophy points to the fact that an analysis of the novel from this perspective could complement well the analysis from the perspective of trauma studies. As one aims to show in the following section, analyzing the way characters behave when faced with devastation and with an increased awareness of the existential absurd is also one of McCarthy's main concerns in *The Road*.

## Conclusion

The Road has attracted the attention of many critics. One prominent reading of the book sees it as a response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Although the novel undoubtedly shares some of the characteristics which are typical of 9/11 fiction, reading it exclusively from this perspective can lead to very narrow results because, as have demonstrated in this paper, the meaning that the novel conveys goes beyond being only a non-violence message.

When analysed from the combined perspectives of trauma studies which may, nevertheless, be in conflict with one another in some respects, a more complex reading of the novel surfaces where its relevance lies strongly on both the portrayal of the emotional consequences of a collective trauma and on the message that the book conveys in the face of utter destruction. Much the novel's success is indebted to the contemporary reverberations of the message that it conveys about widespread violence and its traumatic consequences for the human population.

The first chapter of this project deals with different aspects of the trauma theory, which is an emerging branch of study. The origin, various theoreticians, their contributions, development phases of the theory and so on are discussed.

The second chapter depicts the relevance of the text *The Road* by McCarthy. It comprises of the information regarding the renowned author, the plot and critical overview of the text.

The third chapter details how has the theory of psychoanalytic trauma taken a deep dive into the novel. Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* the main protagonist and his son are cursed to wander the savage landscape of a post-apocalyptic world in which

most of the world's population has been killed. McCarthy absolutely nails their dialogue making marvel at how well he has mastered presentation a page the way one communicates.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**POSTCOLONIAL FEMINISM IN BARBARA L BAER'S  
*THE LAST DEVADASI***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirement for the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**PRATHYUSH PRABHAKAR**

**Register No: DB18AEGR045**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project Supervisor: Ms. ANU P THOMAS

February 2021

## KANNUR UNIVERSITY

### Bonafide Certificate

This is to certify that this project report “Postcolonial Feminism in Barbara L Baer’s The Last Devadasi” is a bonafide work of Prathyush Prabhakar, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Anu P Thomas

Department in charge

Project

Supervisor

## **Declaration**

I, Prathyush Prabhakar, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Postcolonial Feminism in Barbara L Baer’s The Last Devadasi” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Anu P Thomas of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

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Prathyush Prabhakar

DB18AEGR045

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PRATHYUSH PRABHAKAR

## **Table of Contents**

	Page no.	
Introduction		5
Chapter One		7
Chapter Two		22
Chapter Three		29
Conclusion		39
Works Cited		41

## Introduction

*The Last Devadasi* is a Novel written by Barbara L Baer where she emphasises the passionate and forbidden love clashes with tradition and caste in changing India. *The Last Devadasi* was Barbara L Baer's second Novel, first Novel was published in 2017 *The Ballet Lover* and her third Novel is *The Ice Palace Waltz* which was published in 2020. Barbara Baer leads us down fascinating lanes of deception and discrimination with a light touch and careful attention to cultural details through this Novel *The Last devadasi*.

Devadasis are dancing girls attached to the Tamil temples, who subsist by dancing and music and the practice of the oldest profession in the world. *The Last Devadasi* tells the story of Kamala, a girl who was trained in the line of Devadasis, a caste set in place a thousand years ago when girls were first dedicated in south Indian temples to serve the gods and men.

In this project, study on PostColonial Feminism in Barbara L Baers *The Last Devadasi*, first chapter deals with the theory of PoatColonial Feminism. This Concept deals with the social injustice, repression, sexual Inequality, lack of freedom exhibited by poor girls in Postcolonial period. Next chapter contains the details of the author, her narrative style and short summary of *The Last Devadasi* . The Final Chapter contains the nutshell, the postcolonial feministic elements in *The Last Devadasi*.

## Chapter I

### Overview of Post-Colonial Feminism

Nevertheless, this chapter intends to engage with the relevant use of the term, post colonialism and attempts to justify its features and its limitations with regards to English writing in the Indian context, as well as with reference to my own novel. With regards to usage of the hyphenated post-colonial, and postcolonial, in order to avoid confusion, the hyphen is applied to denote chronological time as past the colonial period, whereas postcolonial is used as the conventional term for a category or body of study, for example, postcolonial literature.

Post colonialism is defined as the ‘political or cultural condition of a former colony’, the term post colonialism might be thought to mean a complete disconnect from the colonial past, and perhaps even a return to the original, precolonial status, despite an acknowledgement of a changed culture. But given the number of years

spent under colonial rule, it is evident from the Asian and African experience that this is too simplistic a formulation. For example, despite seventy years of being an independent country, India as a postcolonial nation continues to carry remnants of the Postcolonial feminism challenges traditional white Western feminism for the latter's association with political liberation movements. Women around the world have very different histories with respect to their postcolonial inheritance, involving such experiences as imperial conquest, slavery, enforced migration and even genocide. Thus, postcolonial feminists have argued for the rewriting of history based on the specific experiences of formerly colonized people and their various strategies for survival.

The theory of post colonialism is a lens that can be applied to any manner of academic pursuits. The movement has roots in academic projects of decolonisation, such as Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), which argued for the decolonisation of not only the body but also the mind, and famously Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Said's theory of orientalism illuminates the pervasive tradition of Western literature, art and culture to stereotype representations of Eastern cultures and people, whilst centring the Western experience to the extent that people who are not white and western are, by default, 'other'.

Postcolonial feminism, therefore, aims to understand and undo the legacies of colonialism within feminist activism. In other words, postcolonial feminism wants to decolonize feminist activism — reclaim it as more than just a pursuit of the western world and its people. Postcolonial feminist academic writing seeks to understand and interpret everyday lived experiences through a postcolonial perspective, de-centring the white, western, Eurocentric experience. Post colonialism overall is the practice of studying cultural impacts and legacies of colonialism which have manifested themselves in human and political consequences.

Postcolonial feminism is a form of feminism that developed as a response to feminism focusing solely on the experiences of women in Western cultures and former colonies. Postcolonial feminism seeks to account for the way that racism and the long-lasting political, economic, and cultural effects of colonialism affect non-white, non-Western women in the postcolonial world. Postcolonial feminism originated in the 1980s as a critique of feminist theorists in developed countries pointing out the universalizing tendencies of mainstream feminist ideas and argues that women living in non-Western countries are misrepresented.

Postcolonial feminism argues that by using the term "woman" as a universal group, women are then only defined by their gender and

not by social class, race, ethnicity, or sexual preference. Postcolonial feminists also work to incorporate the ideas of indigenous and other Third World feminist movements into mainstream Western feminism. Third World feminism stems from the idea that feminism in Third World countries is not imported from the First World, but originates from internal ideologies and socio-cultural factors.

Postcolonial feminism is a relatively new stream of thought, developing primarily out of the work of the postcolonial theorists who concern themselves with evaluating how different colonial and imperial relations throughout the nineteenth century have impacted the way particular cultures view themselves. This particular strain of feminism promotes a wider viewpoint of the complex layers of oppression that exist within any given society.

Postcolonial feminism began simply as a critique of both Western feminism and postcolonial theory, but later became a burgeoning method of analysis to address key issues within both fields. Unlike mainstream postcolonial theory, which focuses on the lingering impacts that colonialism has had on the current economic and political institutions of countries, postcolonial feminist theorists are interested in analysing why postcolonial theory fails to address issues of gender. Postcolonial feminism also seeks to illuminate the tendency of Western feminist thought to apply its claims to women around the

world because the scope of feminist theory is limited. In this way, postcolonial feminism attempts to account for perceived weaknesses within both postcolonial theory and within Western feminism. The concept of colonization occupies many different spaces within postcolonial feminist theory; it can refer to the literal act of acquiring lands or to forms of social, discursive, political, and economic enslavement in a society.

In Audre Lorde's foundational essay, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House", Lorde uses the metaphor of "the master's tools" and "the master's house" to explain that western feminism is failing to make positive change for third world women by using the same tools used by the patriarchy to oppress women. Lorde found that western feminist literature denied differences between women and discouraged embracing them. The differences between women, Lorde asserts, should be used as strengths to create a community in which women use their different strengths to support each other.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, a principal theorist within the movement, addresses this issue in her seminal essay "Under Western Eyes". In this essay, Mohanty asserts that Western feminists write about Third World women as a composite, singular construction that is arbitrary and limiting. She states that these women are depicted in

writings as victims of masculine control and of traditional culture without incorporating information about historical context and cultural differences with the Third World. This creates a dynamic where Western feminism functions as the norm against which the situation in the developing world is evaluated. Mohanty's primary initiative is to allow Third World women to have agency and voice within the feminist realm.

Postcolonial feminism began as a criticism of the failure of Western feminism to cope with the complexity of postcolonial feminist issues as represented in Third World feminist movements. Postcolonial feminists seek to incorporate the struggle of women in the global South into the wider feminist movement. Western feminists and feminists outside of the West also often differ in terms of race and religion, which is not acknowledged in Western feminism and can cause other differences. Western feminism tends to ignore or deny these differences, which discursively forces Third World women to exist within the world of Western women and their oppression to be ranked on an ethnocentric Western scale.

Postcolonial feminists do not agree that women are a universal group and reject the idea of a global sisterhood. Thus, the examination of what truly binds women together is necessary in order to understand the goals of the feminist movements and the similarities

and differences in the struggles of women worldwide. The aim of the postcolonial feminist critique to traditional Western feminism is to strive to understand the simultaneous engagement in more than one distinct but intertwined emancipatory battle.

This is significant because feminist discourses are critical and liberatory in intent and are not thereby exempt from inscription in their internal power relations. The hope of postcolonial feminists is that the wider feminist movement will incorporate these vast arrays of theories which are aimed at reaching a cultural perspective beyond the Western world by acknowledging the individual experiences of women around the world. Ali Suki highlights the lack of representation of women of color in feminist scholarship comparing the weight of whiteness similar to the weight of masculinities. This issue is not due to a shortage of scholarly work in the global South but a lack of recognition and circulation. This reinforces Western hegemony and supports the claim of outweighed representation of white, Western scholars. Most available feminist literature regarding the global South tends to be written by Western theorists resulting in the whitewashing of histories.

Postcolonial feminism has strong ties with indigenous movements and wider postcolonial theory. It is also closely affiliated with black feminism because both black feminists and postcolonial

feminists argue that mainstream Western feminism fails to adequately account for racial differences. Racism has a major role to play in the discussion of postcolonial feminism. Postcolonial feminists seek to tackle the ethnic conflict and racism that still exist and aims to bring these issues into feminist discourse. In the past, mainstream Western feminism has largely avoided the issue of race, relegating it to a secondary issue behind patriarchy and somewhat separate from feminism. Until more recent discourse, race was not seen as an issue that white women needed to address.

In her article "Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference", Lorde succinctly explained that, "as white women ignore their built-in privilege and define woman in terms of their own experiences alone, then women of Color become 'other'..." which prevents the literary work produced by women of color from being represented in mainstream feminism.

Postcolonial feminism attempts to avoid speaking as if women were a homogeneous population with no differences in race, sexual preference, class, or even age. The notion of whiteness, or lack thereof, is a key issue within the postcolonial feminist movement. This is primarily due to the perceived relationship between postcolonial feminism and other racially based feminist movements, especially Black feminism and indigenous feminisms. In Western culture, racism

is sometimes viewed as an institutionalized, ingrained facet of society. Postcolonial feminists want to force feminist theory to address how individual people can acknowledge racist presumptions, practices, and prejudices within their own lives attempting to halt its perpetuation through awareness.

Postcolonial feminism is a way to look beyond the whitewashing of feminism, and to understand the nuance of power, geopolitics and money at play in the oppression and exploitation of various people, and thus for each feminist to become accountable for their own actions and activism. In reality, feminism is not feminism unless it is postcolonial.

Postcolonial feminism embraces the potential for diverse, organic feminisms that seek to end the ramifications of sexism, racism, capitalism and imperialism in their totality. It reminds us the united front of “sisterhood” is less in the spirit of feminism than are solidarity and awareness of the multitude of global experiences that comprise womanhood.

Postcolonial feminist theory is primarily concerned with the representation of women in once colonized countries and in western locations. While postcolonial theorist struggles against the maiden colonial discourse that aims at misrepresenting him as inferior, the

task of a postcolonial feminist is far more complicated. She suffers from “double colonization” as she simultaneously experiences the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy. She has to resist the control of colonial power not only as a colonized subject, but also as a woman. In this oppression, her colonized brother is no longer her accomplice, but her oppressor. In his struggle against the colonizer, he even exploits her by misrepresenting her in the nationalist discourses. Not only that, she also suffers at the hand of Western feminists from the colonizer countries who misrepresent their colonized counterparts by imposing silence on their racial, cultural, social, and political specificities, and in so doing, act as potential oppressors of their “sisters”. In this article, I explore these struggles of a postcolonial feminist, for it is in her struggle against the “postcolonial” and “feminist” theorists that she can assert her identity as a “postcolonial feminist.”

Postcolonial feminist theory exerts a pressure on mainstream postcolonial theory in its constant iteration of the necessity to consider gender issues. Postcolonialism and feminism have come to share a tense relationship as some feminist critics point out that postcolonial theory is a male-centered field that has not only excluded the concerns of women, but also exploited them. Postcolonial feminist theorists have accused postcolonial theorists not only of obliterating

the role of women from the struggle for independence, but also of misrepresenting them in the nationalist discourses. Edward Said's seminal study *Orientalism* itself accorded little attention to female agency and discussed very few female writers. Homi K. Bhabha's work on the ambivalence of colonial discourses explores the relationship between a "colonizing" subject and a "colonized" object without reference to how the specifics of gender might complicate his model. Critics such as Carole Boyce Davies who are suspicious of the male-centered bias of postcolonial critique often ask "where are the women in the theorizing of postcoloniality?"

Postcolonial feminist theory has always concerned itself with the relationship between White feminist and her indigenous counter-part. In their eagerness to voice the concern of the colonized women, White feminists have overlooked racial, cultural and historical specificities that mark the condition of these women. In so doing, they have imposed White feminist models on colonized women, and thereby, worked as an oppressor. In this section, I analyze two major lacunae, the exclusion of the notion of "race" and the denial of the socio-historical context that characterize the work of Western feminists in their approach toward "Third World" women.

Post colonialism can provide an outlet for citizens to discuss various experiences from the colonial period. These can include:

"migration, slavery, oppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place and responses to the influential discourses of imperial Europe. Ania Loomba critiques the terminology of 'postcolonial' by arguing the fact that 'post' implicitly implies the aftermath of colonization; she poses the question, "when exactly then, does the 'postcolonial' begin?" Postcolonial feminists see the parallels between recently decolonized nations and the state of women within patriarchy taking "perspective of a socially marginalized subgroup in their relationship to the dominant culture." In this way feminism and post colonialism can be seen as having a similar goal in giving a voice to those that were voiceless in the traditional dominant social order. While this holds significant value aiding new theory and debate to arise, there is no single story of global histories and Western imperialism is still significant. Loomba suggests that colonialism carries both an inside and outside force in the evolution of a country concluding 'postcolonial' to be loaded with contradictions.

Orientalism formed the basis for postcolonial theorization. The 'orient' refers to countries east of the Mediterranean. Historically, the term 'orient' meant the oldest colonies of the Europeans extending from India to the Far East. In orientalist discourse, cultural differences from the west were sexualized to categorize the oriental women (including Indian women) and contrasted with the superiority

of the European women. In his famous book *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said contends that orientalism or the study of the orient is ultimately a political vision which promotes a binary opposition between the familiar West and the strange East, the inferior 'other'.

In the early 1980s several critics explored the difficulties Black women faced in working with popular feminist discourses. Helen Carby explores these issues in her influential essay "White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood." In identifying and discussing the condition of "Western feminism" in the 1970s, Carby explains that Black and Asian women are barely made visible within its discourses. And when they are addressed, their representation remains highly problematic. Western feminism is criticized for the Orientalist way in which it represents the social practices of other races as backward and barbarous, from which Black and Asian women need rescuing. In Carby's view, Western feminism frequently suffers from an ethnocentric bias in presuming that the solutions which White Western women have advocated in combating their oppression are equally applicable to all. As a result, issues of race have been neglected which has hindered feminists from thinking about the ways in which racism and patriarchy interact.

This constitution of a colonial Other in these White Western feminist texts on women in the Third World is, according to Mohanty,

due to three analytical presuppositions in these texts. First is the assumption of the category of “Third World’ women as a coherent group with identical interests, experiences, and goals prior to their entry in the socio-political and historical field” . This Western feminist discourse defines Third World women as subjects “outside” social relations instead of looking at the way these women are constituted through these social structures. Economic, religious and familial structures are judged by Western standards; the “typical” Third World woman is thus being defined as religious, family-oriented, legal minors, illiterate and domestic. Through this production of a Third World Other, White Western feminists are discursively representing themselves as being sexually liberated, free-minded, in control of their own lives. Secondly, the model of power which these Western feminist writings imply, namely the humanist, classical notion of men as oppressors and women as oppressed is taken up by these White scholars. This concept is definitely not adequate, says Mohanty, as it implies a universal notion of patriarchy and thus only stresses the binary “men versus women”. Furthermore, in not taking into account the various socio-political contexts, women are “robbed” of their historical and political agency. She pleads for a politics of location and a more Foucauldian model of power, so that the colonialist move made by some Western feminist scholars can be made explicit as being a discursive institution, and “Third World” women, placed in their own

particular historical and political contexts, now can have moments of empowerment with this “diverse, heterogeneous sort of subjectivity”. In this way, Mohanty is deconstructing the idea of “First World woman as subject” versus the “Third World woman as object” which eventually leads to an opening up of theoretical space to talk about differences among Third World women, and women in general.

The dismissal of First World feminism at a stroke because of the problems discussed earlier in this article might risk losing its resources which can contribute to feminist critique. Hence, one needs to think of the possibility of building new, vigilant relations between women across “First” and “Third World” feminism, as is evidenced by a book edited by Susheila Nasta entitled *Motherlands: Black Women’s Writing from Africa, the Caribbean and South Asia*. Nasta states that a creative dialogue is possible where First world and Third world voices both contribute and learn from each other. Nasta also acknowledges the problems with the use of English as father tongue that remains problematic for these women, as it houses both colonial and patriarchal values. She, however, reminds us that we must attend to ways in which women can transform the colonizer’s language in order to enable new kinds of representations through which they can speak.

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## Chapter II

### About Barbara L Baer

Barbara L Baer received her BA and MA at Stanford University before travelling to live and teach in South India and Uzbekistan, USSR. Barbara has written for national and international publications and is the author of three novels which are “The Ice Palace Waltz”, “The Ballet Lover”, The last Devadasi. When the 2008 financial meltdown began, she remembered stories of tragedy and loss following the 1907 panic and the crash of 1929 that devastated her families.

She has reviewed classical and contemporary dance for newspapers and periodicals in America and France. Credits include fiction in Redbook and reportage for The Nation. She lives in Sonoma County, California, where she and her husband, Michael, who is a writer, cultivate pomegranates and olives.

An interviewer asked a question to Barbara that ‘What led you to write The Last Devadasi?’ and she answered that when I studied in Madras with the greatest South Indian dancer, Balasaraswathi, I learned from her family of the discrimination she had endured because of being born into the Devadasi caste. The contradiction that the most venerated dancer, Balasaraswati, had experienced, like other women

for millennia, was that she was dedicated as a girl to temple deity, determining that sexual object to upper caste men. As much as the dance, I learned the determination of caste, and that stayed with me long after I left India.

The Author always says fiction gives the writer a range of choices that history and non-fiction writing do not. Anything you know can be re-invented and given to a character to embody in fiction, while the essays and memoir pieces that I also write cannot stray too far from the truth because, I believe, that writing suffers from real life experience being tampered with too much.

The Last Devadasi, set in South India in the 1970s, The Last Devadasi tells the story of Kamala Kumari, a rising film star, who must conceal her origins as a member of the shunned Devadasi caste, entangling friends and lovers in her deceptions.

The Author was working on the novel 'The last Devadasi' about 20 Years, thinking and rewriting the story of a fictional dancer, Kamala kumari, whose life she merged with the facts of the Indian caste system and her memories of dance in Madras.

Kamala Kumari is more than a Gemini Studio starlet; she's a classical dancer trained in the age-old line of Devadasis, a caste set in

place a thousand years ago when girls were first dedicated in south Indian temples to serve the gods and men.

From the promise of art and devotion, the sacred dancers fell into the hands of priests who both exalted and betrayed them. Beautiful, brilliant and proud, Kamala struggles to escape the old ways, entangling her Indian assistant, Dutch lover, and his young American wife.

The Last Devadasi tells us a story of Kamala, a girl who was trained in the age old line of Devadasis, a caste set in place a thousand years when girls were first dedicated in South Indian temples to serve the gods and men. We also follows a troubled Dutchman Jules and his struggle between his love for Kamala and devotion to his American wife Angela. There is also Celestine Marie, known as Celest, an orphan from a French monastery who links all the characters.

Barbara Baer managed to potray beautifully all that is beautiful and ugly in the Indian society. The main theme of the novel is Devadasi caste, they were young women who, at very young age, were forced to dedicate their lives to worshipping and serving the temple of a Hindu deity Siva. Besides being trained in singing and traditional dances, these girls also had to sleep with men from higher castes.

They were marked as unpure and were social pariahs. 'The Last Devadasi' doesn't follow in detail Kamala's childhood, initiation to the Devadasis and her life in that period. It focuses on the consequences.

Kamala is no longer a Devadasi, but famous dancer and a rising Bollywood star. However, while she can hide her past, she can't put it behind her. Even though she is a beautiful and successful woman, her life as a Devadasi made her insecure, distrustful of men, and ashamed which she tries to cover with her outspoken personality.

In this Novel the author had not only given focus to Kamala but also to Celeste and Angela, this novel is all about their life and the situations they overcome from high standard mans in the society. Here we can see the men like Film Directors etc. are being torturing these women's for money and their sexual desires but in this novel Barbara shows some men with good characters.

Most of the novel takes place in the 1970s when this tradition was outlawed. Because of this, some tend to romanticize the Devadasi caste as a deeply spiritual, noble tradition. Baer manages to prove them wrong, showing that the tradition was nothing but forcing young girls to prostitute themselves.

The Devadasis are not the only characters who have to deal with prejudice. Baer also points out that there are still castes in India who

are deprived of some basic human rights, namely the so called Untouchables. Moreover, there is a lot of criticism of colonialism which is shown in Angela's encounters with rich, British, highly prejudiced ladies.

Celeste is an example how selective the mindset of this society is. Europeans in this book are very well respected. Celeste, however, although a well-educated, hard-working, polyglot Frenchwoman, is dark skinned, and thus she will always be looked down upon and seen only as servant.

The Devadasi system emerged in recognizable form during the chola Empire, 850-1300 A.D., when the Saivite and Vaishnavite hymnists challenged the primacy of the Jain and Buddhist faiths. Under the influence the new bhakti, with its "total surrender to God", as taught by the hymnists, the institution became entrenched and persisted. The system received official priestly sanction and the "sanctity of nobility." Over the centuries the "apparent nobility" attached to the Devadasi instituton gradually disappeared and by the second half of the nineteenth century it had acquired a ignoble connotation.

Devadasis were regaded as "mortal bridal girls" married to "immortal bridegrooms" at an early age. Thiruvalluvar, the great

thinker, adored family life as the most perfect form of life; sexual activity should be used for both satisfaction and procreation. Misuse of sex was against the plan of nature. Gods and goddess were considered to be immortal because of the sacred and divine attributes attached them. These “immortals” were married to mortal girls; but the facts of life, such as death itself, make it clear that the divinity attached the girls to enable them to be married to gods was man-made. Because of this, man himself was responsible for the decay of the system which from the start had a “hidden agenda.”

The term Devadasi is a Sanskrit word, which literally translates to “female slave of god”. The first confirmed reference to a Devadasi was during the Keshari Dynasty in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. in South India .The practice began when one of the great queens of the Dynasty decided that in order to honor the gods, certain women who were trained in classical dancing, should be married to the deities. The inception of the practice was one that was imbued with great respect as the women whom were chosen to become Devadasi were subject to two great honors: first, because they were literally married to the deity, they were to be treated as if they were the Goddess Lakshmi herself, and second, the women were honoured because they were considered to be “those great women who could control natural human impulses, their five senses and could submit themselves completely to God”. As

they were married to an immortal, the women were considered to be auspicious. Their main duties, in addition to committing to a life without marriage, were to take care of a temple and learn classical Indian dances, usually the Bharatnatyam, which they would perform at temple rituals. Patrons were considered to have higher status for their ability to financially sponsor Devadasis.

The modern iteration of the Devadasi practice is significantly different from the historic institution, in terms of both its physical manifestation and underlying goals. In its current form, the practice is not as much about temple worship or temple dancing; rather, it is almost singularly related to the sex trade, prostitution, and exploitation of the lower caste. The difference between the Devadasis of the past and those of today, is perhaps best summarized by William Dalrymple of *The New Yorker*: There is an almost unimaginable gulf separating the Devadasis of ancient poems and inscriptions and the lives lived by women. In the Middle Ages, the Devadasis were drawn from the grandest families in the realm among them princess of the Chola royal family and possibly from slaves captured in war. Many were literate, and some were highly accomplished poets indeed at the time they seem to have been among the few literate women in the region. Today, the Devadasis are drawn exclusively from the lowest castes usually from the Dalit Madar caste and are almost entirely

illiterate. The majority of modern devadasis in Karnataka are straight forward sex workers.

### **Chapter III**

Post-Colonial Feminism in Barbara L Baer's – *The last Devadasi*

The Postcolonial situation in *'The Last Devadasi'* is marked by social injustice, repression, sexual Inequality, lack of freedom exhibited by poor girls. Barbara L Baer has presented their unpredictable situations they suffered.

Devadasi women rendered ritual and artistic services within temples. In exchange for their service, they typically received an income from the temple. As “wives” of the deity, they were prohibited from marrying mortal men: however, many Devadasis maintained sexual relationships with upper caste male patrons. As women whose existence appears at odds with normative frame works of conjugality and sexuality, Devadasis offer scholars the promise of a recuperative history that renders visible forms of subjectivity largely absent from the colonial archive. Research documenting Devadasis modes of sociosexual reproduction lends some credence to this recuperative promise. Emphasizing Devadasis role as dancers and ritual specialities, several studies argue that these dedicated women enjoyed opportunities more varied than those available within heterosexual monogamous marriage. Consequently, the colonial era compaigns to “reform” Devadasis by ending temple dedication may actually have narrowed the range of options available to them.

In this novel Barbara had presented a small story that had been told by Kamala to Celeste to type and this story was from the book “A

Rendering of Accounts in the Tanjore District of Madras Presidency, 1789-1877” and the story was “The True Story of the Theft of the Idol Ganesh from the Tanjore District” but Kamala had told it her own that everyone thought that this story was made by Kamala but Celeste had later found out that it was from the book but some characters in that story told by Kamala was from her imagination and in that there were a Dutch man who at last running to a temple in need of water that he was that much thirsty and he thought that he will be died without getting water to drink but at last from the temple a beautiful young girl gave him water and through that she had resembled Devadasis and we can see a Postcolonial Feminism in that story itself.

Since the time when women started questioning their subordinate status, got continuously fractured, divided and developed; it at present does not imply to a single and coherent trajectory of thought (Tolan, 2006). In the course of development especially, with the fall of European colonies in Africa, South-East Asia, and Latin America, and the Caribbean islands, it was felt by feminists belonging to once-colonized territories in the eighties that much amount of time passed and it is nonsensical to continue to be represented by aliens; we should represent ourselves in our own terms instead, hence postcolonial feminism. Before we discuss postcolonial feminism, it is better to know first what post colonialism is. Post colonialism or

'postcolonial critical theory' without doubt is an after-colonial development. It emerged around the closing years of the 80s. But it gained currency as a critical spade only in the 1990s. It struggles to push back economic, social, cultural, psychological, and linguistic colonial left-overs. The term is generally applied 'to describe any kind of resistance, particularly against class, race, and gender oppression' (Theime,2003). It does not approve of unjust power structures and relationships. This thought movement argues for 'social justice, emancipation, and democracy in order to oppose oppressive structures of racism, discrimination, an exploitation' (Nayar, 2008) by hiding off colonial dy-namism. Colonial masters at colonial sites applied intricate strategies to others at every footstep. Postcolonialism is concerned with social, cultural, political, economic, moral, religious sites, literature, language etc. to fight back 'euro-centrism'.

In this novel *The Last Deavdasi* we can see many postcolonial feministic elements like:

"On the front cover of *Problems of Public Morality: The Place of Devadasis in Hindu Society*, a dancer held a provocative pose. The curvaceous woman, arms over her head, her sari tied tightly at her waist, looked to be of short stature, full in bosom and hips, an hourglass figure that was the ideal South Indian woman, one of Kamala Kumari's attractions. On the back cover of the booklet, the

author, an old man named Krishnamarcharia, was posed before a draped cloth, one hand on a sacred Brahmin thread that crossed his sunken chest like a white worm. The book seller, sacred thread across his plump brown chest, made a chapel with his putty-colored hands. “Dancing girls are special interest to you, my friend. I have saved this for you.” Warm sea air whipped Jules’ face and dried his perspiration. He felt an itching, uneasy hot sensation down his spine and into his groin as he read the back cover. Devadasis are wedded to God because they are the sacred dancers who alone perform a most important divine commission in our temples. They dance and sing and serve rice to Siva. They perform another service: to reclaim lost sheep and bring them into the fold of God. Without their special services, ordinary homes like ours would become secret brothels, husbands would not respect their wives, and diseases would spread more virulently than ever without such abolution. “Abolution! Do you know the word?” Jules asked the bookseller. “No, Sahib.” “Well, for your information, the esteemed author has made an unconscious neologism that I find fascinating. He combines your Hindu bathing ritual of ablution with a Catholic priest’s grant of absolution for sin, especially of a sexual nature, along with abolition, meaning to end something. Do you find this not amusing?” “Sahib, the book is written by a most learned man with A.B. degree. I respect learning.” “I am sure you do, and I expect this treatise by a self-proclaimed scholar who doesn’t get his words

quite right will be riddled with superstition, error and repressed lust.”

“Sahib, you have liked my books in the past. Why are you insulting learning?” The bookseller pressed his hand to his heart as if personally wounded by Jules’ words. “Because it perpetuates ignorance.” Jules looked from the author’s photograph to the bookseller and saw two Brahmins who felt privileged by the superiority of their caste, even as it bound them to prohibitions and taboos against anything connected with sex. Even in marriage, the sexual act that resulted in losing semen was a loss of self and had to be washed away, purified. However, these clever, clever men had invented an escape hatch in the system: girls and women born into the Devadasi caste, females classified as Untouchable like those pariahs who carried away waste and the dead, were assigned the sacred rituals of serving the deities inside the temple, while outside, in dark warrens and cottages, they were bound to service the lower parts of the upper caste body: these were the services the author of the pamphlet meant without spelling it out. Jules regarded the entire caste system, like the Catholic Church, as one huge pathology. The key insight in his own research would show how the Devadasi caste had been created to reward men who feared women. In these paragraphs Barbara had given some layers of the Devadasi system that had been seen in the postcolonial period.

In the following paragraphs Barbara had shown how will be a Devadasis life and what all things should be they worried about;

"Usha. Sahib, you wish to come with me?" "Usha, the heavenly dancer." "Sahib, you are handsome as a Hindi film star so you will come with me." She stroked the tip of her oiled braid that lay across her breasts like a pet black snake, reached into a small purse, withdrew a tube of lipstick and applied its shiny red apple color in a single swipe. She flicked her tongue onto her upper lip where she had a faint mustache and beads of perspiration. A shiny water bug the size of a frog scuttled across the sidewalk at her feet. "What a dirty bad place this is for you, Sahib. You'll be getting your fine clothes soiled from the street. Please follow to my room." "Where do you come from, Usha? Where were you born?" Usha named a village. "It is called Puddavalli, but you will not know it." "Yes, I do, Usha. Puddavalli was an ancestral Devadasi village." "I know nothing of that, Sahib." Usha could be a valuable source, he told himself. A few minutes of questioning the girl and then he'd be on his way home to his bride. "You are wearing a wedding tali." Jules stared at the gold disc centering a strand of black beads around her neck. This tali was exactly the kind of disc that priests tied around the necks of Devadasi girls at the time of their symbolic marriage to the statue or symbol of a deity. Usha looked down at her bosom and tucked the tali in her

blouse. She began walking. He followed along Mahatmahaji Row, named after Mahatma Gandhi who had led the ban on dedicating girls to temples. How could that good man have known that this street where girls sold themselves would be named after him? “Where is your husband, Usha?” Excitement began to overwhelm him. His feet, his nose, his throbbing capillaries were seeking relief all the while his mind was telling him that Usha would be nothing more than an opportunity for an informational interview. “I was married at ten, Sir. The boy died. You are not afraid that widows are bad luck?” “No, I pity your hardship. You were unlucky.” “Yes, I have no luck.” He could see that Usha was afraid of something. She looked behind her twice before she arrived at a warehouse, opened an outside door and began to climb stairs with him behind her. On the third floor, she pulled open a door. Inside, a bulb encrusted with dead insects dangled in the center and roaches scuttled to dark corners and vanished into the walls. Usha stood calmly, her sturdy legs apart. “I’m sorry that I cannot bathe, Sahib. There is no water here.” “You shouldn’t worry. I’m here only to talk with you. Please come to sit beside me and answer a few questions. I will pay you well for your time, Usha.” She sat next to him on the narrow bed and stroked his arm. “Was your mother connected to classical music or dance in any way?” “Why should she be, Sahib? I like only sweet songs.” Usha smiled and began to sing a catchy melody Jules had recently heard on the radio. “I know many songs from the

Beatles. I love Beatles!” Usha pointed to a photograph of four young men leaning together and grinning at the camera. “I’ve heard of them but my interest is in your music in India,” Jules said. “Sahib, I can’t be long. Brothers are waiting.” She stood up and began to untie her sari. He held her arm. “Be a smart girl and tell me of your marriage, Usha.” She looked worried. “I told you, Sahib. I am a poor widow since childhood.” “But what kind of wedding? Did they secretly dedicate you to Lord Siva?” “Why would you say that! Please, I cannot take more than my usual time here. Otherwise, brothers will be angry.” As she backed toward the bed, she bumped into a nightstand and knocked a pink box onto the floor. Powder spilled everywhere. “Oh, look what you’ve made me do. Now surely I will be in trouble, so be quick.” She gripped one of his hands. “Sahib, waste no more time.” These shows their suffering life.

In this novel the author, Barbara L Baer tells Kamala Kumari’s life and more over about others who are connected somehow with Kamala Kumari and the problems faced by her when she is an actress and a famous Dancer, and the author had explained the Devadasi system through some incidents and she had presented the American, Dutch , German characters in her novel were an Indian women is the central character. But if Kamala Kumari is the central character, the author didn’t give that much focus on her. And the author had given a

clear picture of how the actresses were on the film shooting and also at dance programme, and what were the problems faced at that times. Celeste is having a major role in this novel that she is the all in all of Kamala Kumari and she had helped Kamala Kumari and Angela in many ways. Angela is also an important character, she is the wife of the Dutch man Jules who got a love towards Kamala Kumari, Angela is an American, she is a good person and also her husband. Angela has been affected Dungi Fever and for her wellness Jules had told Kamala Kumari to stay for a few times daily and Kamala had told yes to that, and she started to go to Angela in morning because after that she want to go to shooting. So here these people are having the major roles in this novel.

Postcolonial feminists attempt to change the oppressive power relations encoded in the name of race, nation, and empire. They are especially concerned with issues of gender, class, and sexuality. Postcolonial feminist theories are inter-disciplinary and cut across the disciplines of philosophy, political science, human geography, sociology, economics, literature, and media. Notable postcolonial theorists include Franz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, and Chandra Mohanty, with the latter two more specifically addressing issues of gender. Postcolonial feminist theory has a two-fold objective: (i) to racialise mainstream feminist theory and (ii) to

genderise colonialism and post colonialism. Let us now look at the main ideas of a few postcolonial and feminist theorists whose work has been extremely influential in the area of Postcolonial feminist studies. The lasting impact of colonialism even after independence from imperial powers is called post colonialism. It is a broad concept covering individual, geographic, historical and cultural specifications. In this unit, post colonialism specifically refers to issues of cultural diversity, ethnic, racial and cultural differences and the power relations within the postcolonial /liberated people.

### **Conclusion**

*The Last Devadasi* has its turbulent passions and social upheavals. Barbara Baer managed to portray beautifully all that is beautiful and ugly in the Indian society through this Novel , this Novel deals with social criticism

An analysis of *The Last Devadasi* shows the consequences faced by a Devadasis, and the author tackled social issues through the novel. The Novel details the sad destiny of Devadasis that is young

women in this caste were forced to dedicate their lives to worshipping and serving the temple of a Hindu deity Siva. Besides being trained in singing and traditional dances, these girls also had to sleep with men from higher castes. The author had shown the life of Kamala Kumari as well as Angela, the American Women and the wife of Dutchman Jules who has love on Kamala Kumari and also Celestine is also a major role in this Novel, an Orphan from French Monastery and she is an in all for Kamala. The author drawn the state of Directors that as if Kamala had become an actress are looking Kamala in the old way as she were in Devadasi Caste.

The Devadasi system had been in the Postcolonial period and through this caste many womens are gone to the sex trade or prostitution and many were molested and this process are being practised nowadays also so we could emphasise the feminine rights and Barbara L Baer had drawn a path to the social dirtiness, Injustice etc.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKADAVU**

**WHEN MOB SPREADS IT'S VICIOUS GAZE; ANALYSIS OF**  
**THE GAZE OF MOB IN**  
***JALLIKATTU AND THANIYAVARTHANAM***

A project submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Arts

**RISHIKESH P SATHEESH**

**Register No. DB18AEGR046**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Project supervisor: Mrs. Ansa George

June 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “When mob spreads it’s vicious gaze: analysis of the gaze of mob in *Jallikattu* and *Thaniyavarthanam*” is a bonafide work of Mr.Rishikesh P Satheesh who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Mr.Sarath Krishnan

Mrs.Ansa George

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Rishikesh P Satheesh, hereby declare that the project work entitled “When mob spreads its vicious gaze: analysis of the gaze of mob in *Jallikattu* and *Thaniyavarthanam*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Mrs. Ansa George of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science college.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

Rishikesh P Satheesh

08.06.2021

DB18AEGR046

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.Rishikesh P Satheesh

## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter one:	3
Gaze Theory, Male gaze and the analysis of the gaze of mob	
Chapter Two:	9
Film analysis of <i>Jallikattu</i> (2019), <i>Thaniyavarthanam</i> (1987)	
Chapter Three:	19
Analysing the gaze of mob, groups or crowd in <i>Jallikattu</i> and <i>Thaniyavarthanam</i>	
Conclusion	26
Works cited	28

## Introduction

Gaze is a person's or a group's perception or viewpoint towards another individual or group. The concept of gaze have been influenced and researched in many areas like, philosophy, existentialism, psychoanalysis. Male gaze is the fact of showing or looking a woman from a man's point of view. Male gaze theory was introduced by British feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey, in her very renowned work "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema". This theory revolves around the objectification of women and sexualisation of women characters in film. Gaze of the mob or by a group, crowd is an area where considerable researches and observations has been conducted. Psycho analysts like Sigmund Freud, Gustav Le Bon have been conducted studies and analysis on the crowd behaviour and their inner dynamics.

The gaze of groups, mob, or crowd are can be observed in the Malayalam films like *Jallikattu* (2019), *Thaniyavarthanam*(1987). In *Jallikattu*, A buffalo runs amok before the butcher could slaughter it, causing the entire village to slip into a progressive bedlam. Nailing it then becomes a matter of masculine pride, awaking the primal instinct of every man in the village. Each time, there is an influence of several groups of village men, their gaze, which shapes the storyline of the film. The groups running in hysteria behind the buffalo, at one stage starts to unleash their most innate, raw and uncivilised barbaric behaviour.

*Thaniyavarthanam* is the tragic story of a man getting confined in the dark walls of superstitions which is passed down through generations in his house. His family members, village men discusses about his mental health as he is already a mentally weak. Slowly, village people and his house starts seeing him as a 'mad man' which leads to the protagonist's tragedy.

The present study is intended to attempt an analysis on how the influence of the gaze of the mob in these films influences the storyline of the film, the journey of the protagonist.

The project is divided into five chapters including an introduction and conclusion chapter. The introduction chapter explains the significance of the topic. The first chapter is dealing with gaze, male gaze theory and the studies about the gaze of the mob. The second chapter is about the movies such as *Jallikattu* (2019), *Thaniyavarthanam*(1987) which have the instances of the gaze of the mob, group or crowd. The third chapter proves that how the gaze of the groups are present in this movie and how it influences the protagonist's storyline and the plot progression of the movie. The final chapter is the conclusion and is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out in the third chapter.

## Chapter one

### **Gaze Theory, Male gaze and the analysis of the gaze of mob**

In critical theory, sociology, and psychoanalysis, the gaze, in the philosophical and figurative sense, is an individual's (or a group's) awareness and perception of other individuals, other groups, or oneself. The concept and the social applications of the gaze have been defined and explained by existentialist and phenomenologist philosophers. Jean-Paul Sartre described the gaze (or "the look") in his renowned work, "Being and Nothingness". Michel Foucault, in "Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison", developed the concept of the gaze to illustrate the dynamics of socio-political power relations and the social dynamics of society's mechanisms of discipline. Jacques Derrida, in "The Animal that Therefore I Am (More to Come)", elaborated upon the inter-species relations that exist among human beings and other animals, which are established by way of the gaze. In Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, the gaze is the anxious state of mind that comes with the self-awareness that one can be seen and looked at. The psychological effect upon the person subjected to the gaze is a loss of autonomy upon becoming aware that they are a visible object.

Theories of gaze cannot be traced back to a theoretical or critical movement, though it has been scattered along with associated or related ideas and concepts from movements and theories as psychoanalysis, discourse studies and film studies. Hardly more than a quarter of a century old, gaze cannot be given a specific period of genesis or a historical origin. As an umbrella term, it emerges as a method like "discourse" as a way of considering a text or an utterance.

John Berger's influential book "Ways of seeing" (published in 1972) partially prepared the ground for the development of the theories of the gaze. Berger's readings

and interpretations may have altered since 1972, but the crux of his book on 'The way we see the way we see' has been very substantial. However, it was Laura Mulvey's work "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema" (published in 1975) which popularized the term leading to the formation of a new theoretical area of academic study. Mulvey based these key ideas from psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, and further applying the theory to the political aims of feminism. Freud had cited the term 'Scopophilia' in his "Three essays on the theory of sexuality" (1905) as 'taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze'.

When analysing the male part of gaze; In feminist literary theory, male gaze is the act of portraying the world, women, femininity in the visual arts and in literature from a masculine and heterosexual point of view, which present women as object of male pleasure.

As mentioned, Laura Mulvey, a British film theorist coined the term male gaze in her much discussed and critically acclaimed essay 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema'. The work focuses on how mainstream Hollywood films carries the reflections of patriarchal society in which men use or 'objectify' women, their sexuality, to provide as a mere pleasurable experience to the audience, who possess a collective subconscious of patriarchal oppressiveness, majorly prevailing in the socio-cultural scenarios.

In "Being and Nothingness", Jean-Paul Sartre introduced the concept of the gaze, wherein the act of gazing at another human being creates a subjective power difference, which is felt by the gazer and by the gazed, because the person being gazed at is perceived as an object, not as a human being. The cinematic concept of the male gaze is presented, explained, and developed in Mulvey's essay; proposes that

sexual inequality, the asymmetry of social and political power between men and women, is a controlling social force in the cinematic representations of women and men; and that the male gaze (the aesthetic pleasure of the male viewer) is a social construct derived from the ideologies and discourses of patriarchy. In the fields of media studies and feminist film theory, the male gaze is conceptually related to the behaviours of voyeurism (looking as sexual pleasure), Scopophilia (pleasure from looking), and narcissism (pleasure from contemplating one's self).

Theoretical attempts and discussions which glances onto the gaze posited by a group, mob or a crowd towards an individual or a group which might be morally, mentally, sexually, physically fragile; have not been put forward many. But studies and discourses related to the undermining and deconstruction of the subconscious of 'groups' can be traced out. Theorists and scholars like Sigmund Freud, Gustav Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde, and Steve Reicher contributed some valuable studies to the study sectors like crowd psychology.

Sigmund Freud is an Austrian neurologist, the founder of psychoanalysis, who is renowned for his ground breaking observations in the field of psychoanalysis. In one of his works, titled "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego", Freud deeply analyses the psychological mechanisms within the movements of mass. A mass, according to Freud, is a 'temporary entity, consisting of heterogeneous elements that have joined together for a moment'. Like Gustav Le Bon, Freud says that as part of the mass, the individual acquires a sense of infinite power allows him to act on impulses that he would otherwise have to curb as an isolated individual. These feelings of power and security allow the individual not only to act as part of the mass, but also to feel safety in numbers. This is accompanied, however, by a loss of conscious personality and a tendency of the individual to be infected by any emotion

within the mass, and to amplify the emotion, in turn, by 'mutual induction'. Overall, the mass is "impulsive, changeable, and irritable. It is controlled almost exclusively by the unconscious."

Freud distinguishes between two types of masses. One is the short-lived kind, characterized by a rapidly transient interest, such as trends. The other kind consists of more permanent and enduring masses, which are highly organized, such as the Church or the military. "The masses of the former type, so to speak, ride on the latter, like the short but high waves on the long swell of the sea". However, the same basic mental processes operate in both kinds of masses.

Freud refers back to his theory of instincts and believes that masses are held together by libidinal bonds. Each individual in the mass acts on impulses of love that are diverted from their original objectives. They pursue no direct sexual goal, but "do not therefore work less vigorously".

Gustav Le Bon is a French social psychologist whose areas of interest included anthropology, psychology, sociology, medicine and physics. He is best known for his work "The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind", which is considered one of the seminal works of crowd psychology. Le Bon theorised that the new entity, the 'psychological crowd', which emerges from incorporating the assembled population not only forms a new body but also creates a collective unconsciousness. As a group of people gather together and coalesces to form a crowd, there is a 'magnetic influence given out by the crowd' that transmutes every individual's behaviour until it becomes governed by the 'group mind'. This model treats the crowd as a unit in its composition which robs every individual member of their opinions, values and

beliefs; as Le Bon states: "An individual in a crowd is a grain of sand amid other grains of sand, which the wind stirs up at will".

Gustav Le Bon in his work, "The Crowd: A study of the popular mind" observes that there are several characteristics of crowd psychology;

"impulsiveness, irritability, incapacity to reason, the absence of judgement of the critical spirit, the exaggeration of sentiments, and others..."

Le Bon observes that crowds existed in three stages: submergence, contagion, and suggestion. During submergence, the individuals in the crowd lose their sense of individual self and personal responsibility. This is quite heavily induced by the anonymity of the crowd. Contagion refers to the propensity for individuals in a crowd to unquestioningly follow the predominant ideas and emotions of the crowd. In Le Bon's view, this effect is capable of spreading between 'submerged' individuals much like a disease. Suggestion refers to the period in which the ideas and emotions of the crowd are primarily drawn from a shared unconscious ideology.

Crowd members become susceptible to any passing idea or emotion. This behaviour comes from an archaic shared unconscious and is therefore uncivilized in nature. It is limited by the moral and cognitive abilities of the least capable members. Le Bon believed that crowds could be a powerful force only for destruction. Additionally, Le Bon and others have indicated that crowd members feel a lessened sense of legal culpability, due to the difficulty in prosecuting individual members of a mob. In short, the individual submerged in the crowd loses self control as the 'collective mind' takes over and makes the crowd member capable of violating personal or social norms

Le Bon also incorporated the ideas of Charles Darwin and Ernst Haeckel into his studies and observations on human nature which also paved insights into the frenzied mentality of crowd, mob or a group of people. He points out on crowd and individuals;

“By the mere fact that he forms part of an organised crowd, a man descends several rungs in the ladder of civilisation. Isolated, he may be a cultivated individual; in a crowd, he is a barbarian — that is, a creature acting by instinct, possessing the spontaneity, the violence, the ferocity, and also the enthusiasm and heroism of primitive beings.”

## Chapter Two

### Film analysis of *Jallikattu* (2019), *Thaniyavarthanam* (1987)

#### *Jallikattu*

*Jallikattu* is a Indian, Malayalam language film directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery with a screenplay written by S. Hareesh and R. Jayakumar. It was based on the short story 'Maoist' by acclaimed Malayalam writer S.Hareesh. Filled with visually enriched frames and color grading, the cinematography department was headed by GirishGangadharan. The film was premiered at Toronto international film festival and bagged accolades from a very wide variety of critical sources. It was exhibited at Busan international film festival under the section 'A window on Asian cinema'. *Jallikattu* was selected as the Indian entry for the Best International feature film at the 93<sup>rd</sup> Academy Awards, but could not make into the nomination stage.

The short story 'Maoist' by S Hareesh, on which *Jallikkattu* is based, satirizes the chaos unleashed in a high-range village after two buffaloes brought for slaughter runs amok. It's a fairly luminous allegory of state's deeply-entrenched Leftist and semi-feudal social structures over which a wet dream of revolution continues to hover. The village's only resident capitalist seems to be the butcher 'Kaalavarkey', who keeps the elites, the clergy and the commissar alike, in good humour with meatier cuts, thick lumps of fat and shorter waiting time while they mill around his blood-splattered Sunday shop.

The film's title is derived from the renowned Tamil Nadu festival, "Jallikattu". Wild and hungry bulls are released in an open area of human crowd, where they get

the opportunity to capture the ravaging animal. This title derivation hints onto the universe of the film where the boundaries between man and animal, their innate motives, struggles, rawness gets blurred each other and starts to merge.

As the film sets up, viewers are introduced into glimpses of human beings, specifically the villagers, snoring, hissing, waking up with a clock ticking sound playing continuously in the background. This also indicates the wake of a rural village into another day. Elements of nature, caterpillars, ants, flies, skylarks, earthworms, mosquito larvae, their movements and activities are equally given importance as to that of humans. Homes get lit up, villagers get engaged in their daily activities like rubber tapping and so on. KalanVarkey is a butcher in the village who has a sister, Sophie. Antony is Varky's assistant and they both meet before dawn each day to slaughter a buffalo and prepare it's meat for sale in the market.

One morning, a buffalo slips and break it's ropes before the slaughter, running into forest. Soon, a large heap of haystack is set ablaze. Crowd of villagers including children, old men and women, wakes upto put out the fire. Village men, in which, people whose properties got damaged by the buffalo also includes, sets out alike a hunt for the animal. Crowd of villagers gets on increasing despite of caste, religion or any sects, in order to hunt down the escaped buffalo. Meanwhile the buffalo tramples crops, private gardens, milk gallons, breaks in to village bank and continues to create havoc in the nooks and corners of village.

The police warns villagers of the legal consequences of killing cattle. Villagers searching any alternatives to end this crisis calls Kuttachan, famous village poacher, who owns a hunting rifle. Antony who is in the front rows of village crowd for the hunt, gets frustrated and is unhappy to see Kuttachan's return into village. It is said in a flashback that Kuttachan and Antony had been rivals for Sophie. Antony

then informed police that Kuttachan was stealing sandalwood, which lead to his arrest. Amid these noises of hunt, personal issues between villagers slowly starts breaking down. Jealousy, rivalry, lust, greed combats each other, though the inner rawness of villagers. And the undeniable presence of crowd plays a crucial role in the course of plot progression.

Some men commits random acts of vandalism; they sings abusive songs, sets off fireworks. A group of villagers seize Kuriachan from a woman's house; (a wealthy man who had been planning a luxurious feast of various buffalo dishes for his only daughter's marriage, confused of getting buffalo meat as the cattle ran away from Varkey's hands), stripping him to his underwear. Meanwhile, his daughter runs away with her lover, avoiding the arranged marriage, but a neighbour catches and orders her to go back to house, Several men are shown as beating and abusing their wives,

Villagers with torches, sticks, runs around the jungle in a frenzy manner. After night falls, the buffalo is found at the bottom of a well; Antony immediately takes the credit, saying that he tricked the buffalo into trap. Kuttachan demands that he wants to shoot it, but Antony demands that he and Varkey wants to butcher it immediately after it is escaped. Village men builds a scaffold, and lower Antony down so he can attach ropes around buffalo's legs and neck. When the atmosphere gets even more intense with rainfall. Crowd of village men, their fanatic noises, becomes desperate and gets into fights with each other.

While the situation becomes more chaotic filled with the outcries primal human instincts, each man becomes desperate to be the one to finally kill the beast. As the men string up ropes, chains, and nets around the perimeter of the village,

forcing the buffalo into a smaller and smaller area, the situation becomes increasingly chaotic and confused.

Antony and Kuttachan stumble across each other in a clearing in the dark jungle, and begin fighting; Kuttachan is about to kill Antony, but the buffalo suddenly emerges from the undergrowth and disrupts the fight. Kuttachan catches the buffalo by its horns and asks Antony to hold its legs. But Antony uses this opportunity to stab Kuttachan multiple times and fatally wounds him. The buffalo escapes. Antony and the villagers chase the buffalo towards the river and across a bridge, where the animal becomes stuck in deep mud.

Antony stabs the buffalo, and screams that he was the one who deserves the credit for killing it. This makes the scenario even more worse as dozens of men, holding lit torches and bearing crude weapons, jump on top of each other, stabbing both the animal and each other as they form a huge, writhing mass of human bodies, similar as a human pyramid. The final shot is of a group of prehistoric men, wearing loincloths and carrying spears, racing each other through the dark while hunting a buffalo.



*Jallikattu* through its universe, just does not open up a buffalo rampage situation and the mere frenzy reactions of the villagers who are running behind the animal. Additionally, it enables diverse areas of thematic analysis ranging from the close viewing of the most primal and innate human instincts, emotional rupture and its raw exposition.

Themes ranging from Masculinity to the blurring of boundaries between men and animal, *Jallikattu* becomes a socio-political allegory. The movie comments on masculinity that is unaware of its own power to wreak havoc. In the initial scenes, we see predatory men gawking at women, a foul-tempered policeman slapping his wife, and sundry other male villagers generally making a sorry spectacle of themselves when faced with a crisis. If you see the fleeing buffalo as a metaphor for all victims of violence in these volatile times, then the men who are chasing it embody all that is wrong with people on the verge of exploding into acts of desperation that are barely human. Film remains focused on the ferocious male of the species, but not without reminding us in the briefest of scenes that women themselves may appear calmer but are not above running a dagger through other women whose choices they resent or condemn.

The pursuit of the buffalo becomes a proxy mission for establishing alpha male status between the two masculine figures namely, Antony and Kuttachan. The poor creature (one's sympathies do end up almost entirely with the buffalo), occasionally glimpsed careening through the undergrowth or tossing a villager on its horns, transforms gradually into an abstraction, a *bête noire* and a white whale: a symbol of the untrammelled animal instinct that director's deeply pessimistic vision imagines seething in the male of our species, just beneath the thin, livid membrane of civilization.

*Jallikattu* deliberately sets out to impress upon the viewers how similar humans are to animals, despite years of civilisation trying to distinguish between the two categories. How it takes only a trigger for us to regress to who we really are. Renowned Malayalam film critic C S Venkiteswaran feels that the film, though full of despair, sheds light on the Malayali mind. The state itself has witnessed several mob lynchings linked to moral policing in the recent past. "Our society is violent and you would know it once you scratch the surface,"

### ***Thaniyavarthanam***

*Thaniyavarthanam* is a Malayalam drama film written by Lohithadas and directed by Sibi Malayil. Upon release, it received critical acclaim. The film brings to light the mind-numbing chaos that descends on a family as an effect of people's unflinching belief in superstition and their lack of empathy. It was lauded for its aesthetic handling of a very sensitive topic, which gave way for many films that dared to question the dogma dictated by religious provocations and the exploitation of people's fears and spirituality. It stars Mammooty as school teacher BalaGopalan,

Thilakan as the uncle of the matrilineal family, Mukesh as Gopinathan, and KaviyoorPonnamma as the mother.

*Thaniyavarthanam* opens at a familiar but eerie setting of an offering to the gods, (also can be called as “Mudiyettu”, a ritual done by families to please Goddess ‘Kali’ in rural Kerala). The prologue dutifully captures the lives of the men and women who live with constant bouts of remorse and a sense of foreboding that intermittently finds its way into their otherwise ordinary lives, due to an unwelcome tradition that is familiar not just to them, but to the entire village. The family funds the execution of this ritual annually, to extinguish the perilous effects of a curse that had been branded on them as a result of an ancestral wrong-doing that displeased the gods.

This underlines the deep-rooted belief among their family of MarathempalliTharavadu (family name), that one male from each generation will go mad as a person from their past generation had sinned by throwing the idol of ‘Devi’ in a well. He was cursed by the goddess and became a lunatic. This is the above mentioned curse that is believed by the family members, villagers, which would pass down through generations.

Balagopalan is a talented artist who is also a drawing teacher in the local school. He is a respected individual who has made a name for himself. His wife Indu is a loving mother who cares for the family as if it were her own. Their sphere of love extends beyond them and their two kids, as they more than willingly accommodate the rest of the family into their lives despite having the obvious means and opportunities to distance themselves from all the unwanted struggles that the curse has brought with it. He respects the elders of the family and doesn’t question their

authority, a virtue that he knows his brother is yet to understand fully. Balan's maternal uncle Sridharannair lost his lover, who died of snake bite. He lost his mental balance and is chained and confined in a locked room. His other uncle Gangadharan (played by Thilakan) is quite well off and he has a strong belief in the family curse.

Balan is a kind-hearted man who adulated his uncle and saw his untimely descent into madness, and still nurses the pain it brought to his childhood. He looks after everyone in his family, with an unwavering sense of responsibility. At home, he spends time painting his thoughts on canvas, in the hall adjacent to where his uncle is locked, and talks to him about everyday things in an attempt to help him sail through a meaningless existence. Balan's uncle finally dies and the talk of the village became, "Who would be next - Balan or Gopinathan (Balan's brother) ?"

One night changes it all, when Balan has a terrible nightmare. The whole house is woken up in the middle of night. The elder members of the family suspects that Balan is turning mad. The news somehow gets out. Villagers start suspecting Balan of following the footsteps of his ancestors into madness (because Balan's uncle also fell mentally ill with a nightmare).

Now the village, ranging from the teashop to mere village wanderers, evaluates and judges each and every move he makes; he is soon deemed mentally ill. His actions are misinterpreted. He applies for an extended leave and transfer from service. Even some members of his family suspects that he has gone mad. The situation affects Balan and turns him confused. Gopi, progressive and educated, consults Balan with a medically qualified physician. The physician declares him sane. But village doesn't agree.

In the meantime, Balan's wife is forced to leave the house with their children. The family fixes the marriage of his younger sister while hiding the fact she has a "challenged" elder brother. Eventually, Balan is admitted in an asylum and undergoes treatment. He is released after a few days (both mentally and physically broken) and confines to the dark room his uncle once lived. Balan seems to be surrendered to the society.

Everyone in the family are convinced that Balan has become mad as per their prediction. They unanimously agreed as per the belief of the village, there should be a public function to announce this for the well-being of the next generation. Gopi couldn't tolerate this, *hence* left the house accusing Gangadharan (Balan's uncle) and his family, leaving behind a strong political stand of not be a part of this superstitious crowd.

Unable to bear what her dear son is going through, mother decided to set her son Balan, free from all this agony. She asked him whether he wants to live as a lunatic as his uncles lived, or leave this world with peace and tranquillity. She mixes poison in their food and got liberated from this superstitious, wicked world - on the day of the ritual for forgiveness from the goddess - to free him from the world.

*Thaniyavarthanam* travels through many thematic layers including; psychoanalysis, impact of superstitious beliefs in families, gaze of common folk at mentally retarded individuals. As mentioned, the influence of superstitions, folk stories discussing about 'curses of gods', these does plays crucial roles in shaping

the collective consciousness of a region, a family mixed with distress and anguish



## Chapter Three

### **Analysing the gaze of mob, groups or crowd in *Jallikattu* and *Thaniyavarthanam***

#### *Jallikattu*

*Jallikattu* (2019) is a Malayalam film directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery with a screenplay written by S. Hareesh and R. Jayakumar based on Hareesh's Malayalam short story titled as "Maoist". Film's plot revolves around set a remote Kerala village where a buffalo goes berserk on escaping an attempt at slaughter by local butchers Varkey and Antony. The beast runs amok through fields, plantations and human habitations, spurring the men of the community to give chase. This happens in the aftermath of a young man exacting revenge on another in a seething rivalry over a woman they both lust after, a local policeman getting violent with his wife, and other psychological inner conflicts that continue to play out among the groups in the village meanwhile the buffalo wreaks havoc on people's bodies and property.

Instances of people, generally men and the groups consisting of several village men whom are in the frenzied, disoriented, violent state in chasing the ravaging buffalo, posing gaze towards women, a group against the other can be observed in the course of the film. In a scene where the buffalo sets ablaze a large haystack at night, entire village wakes up to put out the fire. It is one of the primary scenes where the audience gets close to the villagers; including women, children, elderly men and women comes to extinguish the fire. Despite knowing the precise intensity of the situation, the village crowd gets confused engaging in the accurate resolution of the scenario. One woman commands to her daughter to "tie up the hair" while running towards the burning haystack. This grief and concern of that mother indirectly

conveys the violent intensity of 'male gaze', objectification of women, viewing women as mere sexual objects which is prevalent in that village, even in the midst of a chaotic situation.

Instances of male gaze can be traced in furthermore instances in the film, which marks the toxic, masculine subconscious of the village men. It is very evident when some group of men gossips about Sophie (Kalanvarkey's sister) to Antony, in a sexually abusive language. They see Sophie as a girl who falls for men so easily. In another scene, Antony forcefully tries to abuse Sophie in an attempt to molest her. Further it is observed that Antony 'succeeds' in forcing her. This masculine domination over a woman (here, Sophie), who is already under the sexual abuse and bullying of villagers is shown in the movie as a girl who easily falls under masculine domination acts of Antony. This weak portrayal of Sophie, who eventually becomes submissive to patriarchy, becomes appealing characterization to male spectators.

In *Jallikattu*, the involvement of many groups of villagers running behind the buffalo, does have a significant influence in deciding the plot progression of the film. There is a scene where every villager fearfully waits for the buffalo to arrive in the village junction. People from different sects including milkmen, political workers, youngsters, aged men are divided into heterogeneous groups. Each and every man waits for the buffalo, as a shopkeeper softly tries to negotiate about the remission of the money with a moneylender. When the buffalo ferociously runs towards the village junction people get crowded and tries to encircle the animal, and capture it. When crowd encircles, this shopkeeper pushes the moneylender towards the rampaging animal.

As Freud says “that as part of the mass, the individual acquires a sense of infinite power allows him to act on impulses that he would otherwise have to curb as an isolated individual “. This mentality of an individual inside a mob, which is "impulsive, changeable, and irritable and controlled almost exclusively by the unconscious", can be spotted inside the mental state of the shopkeeper. He is very civilised in his etiquette while discussing the negotiation with the moneylender who frequently confronts him in person. But when he becomes part of a mob, his deep, unconscious intention of destroying his ‘enemy’ gets activated amid a violently thinking group.

In another scene, another group of villagers deliberately makes the character of Kuriachan , a womanizer, who is under keen pressure of arranging buffalo meat for his daughter’s marriage eve. Kuriachan at night, goes to his neighbour lady for asking some chicken. But the villagers who are in a state of mental disorientation as they are in crowds, blames Kuriachan and the poor women and insults them as secret lovers.

There rises conflicts which is totally uncivilised and frenzied, when the buffalo falls to well and village groups uselessly argues about the share of the meat, and about the exact ‘hunter’ who lead it into the well. As Gustav Le Bon describes of the transformation of human mind or individualism from civilised to a barbaric state, It can be instilled in the film throughout the film where crowd with antony and crowd with Kuttachan argues and attacks each other.

Freud states that each individual amid a mass will be subverted from it’s original objectives. This can be observed when the many village groups get subverted from their original intention of capturing the buffalo, instead they argues and madly attacks each other in the name of meat share, the group from Poomala village

frequently gets into fights with the villagers and they also gets involved in burning of a police vehicle, which heightens the intensity of violent unconscious of the group. This instances of violence and destruction can be read closely to the views of Gustav Le Bon that “crowds could be a powerful source only for destruction”.

Violence too plays a part as a man gets killed while the village groups tirelessly tries to save the buffalo from the well. The distinction between the unconscious of man and animal blurs out when Antony and Kuttachan fights each other, which can be closely compared to as two animals fighting each other. And they completely forgets about the collective intention of the village to capture the devastating animal. Kuttachan also cries out that he came not to hunt down the animal but to kill Antony.

As the film nears to it's ending portions, Antony's arguments that he killed the buffalo and hence he owns it's flesh is violently turned down by many village groups. These many village groups eventually forms a massive crowd, violently crying with a heightened euphoria of destruction. With their weapons, these crowds forms a gigantic human pyramid, signifying that their primal instincts have not travelled much distances than of ancient hunt gatherers.

### ***Thaniyavarthanam***

*Thaniyavarthanam* is one of the critically acclaimed malayalam movies which can also be included as one of the classic movies in Malayalam. Released in 1987, the screenplay of the film was written by Lohithadas and directed by SibiMalayil. Plot progresses through a family named Marathempallitharavadu and it's members, whose life is confined in the diabolic hands of beliefs and superstitions. They believes that

there is a curse of goddess Kali, that every male member of every generation in Marathempallitharavadu will be mentally unstable at a certain point of life. So this trauma is in the consciousness of each and every family member. When Sreedharan, the man who is called as 'mad man' by the family members, villagers dies, they shifts their gaze towards Balan, the protagonist of the film which is also representative of the present generation. Throughout the film, groups consisting of family members and village people including tea sellers, soda sellers, deliberately makes Balan the next lunatic from that family. This gaze of groups including family members and villagers; they commonly shares a collective unconscious where there have to be a man with mental instability in this family, in every generation. For years, they have been witnessing the transformation of the members of that family turning into a mentally disabled state. This individuals who gets affected mentally, is continuously influenced by this superstitious beliefs, fear and trauma instilled by the family members.

Renowned American psychologist David Rosenhan conducted psychological study called 'Rosenhan experiment'. The experiment was done in two parts. The first part involved the use of healthy associates or 'pseudopatients', who briefly feigned auditory hallucinations in an attempt to gain admission to 12 psychiatric hospitals in five states in the United States. All were admitted and diagnosed with psychiatric disorders. After admission, Rosenhan claimed the pseudopatients acted normally and told staff that they no longer experienced any additional hallucinations. As a condition of their release, all the patients were forced to admit to having a mental illness and had to agree to take antipsychotic medication. The average time that the patients spent in the hospital was 19 days. All but one were diagnosed with schizophrenia "in remission" before their release. The study concluded "it is clear that we cannot

distinguish the sane from the insane in psychiatric hospitals" and also illustrated the dangers of dehumanization and labelling in psychiatric institutions. This conclusions of the experiment can be closely read with the mental deterioration happening to Balan, which is also related to the gaze of villagers and family.

The gaze of the villagers become mentally intense, and posits Balan as the subject. After the death of Sreedharan, villagers starts discussing that Balan will be the next victim towards the Kali's curse. When one rejects the belief, two villagers strongly reaffirms that Balan will be the next victim. As Freud states that there is always a tendency of the individual to be infected by any emotion within the mass, and to amplify the emotion. Villagers who are affectionate towards Balan are unconsciously forced to change their affection , when they are part of a group which thinks that he will turn into a 'lunatic' , thereby dehumanizing him.

There is a scene where Balan goes to tea shop and the villagers there starts closely observing him, even though he is normal. People advises him to stay home and not to walk around in this mentally 'vulnerable' state. Frustrated, Balan walks into his school. There the gaze is posited by the headmaster whose behaviour was completely normal till the previous day. Balan's mental state gets disrupted when his student, a small girl is terrified by his presence. She was told by her surroundings; her parents, friends or relatives (which all can be included in specific groups of villagers positioning their gaze towards the mental state of Balan) that "Balan mash is mad". The next scene is Balan's hallucination where his students, small kids violently chases him and throws stones at him. From there, Balan's consciousness starts to get disrupted and imbalanced as he himself doubts that whether he is transforming into a

lunatic individual like his predecessors. This thought is sowed inside him by the gaze of villagers and his family.

In a scene, Gopi consoles his brother Balan that he is completely fine. He reminds to Balan that “all people are eagerly waiting for your fall into their traps”, denoting the intensity of the gaze of villagers and family members. This instances also breaks the stereotypical image of villages, rural areas depicted in literature and movies as, 'Villages, the abode of goodness'.

After Balan gets a relaxation with the consultation of a psychiatrist, he decides to return to his home. Balan reaches but gets alienated by his own family members as there was a marriage proposal for his sister on going there in the house. His uncle claims Balan as a 'stranger' in order to not to get insulted in front of the family who sought the proposal. Even his wife's family decides to alienate him and to keep his son away, to avoid being the next 'mad man in the house'. Slowly, Balan realises that his outer world, his family, needs him to be a lunatic which reaffirms the superstition. Balan's mental state slowly moves into a stillness where it was the tragic result of the gaze of his villagers, family and society.

In *Thaniyarthanam*, it is the villagers, family which can be observed as sects of groups who gazes into the inner realms of Balan which culminates into the tragedy of the protagonist.

## Conclusion

Film is a means of creative expression. It involves the process of educating, informing the audience and keeping them engaged into the universe of the film. Films also possess the function of reflecting the diabolic sides of contemporary society. Gaze of the mob can be observed in many forms including literature and film. How the gaze of mob, groups or a crowd influences the storyline of the film, its impact on socio - political contexts, the psychoanalytical interpretations of the gaze of groups inside a film's universe, the influence and impact creating by these groups amid the characters, even in the protagonist.

In the movies like *Jallikattu*(2019), *Thaniyavarthanam* (1987), there can be observed that the gaze, which can also be psychoanalytical, influencing the universe of the film and the physical - mental transformation of the protagonist. In *Jallikattu* there also lies the instances of male gaze. It can be analysed in how the character of Sophie is interpreted by the village men in their masculine inner realms. Through their dialogues, village men attempts to portray Sophie as a woman running behind other man for lust. Objectification of women can be observed in these instances in the film. When the buffalo runs away from the village butcher, the entire villagers, divided into many groups runs behind the creature which slowly makes their primal instincts much transparent to the audience, which breaks away from the outer shells of civility and sanity, making them no difference between the barbaric acts of ancient humans.

In *Thaniyavarthanam*, the influence of superstitions prevailing inside the collective unconscious of a family disrupts the mental rhythm of the protagonist namely Balan, who travels from a balanced mental state to insane, disoriented state.

Here it is this groups; family of the protagonist, the villagers places their gaze on Balan and reaffirms that he is a mentally imbalanced individual, these groups makes the protagonist the 'victim' of goddess's curse. These groups consisting of family members, village men, carries the trauma of this curse, the superstitious belief, which they posits it on each and every male member of that family.

This project analysed evidences for the gaze of the mob, groups or a crowd inside these films. It can also be observed that male gaze also can be observed in one of the film. By the observations and analysis attempted in this project, the gaze of the mob, groups or a crowd influences the storyline, the protagonist, characters inside these films namely *Jallikattu* and *Thaniyavarthanam*.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**

**ANGADIKKADAVU**

**PSYCHOANALYSIS IN *OLDBOY***

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**SREEDIN.K.C**

**Register No: DB18AEGR047**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. Twinkle Thomas

February 2021

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “Psychoanalysis in *Oldboy*” is a bonafide work of Sreedin.K.C, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. Sarath Krishnan

Ms. Twinkle Thomas

Department in charge

Project Supervisor

## Declaration

I, Sreedin.K.C, hereby declare that the project work entitled “Psychoanalysis in *Oldboy*” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Twinkle Thomas of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

Angadikadavu

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Sreedin.K.C

DB18AEGR047

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Sreedin.K.C

## Table of Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	1
Chapter One:	2-11
Theoretical approach to the psyche	
Chapter Two:	12-20
Film analysis of <i>Oldboy</i>	
Chapter Three:	21-26
Psychoanalysis of Characters	
Conclusion	27
Works Consulted	28

## Introduction

The project entitled 'Psychoanalysis in *Oldboy*' is a deep observing trying to bring out the psychological movement of the characters. The project is divided into three chapters. First chapter titled 'Theoretical approach to the psyche' discusses Freud's theory of personality, conscious, subconscious and pre-conscious, id, ego and super ego and oedipus complex. Second chapter entitled 'Film analysis of *Oldboy*', contains detailed summary of the movie. Next is the core chapter, under the title 'Psychoanalysis of the Characters', this chapter applies Freud's psychoanalytic theory into the film. The psychology of two male main protagonists is analysed illustrating the psychological moment of the characters, and also on adding incest relationship between the characters.

## Chapter 1

### Theoretical approach to the psyche

Psychoanalysis was a concept developed in 1896 by Sigmund Freud, who was the 19th century rationalist and psychoanalyst, named as father of psychoanalysis. In the very beginning, psychoanalysis was applied in medical treatment for mental health disorders. The psychoanalytic theory is a personality theory, which is based on the notion that an individual gets motivated more by unseen forces that are controlled by the conscious and the rational thoughts. The psychiatric practice of this theory is called psychoanalysis. Freud's theory about personality has had tremendous influence on society around the world through many different disciplines. Not only psychology has been influenced and informed by the ideas of Freud, but also literature, art, philosophy, cultural studies, film theory and many academic subjects.

The division of the physical into what is conscious and what is unconscious is the fundamental premises of psycho-analysis alone make it possible for psychoanalysis to understand the pathological process in mental life which are common as they are important, and to find a place for them in the framework of science. To put it once more in a different way psychoanalysis cannot situated the essence of physical in consciousness, but it obliged to regard consciousness as a quality of the physical, which may be present in addition to other qualities or may be absent. The psychology of consciousness is in capable of solving the problems of dreams and hypnosis. Being conscious is in the first place a purely descriptive term, resting on perception of the most immediate and certain character. Experience goes on to show that a physical element is not as rule conscious for a protracted length of time. On the contrary, a state of consciousness is characteristically very transitory an idea that is conscious now

pleases no longer as a moment later although it can become so again under certain condition that are easily brought about. It was latent and by this that it was capable of becoming conscious at any time it was unconscious. Here unconscious coincides with the latent and capable of becoming the unconscious is not applicable here so long as the idea was in a state of latency it was not anything physical at all to contradict them at the point would lead to nothing more profitable than a verbal dispute. The concept of the unconscious along another path by considering certain experience in which mental dynamics play a part. It have been obliged to us in that very powerful mental process or ideas exist (and here is a quantitative or economic factor comes into question for the first time) which can produce all the effects in mental life that ordinary ideas do (English learning effects that can in the talent become conscious as ideas) do they themselves do not become conscious. It is unnecessary to repeat in detail here what has been explain so often before .it is enough to say that at this point psychoanalytic theory steps in and assert that the reason why such ideas cannot become conscious is that certain force is opposes them, that otherwise they could become conscious and that it would then be apparent how little they differ from other elements which are admittedly physical. The fact that in the technique of psychoanalysis amine has been found by which the opposing force can be removed and the ideas in question made conscious renders this theory irrefutable. The state in which the ideas existed before being made conscious is called by repression, and maintains it is perceived as resistance during the work of analysis.

It obtains the concept of the unconscious from the theory of repression. The repressed is the prototype of the unconscious for us. However that we have two kinds of unconscious the one which is latent but capable of becoming conscious and the one which is repressed and which is not in itself and without more ado, capable of becoming

conscious. This piece of insight into physical dynamics is cannot fail to effect terminology and description. The latent which is preconscious restrict the term unconscious to the dynamically unconscious replaced so that now there is three terms- conscious(Cs), pre-conscious(Pcs) and unconscious(Ucs). Whose sense is no longer purely descriptive. The Pcs is presumably a great deal closer to the Cs. than is the Ucs. And since it have called the Ucs. Physical with even less hesitation call the latent Pcs, Physical. The philosophers would then propose that the pre conscious and the unconscious should be described as two species or stage of the psychoid and harmony would be established but endless difficulties in exposition would follow , and the one important fact that these two kinds of psycho coincide in almost every other respect with what is admittedly physical would be forced into the background in the interest of a prejudice dating from a period in which these psychoids or the most important part of them ,were still unknown.

The three terms Cs,Pcs,andUcs, so long as it do not forget that in the descriptive sense there are two kinds of unconscious but in the dynamic sense only one .For purpose of exposition this distinction can in some cases be ignored, but in others it is of course indispensable .At the same time, it's become more or less accustomed to this ambiguity of the unconscious and have managed pretty well with it. It is impossible to find the ambiguity the distinction between conscious and unconscious in the last report a question of perception which must be answered yes or no and the act of perception itself tells us nothing of the reason why a thing is or is not perceived .No one had a right to complain because the actual phenomenon expresses the dynamic factor ambiguously in the further course of psychoanalytic work however even those distinctions have proved to be inadequate and for practical purposes , insufficient. This has become clear in more ways than one but the decisive instance is as follow. We have

formed the idea that in each individual there is a coherent organization of mental processes and we call this the ego. The ego controls the approaches to motility - that is to the discharge of excitations into the external world. It is the mental agency which supervises all its own constituent processes, and which goes to sleep at night, and then it exercises the censorship on dreams. From this ego proceed these repressions, too, by means of which it is sought to exclude certain trends in the mind not merely from consciousness but also from other forms of effectiveness and activity. In analysis these trends which have been shut out stand in opposition to the ego, and the analysis is faced with the task of removing the resistances which the ego displays against concerning itself with the repressed.

As humans our behavior, our thoughts and actions, are the product of our psyche. In order to have an understanding of why we behave as we do, it is necessary to identify the formation and structure of the human psyche. Sigmund Freud's work in the field of psychoanalysis was ground breaking because it answered questions about the human psyche in a way that no one else had before him. This paper will explore Freud's conception of the formation and structure of the human psyche. It will discuss the shift from a static to a dynamic (libidinal) conception of unconsciousness, sublimation and its fundamental role not only in an individual's psychological development but also in psychological development from a cultural perspective, and finally it will explore the social dimension of identity formation. Explication of these concepts will clarify the role of the human psyche in governing human behavior on both an individual and societal level. Freud analyzes the human psyche in terms of three elements, which he calls, the Id, Ego, and Super-Ego. In order to obtain an understanding as to why humans behave as they do, it is necessary to examine all three. The Id is the unorganized part of the psyche that contains a human's instinctual

drives. The Id is the only part of the psyche that is present at birth and it is the source of our bodily needs, wants, desires, and impulses; particularly our sexual and aggressive drives. The Id is an entirely unconscious aspect of the psyche and, according to Freud, is the “source of all psychic energy”; thus making it the primary component of personality. Freud claimed that the Id acts according to the pleasure principle and that the Id contains the libido, which is the primary source of instinctual force that is unresponsive to the demands of reality. The pleasure principle drives the Id to seek immediate gratification of all needs, wants, and desires. Clearly instant gratification of these desires is not always possible and thus psychological tension is created that needs to somehow be discharged. The Id remedies this tension through, what Freud called, Primary Process. The Id uses Primary Process to fulfill the need to act on an urge that is dangerous or unacceptable by creating a mental image of the desired object to substitute for the urge. This mental representation then diffuses psychological tension and relieves anxiety. Day dreaming and masturbation would be common examples of the Primary Process. To elaborate, Freud believed that when a person masturbated it was to relieve sexual tensions that they were experiencing.

The act of masturbation proceeds from a mental image that then substitutes for the object of sexual desire in reality. Masturbation provides, what Freud thought, to be a perfect image of once sexual desires. It allows that person to be in complete control of their experience and it is because of this that some actually argue that masturbation is better than sex. The desires of the Id give rise to the Ego, which is generally the component of the psyche that ensures that the impulses of the Id are expressed in a way that is acceptable to the real world. The Ego operates according to the reality principle. In order to better understand the role of the Ego it is necessary to first discuss the three stages of consciousness and how they each function. Freud equates consciousness with

awareness. He believed that our behavior and personality derives from the constant and unique interaction of conflicting psychological forces that operate at the three levels of consciousness, or awareness. The conscious mind includes everything that we are aware of. It is the aspect unconscious: The first is latent but capable of becoming conscious, and the second is repressed and not capable of becoming conscious in the ordinary way. The latent kind of unconscious is the second level of awareness and is called the Preconscious (Pcs). This part of the mind generally represents ordinary memory. We are not consciously aware of the information contained in the Preconscious; however, we can retrieve it and pull it into consciousness at anytime. An analogy of the Preconscious is ones peripheral vision. While operating a motor vehicle it is impossible to be completely conscious of everything happening around you. We use our peripheral vision, which works rather like the preconscious, to supplement our awareness and allow us to safely and effectively navigate, utilizing data derived from it when we need to. The repressed kind of unconscious is the third level and is referred to as the unconscious mind (Ucs). This part of the psyche deals with unconscious repressed data. It is a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that are outside of our conscious awareness. Freud believed that most of the contents of the unconscious were unpleasant, such as feelings of pain, anxiety, or conflict. Freud also believed that the unconscious continually influences behavior and experience, even though there is no awareness of the influences. Freud links the unconscious to dreaming. He talks about symbolism, specifically how objects in the dream represent different objects in reality.

A common Freudian example would be entering a tunnel in once dream may result from ones sexual desires and thus symbolize a vagina. Upon discussing the unconscious it is key to note hypnosis and its ability to bring repressed feelings and desires from the Ucs to a more conscious level of awareness. Under hypnosis we enter

a special psychological state with physiological attributes that resemble sleep but give rise to a level of awareness distinguishable from the ordinary state. Freud believed it to be possible to recover repressed memories through the implementation of hypnosis. Hypnosis could serve as an instrument supplementing normal psychoanalysis by recovering repressed memories of past traumas that one may have experienced early in life, which could then allow for therapeutic breakthroughs to be made on the psychoanalytic level. Freud's conception of the unconscious moves from being one that is static to one that is dynamic because within the psyche, the forces will enter into psychological conflict with one another. The static conception of the unconscious is descriptive. It connotes whatever is outside of the field of consciousness, thus embracing both the Ucs and Pcs as one.

The dynamic approach to the unconscious allows for the distinction to be made between the two. It designates not only latent ideas but also ideas with a certain dynamic character, ideas keeping apart from consciousness in spite of their intensity and activity. Moving back to Freud's structure of the psyche, the Ego is identified as being a coherent organization of mental processes. Freud's conception of the Ego is strongly related to consciousness and it controls approaches to the discharge of excitations into the external world. It is an element of the psyche that tries to regulate all of its constituent processes. Freud believed that even when one went to sleep at night, the Ego continued to exercise a censorship upon one's dreams. It is from this aspect of the Ego that it becomes necessary to discuss its role in the unconscious. Repressions are an attempt to cut off certain aspects of mental functioning not merely from consciousness but also from their other forms of manifestation and activity. Those functions that have been shut out stand in opposition to the Ego. All that is repressed is a part of the Unconscious mind meaning that it is possible that a part of what was

initially the Ego may become a part of the Ucs. Freud suggests that the real difference between an unconscious and a preconscious thought consists in the notion that the unconscious is formed from some material which remains unrecognized, whereas the preconscious can be brought into connection with verbalized images. With the repressed unconscious there are no verbalized images to refer to, thus it remains unrecognized. Fundamentally, the Ego has a set of psychic functions able to distinguish between fantasy and reality. It organizes thoughts and makes sense of the world. The Ego represents reason and common sense. The ego is said to serve three masters: the external world, the Id, and the Super-Ego. The Super-Ego is the third part of Freud's system. The Super-Ego reflects the internalization of cultural rules, mainly taught by parents applying their guidance and influence. For Freud the Super-Ego can be described as a successful instance of identification with the parental agency. The Super-Ego aims for perfection. It is made up of the organized part of the personality structure, which includes the individual's Ego ideals, spiritual goals, and conscience. It is a psychic agency that criticizes and prohibits one's drives, fantasies, feelings, and actions.

The Super-Ego works in contradiction to the Id because it strives to act in a manner that is socially appropriate. As a consequence of the Super-Ego conflicting with the demands of the Id, the Ego often has to mediate between the two. Understood as the conscious individual, the Ego, is driven by the Id and confined by the Super-Ego; it sometimes struggles to bring about harmony among the forces and influences working and acting upon it, causing it to break out in anxiety; realistic anxiety regarding the external world, moral anxiety, regarding the Super-Ego, and neurotic anxiety regarding the strength and passions of the Id. To overcome these anxieties the Ego employs defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms are not necessarily direct or conscious. They lessen the tension by covering up our impulses that are threatening. One defense

mechanism Freud talks about in particular is Sublimation. Sublimation is the defense mechanism where socially unacceptable impulses or desires are consciously transformed into socially acceptable behaviors or actions, possibly resulting in a long-term conversion of the initial impulse. Freud believed sublimation to be a sign of maturity, not only individually but also societally, allowing people to function in culturally acceptable ways. Freud defined sublimation as the process of deflecting sexual instincts into acts of higher social valuation. He saw it as an especially conspicuous feature of cultural development. Sublimation is what allows for higher psychological activities, scientific, artistic, or ideological, to play such an important part in civilized life. Ultimately it is the interaction of each aspect of the human psyche that accounts for one to develop. Each aspect has its own unique features that give the human psyche an immeasurable degree of depth. e features often conflict with one another but they also work harmoniously to resolve these conflicts. It is also by analyzing these aspects and their functions that we are able to interpret why human beings behave the way they do on both an individual and cultural level.

These interpretations allow us to derive a better understanding of each other's behavior and also allow us to engage in self-reflection, to better understand our own behavior.

Incest: Characterization and definitions vary across cultures, but incest refers to sexual relations between close relatives. Prohibition may be according to custom or morality, and embodied in law. In psychoanalysis, the term is also and especially discussed in terms of fantasy and psychological conflict. Freud mentioned incest for the first time in his correspondence with Wilhelm Flies, in which he explained "saintliness" in terms of its impious and anti-social character. A family primordially promiscuous would be forced to give up incestuous behavior in order to avoid being socially isolated. Incest

subsequently became a central theme in Freud's formulation of the Oedipus complex, defined as a child's conflict between sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex (the "positive" oedipal complex) and repression of that desire. The theory was put forth in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* and in Freud's discussion of the case of "Little Hans", among other works. From the start Freud also discussed the incest taboo in an anthropological context, in terms of its role in the evolution of society. The first chapter of *Totem and Taboo* was devoted to "the horror of incest" and was based on the work of contemporary ethnologists. For Freud it was important to establish that such a taboo operated in every human society. This view gained some support in the work of later anthropologists, including Claude Lévi-Strauss, who, however, maintained reservations regarding Freud's obligatory corollary, that the Oedipus complex was "universal."

Freud held that psychic energy which accumulates through repression of sexual gratification, prohibitions owed to the oedipal situation, becomes an essential force propelling the development of civilization, especially through channels of sublimation. In "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness", Freud suggested that repression can also provoke psychological disorders through the "damming-up" of libido (the "actual" neuroses) or by substitute symptom formation (the psychoneuroses). The price of civilized morality is high when repression adversely affects too many individuals and distorts the social fabric; Freud examined these issues in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* and in *Civilization and Its Discontents*. The incest theme has received little attention in contemporary psychoanalytic literature; an exception is Paul-Claude Racamier's interesting treatment of the "Incestual"

## Chapter 2

### Film analysis of *Oldboy*

Park Chan-wook is one of the most popular directors in 'Korea' and his films have been successful both domestically and internationally. His films are known to contain a large amount of violence and other sensitive subjects, which has raised a lot of discussion and criticism by looking this film "*Oldboy*" from the beginning. A man gets violently drunk and is chained to the wall in a police station. His friend comes and bails him out. While the friend is making a telephone call, the man disappears from an empty city street in the middle of the night. The man regains consciousness in what looks like a shabby hotel room.

A bed, a desk, a TV, a bathroom cubicle. There is a steel door with a slot near the floor for his food tray. Occasionally a little tune plays, the room fills with gas, and when he regains consciousness the room has been cleaned, his clothes have been changed, and he has received a haircut. This routine continues for 15 years. He is never told who has imprisoned him, or why. He watches TV until it becomes his world. He fills one journal after another with his writings. He pounds the wall until his fists grow bloody, and then hardened. He screams. He learns from TV that his blood and fingerprints were found at the scene of his wife's murder. That their daughter has been adopted in Sweden. That if he were to escape, he would be a wanted man. The man, named Oh Dae-su (Choi Min-Sik), is a wretch when we first meet him, a drunk who has missed his little daughter's birthday and now sits forlornly in the police station, ridiculously wearing the angel's wings he bought her as a present. He is not a bad man, but alcohol has rendered him useless.

When he suddenly finds himself freed from his bizarre captivity 15 years later, he is a different person, focused on revenge, ridiculously responsive to kindness. Wandering into a restaurant, he meets a young woman who, he knows from the TV, is Korea's "Chef of the Year." This is Mido (Gang Hye-Jung). Sensing that he has suffered, feeling an instinctive sympathy, she takes him home with her, hears his story, care for him, stated to love him. Meanwhile, he sets out on a methodical search to find the secret of his captivity. He was fed pot stickers, day after day, until their taste is burned into his memory, and he travels the city's restaurants until he finds the one that supplied his meals. That is the key to tracking down his captors. It is also, really, the beginning of the movie, the point at which it stops being a mystery and becomes a tragedy in the classical sense. It will not reveal the several secrets that lie ahead for Oh, except to say that they come not as shabby plot devices, but as one turn after another of the screws of mental and physical anguish and poetic justice. It can mention a virtuoso sequence in which Oh fights with several of his former jailers, his rage so great that he is scarcely slowed by the knife sticking in his back. This is a man consumed by the need for revenge, who eventually discovers he was imprisoned by another man whose need was no less consuming, and infinitely more diabolical.

He has been locked up for 15 years without once seeing another living person. For him the close presence of anyone is like a blow to all of his senses. When he says in a restaurant, "I want to eat something that is alive," we understand (a) that living seafood is indeed consumed as a delicacy in Asia, and (b) he wants to eat the life, not the food, because he has been buried in death for 15 years. Why would Mi-do, young, pretty and talented, take this wretched man into her life? Perhaps because he is so manifestly helpless. Perhaps because she believes his story, and even the reason why he cannot reclaim his real name or identity. Perhaps because in 15 years he has been

transformed into a man she senses is strong and good, when he was once weak and despicable. From his point of view, love is joined with salvation, acceptance, forgiveness and the possibility of redemption. All of this is in place during the several scenes of revelation which follow, providing a context and giving them a deeper meaning. The ending is improbable in its complexity, but it is not impossible, and it is not unmotivated. *Oldboy* ventures to emotional extremes, but not without reason. *Oldboy* begins in 1988 when the main character, Oh Dae-su (Choi Min-sik), is mysteriously kidnapped on the night of his daughter's birthday. For fifteen years, Oh Dae-su is confined to a hotel room without reason. His only window to the outside world is a television set. Through the television he learns that his wife has been murdered. In his strange absence he becomes the main suspect. Each day Dae-su practices boxing and attempts escape. One day, Dae-su is released on the roof of an apartment building. From a small trunk, he emerges into the world. Unable to figure out why he was kidnapped or who kidnapped him, he goes to a sushi restaurant where he meets Mi-do (Kang Hye-jung). Oh Dae-su faints at the restaurant and Mi-do takes him back to her apartment. Upon waking, Dae-su briefly loses self-control and tries to attack Mi-do.

However, the two reconcile and become friends. Mi-do agrees to help Dae-su search for his daughter. They learn that Dae-su's daughter was adopted by a Swedish family after his wife was murdered. Distraught by the news, Dae-su continues to search for his kidnapper. He tracks down the restaurant that made the dumplings he ate each day in captivity. From there he finds the delivery boy and then the makeshift prison. Returning to the private prison to get information, Dae-su must later fight his way out of the building. The famous fight scene involves Dae-su armed with a hammer against multiple henchmen.

Eventually, Dae-su and his captor meet. His captor Lee Woo-jin (YooJi-tae) gives Dae-su five days to solve the mystery of his imprisonment. If he solves the mystery, Woo-jin will kill himself, if Dae-su cannot solve the mystery, Woo-jin will kill Mi-do. Dae-su and Mi-do work together to understand Dae-su's imprisonment and in the process fall in love. In a moment of intense passion the two have sex. Dae-su begins to put together the pieces of his connection to Woo-jin, realizing that they both attended the same high school. As a teenager, Dae-su witnessed Woo-jin and his sister's incestuous relationship. Dae-su then accidentally spreads the rumor of their relationship and Soo-ah (Woo-jin's sister) commits suicide. Solving the mystery, Dae-su rushes to Woo-jin's penthouse apartment. There, Woo-jin reveals that Mi-do is actually Dae-su's daughter and that he used hypnosis to orchestrate their meeting and attraction. In a moment of extreme anguish, Dae-su cuts out his own tongue, Woo-jin commits suicide, and the penthouse fills with blood. In a flash-forward, Dae-su is hypnotized again to forget the terrible act he has committed. Dae-su and Mi-do meet again, but the success of the hypnosis is unclear.

Oh Dae-Su is determined to discover who his mysterious enemy is. He gets his first clue when a homeless man hands him a cell phone and a wallet full of cash. Later, while Dae-su is eating in a Japanese restaurant, the phone rings and a voice challenges him to find the reason for his imprisonment.

Dae-Su blacks out only to awaken in the apartment of the restaurant's pretty, young waitress, Mido (Kang Hye-Jung). Mi-Do helps him search for his hidden prison, but one night, Dae-Su finds Mi-Do exchanging emails with a mysterious stranger who seems to know all about him. Convinced Mi-Do has betrayed him, he continues the search on his own.

Dae-Su locates his former prison and beats up the gangsters who served as his captors. A tape offers clues as to his enemy's motives, but not his identity. Dae-Su blacks out on the street and after being helped into a cab by his mysterious, but still unnamed foe, he ends up back at Mi-Do's. An old friend who owns a cyber café helps Dae-Su discover that Mi-Do's emailer, "Evergreen", is indeed the man who had him locked up. Dae-Su is enraged by Mi-Do's apparent betrayal, but a face-to-face confrontation with his smooth-talking adversary ends with Dae-Su's conviction that she is innocent. The man gives Dae-Su five days to discover who he is and why he imprisoned him. He is told that if he succeeds, the man will kill himself; if he does not, he will kill Mi-Do. Final clues lead Dae-Su back to his old high school, where he discovers that his enemy is fellow graduate Lee Woo-Jin (YooJi-Tae), whose sister, Soo-Ah (Yoon Jin-Seo), committed suicide years before. Dae-Su confronts Lee in his ultra-modern penthouse apartment, only to discover that his enemy's tortures are just beginning. Seeking revenge is the best cure for someone who's been hurt", says the captor of Oh Dae-su, a man who has been held for 15 years in a grimy hotel room, and this is a story of mutual revenge served both hot and cold. There've both been hurt, probably irreparably, and what looks like a chain of events set in motion with a kidnapping from a phone box a decade and a half ago actually began its pitiless, unrelenting process considerably earlier. There is something clicked about the "we will always be linked together, you and I, even though we are enemies" style of story; it's been done plenty of times. But rarely with such a heady mix of eye-popping fighting, deadpan humor, graphic torture and grungy cinematography. It's not for the squeamish though, or anyone with a dental phobia. When we first meet Dae-su (Choi Min-sik) he's drunk, at a police station, and trying to piss in a waste paper bin, after missing his four

year old daughter's birthday party. He's rescued by his friend, who then calls Dae-su's wife from a phone box, only to turn around to find Dae-su has vanished.

And vanished Dae-su remains, for 15 long years, during which time he is framed for his wife's murder, and his daughter is adopted overseas. Those 15 years are spent in a hotel room; the kind of hotel that's grimy, old fashioned and uncomfortable. And he never has any inkling why he is there or who is in charge. During his enforced stay Dae-su channels his rage into teaching himself martial arts, and tries to dig his way out, an incredibly laborious process that takes literally years. He also tattoos his hand yearly with a sharpened chopstick to indicate the passing of time, and – worst of all – watches reports on TV of his wife's murder and his own framing for the crime. After 15 years he's left outside in a suitcase and emerges disheveled and disoriented. He can't even call up his friends or family as they think he killed his wife. Despite the grim set-up *Oldboy* is very funny in a deadpan way. Faced with a gang of young thugs, Dae-su muses: "Can ten years of imaginary training be put to use?" Whereupon he launches himself at the gang, gives them a good kicking then calmly states "Apparently, it can". His first visit to a restaurant sees him downing a wriggling live octopus. The young chef there, Mi-do (King Hye-jung), is partly fascinated by him and partly horrified. She takes him home where he proceeds to try to rape her though she fights him off easily.

Dae-su may be physically free but he isn't free of his captor Woo-jin (YooJi-tae). Revenge is on his agenda, but Woo-jin too is determined to drive their mutual story, of which Dae-su is not even aware, to its conclusion. Dae-su is given five days to work out who he was imprisoned for so long, or Mi-do will die. But the biggest shocks are yet to come, along with the most hard-to-watch self-torture scene. There's a relentlessness to *Oldboy*, a one-destination ride that can't get off. And throughout, the

man who took Dae-su captive all those years ago seems several steps ahead, an arch manipulator directing events, Dae-su's existence still managed and engineered by him. In many ways this is also about freedom: whether we really have it, and whether our decisions are directed or borne out of real choices. Choi Min-sik perfectly captures that sense of disconnect with the world on his release, a world which has continued happily without him. Kang Hye-jung is fabulous as Mi-do, a woman who is both a protagonist and a victim. The plot starts after the first sixteen minutes of the film, which served as a descriptive prologue to the status and the gradual transformation of the hero, from the already dysfunctional but weirdly funny family man of the first scene, to the vengeance machine he becomes for the rest of the film. Oh Dae-Su is determined to find the person who deprived him of fifteen years of his life. He finds a valuable ally and lover in the form of a young sushi chef, Mi-do (Gang Hye-Jung) and together they follow clues in order to unravel the mystery. The plot follows the traditional narrative of the suspense thriller which sees a victim –in this case Oh Dae-Su– tortured both psychologically and physically by an unknown person. However, in contrast to the always refined, sophisticated and in control Hitchcockian heroes, Oh Dae-Su seems to have lost a great deal of his humanity during his imprisonment, turning him into a monster, an insensitive person consumed by rage and sentiments of hatred and cruelty. Little by little, the pieces of the puzzle fall into place, and the spectator meets Oh Dae-Su's tormentor, Lee Woo-Jin (YooJi-Tae).

Lee Woo-Jin is a young millionaire who had an incestuous relationship with his sister in high-school. Oh Dae-Su, who attended the same school, had witnessed the siblings touching and had started a rumor about Lee Soo-ah being pregnant with her brother's child, which had unpredictable consequences since the young girl could not

stand the shame and committed suicide to avoid public humiliation, leaving her brother alone to face the music and deal with her loss.

Lee Woo-Jin then constructed a devious plan to get his revenge on the person who he believed had destroyed his life. Patiently yet methodically, he waited for the right moment to strip Oh Dae-Su of everything and everyone he ever cared for. Woo-Jin murdered his wife, his best friend, and raised his young daughter from the age of three in order to complete his diabolical scheme: to make Oh Dae-Su experience the same criminal feeling that he did, by making the punishment fit the crime. Mi-do is not just a young woman who happened to fall in love with an older man; she is Oh Dae-Su's daughter. The moment Oh Dae-Su's realizes that he had a sexual relationship with his daughter, he assumes the paternal role and the first thing he asks is whether his daughter is aware of his true identity. Even though he was accused by Lee Woo-Jin of never protecting the women in his life, he now begs for forgiveness as he realizes he still has a chance to make amends. In Sophocles' Oedipus Rex, when Oedipus learns that he had unknowingly killed his father, Laius, and had then married his mother Jocasta, fulfilling an ancient prophecy, he uses his wife's/mother's golden pins to stab out his eyes. Similarly, Oh Dae-Su falls on his legs, takes a pair of scissors and cuts off his tongue, confirming Lee Woo-Jin's words:

“Your tongue got my sister pregnant! It wasn't Lee Woo Jin's dick; it was Oh Dae-Su tongue!” (“Lee Woo-jin” 1:31:54-59).

After the revelation of the mystery and his mission complete, Lee Woo-Jin commits suicide which, along with Oh Dae-Su's symbolic mutilation, brings catharsis to the story. However, the end credits do not make their anticipated appearance, as Park opts for a more ambiguous ending. In the last scene, Oh Dae-Su is in an unidentified

place, in the snowy mountains, and with the help of an expert in hypnosis tries to erase the unbearable memories of the incest. The healer asks him to return mentally to Lee Woo-Jin's apartment and to split up into two different people when he hears the sound of a bell she is holding. Indeed, the spectators now see two different Oh Dae-Sus: the one who does not remember, and the monster who holds the secret and dies pacing. In the very last scene back in the mountain, Mi-do finds her father on the snow, and hugs him, saying: "I love you Oh Dae-Su." The spectators know that Mi-do is not aware of the secret and her presence there can be easily explained by the fact that she took care of Oh Dae-Su even when he was a stranger. However, Oh Dae-Su is once again unaware of the young woman's true identity. Does his smile and tears signify a sexual reunion? Or, does his expression symbolize a deeper understanding of the true bond that unites them? The question remains unanswered and the film *Oldboy*'s open ending can be interpreted according to each spectator's beliefs, background and desires.

## **Chapter3**

### **Psychoanalysis of the characters**

This chapter applies Freud's psychoanalytic theory into the film, in order to analyse the psychology of two male main protagonists by illustrating the psychological moment of the characters, but also on adding incest relationship between characters which was achieving the oedipal phase in Freud's concept the Id of Oh Dae Su will be analysed first. Then the internal conflict of Lee Wo jin . And attitudes on their individual incestuous relationship would be listed and finally how hypnotism work in Dae-Su and Mi-do.

As one of the main protagonists in the film, OhDae Su had always presented through his behavior especially in the very beginning. When he was arrested in the police station, he tried to make trouble inside the police station because he was actually drunk at that moment. Through his dialogue with the police we realized that he got drunk on his daughter's birthday party and forgot to give his present to her. He started having piss on the corner, shouting foul languages to the police, and stole a woman's sunglasses without reason.

These behaviors could be seen as expressing his id because he could not control himself at that moment. He did not have the awareness to activate his defense mechanism.

During the 15-years unreasonable imprisonment, his unconscious started to break out. In the beginning, he still believed that someone would tell him the reason of getting imprison. However, when he realized the news, which his wife was killed and the police believed he was the murderer in the television report, an ant was running up

from his arm in a close up shot. When the camera made a close up shot to his shocked face, dozen ants continued coming up from his face until he fell on the floor.

Surrealism was applied in this scene. Ants were usually move in a group and searching a place to build their home. For me, ant could represent Dae Su's fear and disorientating in the film. Since those ants were going in different directions, it presented his confusing feeling without any solution on his situation. He could not accept what was happening on him. Since then, all his desire was escaped from the prison and found out the truth. Therefore, he wrote down all the person he had fought and bothered. He also trained his body strength in order to take revenge after he could escape. Dae Su's "Id" was ultimately uncontrolled after he was suddenly released.

His behaviors were mainly seeking for self-centered pleasure in order to fulfil his nature impulse humanity. For example, he went to a restaurant after he was released. Mi-Do was the waitress who served him a live octopus. Dae Su immediately ate it with his hands. He teared the octopus ravenously like an animal eating a prey. It was not easy for audience to accept this scene because eating live animal was not familiar for everyone.

However, this behavior matched Freud's "the uncanny" concept in psychoanalysis. Freud argued that the "uncanny" occurred when people terrified on something which was secretly familiar to us. Dae Su's desire on food presented his id. It also aroused audience mental anxiety. Besides, there was a scene which Da Su was fighting with the gangsters in the corridor. The camera was set in the cross-section view of the corridor, creating a tense spatial area with many people. This scene maintained a long shot and a long take without cutting for almost 3 minutes. He fought them all off with nothing more than his hammer and his bare fists. His desire of killing the

opponents was seriously strong as violent was the only way to take revenge on the gangsters, who arrested him for 15 years.

Moreover, sexual desire was also included in Dae Su's "id". Although he did not trust Mi-Do in the very beginning. He still chose to have sex with her because of the uncontrolled sexual impulse of the male humanity. In conclusion, Dae Su's "id" on food, violent and sex were unleashed ultimately in order to present the primordial instincts.

The self-conflict between ego and id of Lee Woo Jin carried a self-judgment on his revenge vengeance project. After the first half of the film, Woo Jin almost dominated the story plot because the reasons behind the vengeance project were gradually revealing by him. Audience would realize that Woo Jin was the final avenger behind. Look through the details during his plan, he had questioned himself several times whether taking revenge was valuable or not. For example, when he discovered the sex making of Dae Su and Mi-Do, which was actually part of his vengeance project, he questioned himself whether they really loved each other or not.

Since he realized that they were father-daughter relationship, which was similar with him and his death sister, he believed that his incestuous relationship with his sister was damaged by Dae Su in the past. It was full of couple love. Therefore, if love was really emerged in their relationship, he would feel guilty because he was now planning to create a tragedy which he went through before. The reason why Woo Jin still chose to take revenge because he could not let his desire go. His sister's death strongly influenced to his emotion on id over ego. Although his sister told him to put her in memory, he still could not forgive Dae Su's fault. Talking revenge (id) was bigger than anything because his only love (his sister) would not be back forever. His sexual desire

(id) was gone already and he could not find any other woman to replace it. Therefore, WooJin sometimes cried and felt sad during his planning. Although he understood revenge was useless on his tragedy, finalizing the vengeance project made him satisfy.

The incestuous relationships in the film generated 2 results based on Freudian Oedipus myth. In Freudian Psychoanalysis, the Oedipus myth was mentioned in order to explain the psychoanalytic theory. A boy gave up his love desire for the mother because he feared the father who had a penis-phallus, could punish him and even castrated him, in order to turn him like his mother. This story simply presented Freud's theory of "unconscious and conscious" and "primal repression". In Woo-Jin's case, he expressed his incestuous relationship with his sister positively. In Dae Su's flashback on his past school days, Woo-Jin removed his sister's shirt in the classroom in order to have sex. He believed that their love would last forever as he already expressed his unconscious (love desire). However, his sister committed suicide because she could not suffer in the general social rule. This result did not damage Woo-Jin's id because he still believed that their incestuous relationship was right.

The theory apply to this movie find out the gossips about the Lee Woo- Jin and his sister about their sexual relationship, which leads his sister's suicide it represents the super ego and also in the when Dae Su realize that the real relationship of mi-Do and Oh Dae Su Because of that he cut his own tongue that represents he want to suicide and relieve from all pain so that represents the super ego

In Dae Su's case, he chose to hide his incestuous relationship forever. For him, it was an accident of having sex with Mi-Do (his daughter). He asked the hypnotist to erase the incest love memories. Although he loved Mi-Do, he did not want her to know the truth and chose to maintain the same situation forever by his ego. However, at the

end shot, he hugged Mi-Do with a smiley face, but slowly turned sadly. Because he still remembered the father-daughter relationship with her. And this end scene lastly showed the hidden psychological conflict of a character. In general, we could realize that both of incestuous relationships presented in a passive way. Due to the usual moral ethic, characters could not express their id to the public. Their unconscious feeling could only continue storing in their mind which that a plethora of different psychological concepts. One concept in particular that made for a major part in the film was the dated Freudian Oedipus complex. The Oedipus complex in a concept again in psychology that describes a child who will have a sexual attraction or a desire for their parent of the opposite sex and the child will have a want to exclude the other parent from that relationship. This desire was theorized to be in the unconscious and that would make sense given it is a psychoanalytic theory. While Oedipus complex can be used to describe any sex's attraction with their opposite-sex parent the phrase Oedipus complex is usually used to describe a man's attraction to his mother while an Electra complex is used to describe a female's attraction to her father. While the relationship between Dae-Su and Mi-do isn't exactly a case of Oedipus complex it could be said that this film takes the concept and uses it to push for a bigger theme.

The psychological concept of Hypnotic Suggestion is talked of and used in various moments in this film. It is arguably the biggest reason the events of this film were able to happen and it is important that viewers understand how hypnosis works in order to make sense of the aforementioned events. Hypnosis can't be used to make someone do something that someone wouldn't normally do. So the step of removing Dae-Su from his family for fifteen years was required to get him to fall in love with his daughter. The interesting thing about the end of the movie is that we don't entirely know if the last hypnotic session had an entire effect on Dae-Su, as he seems to have

residual pain when hugging Mi-do. While the film describes what is done to Mi-do and Dae-Su as Hypnosis, it could be said that what happened to them was more along the lines or at least having the negative connotation of brainwashing. It feel like that was what he was asking the hypnotist to help him forget. He wanted to remain a lover without having to know he's in love with his daughter. So, the hypnotist told him that he would split into two: one, the monster, who knows that Mi-do is his daughter and another who will remain a lover without that burden. It is assumed that he walked the 70 steps and before he wakes from the hypnosis, lying in the snow, that falling to the ground could be the death of his monster and him waking free from burden of knowledge, or just a simple awakening from hypnosis. Everything that happened between Oh and Mi-do were a result of hypnosis. In order to keep their lover relationship going on, Oh went through more hypnosis.

## Conclusion

This project has been a critical examination of the film *Oldboy*. The project analysed the evidence for psychoanalysis in the main two characters Oh Dae Su and Lee Woo-jin, which employs the idea from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic method that the unconscious mind is brought down into the conscious mind so repressed memories can be examined. The Id, Ego and Superego are a set of three concepts in psychoanalytic theory. The three agents are theoretical constructs that describe the activities and interactions of the mental life of a person. Also, an incest relationship between Lee Woo-jin and Mi-Do was achieving the oedipal phase in Freud's concept. In this project, the Id of Oh Dae Su, internal conflict of Lee Woo-jin and attitudes of individual incestuous relationships are examined.

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**DON BOSCO ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE**  
**ANGADIKADAVU**

**AMBIKASUTHAN MANGAD'S *ENMAKAJE*: A POST  
COLONIAL AND ECOLOGICAL STUDY**

A Project Submitted to Kannur University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
the Award of Bachelor of Degree

**THOMAS JOSEPH**

**Register No: DB18AEGR048**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Project Supervisor: Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

**March 2021**

## **Kannur University**

### **Bonafide Certificate**

This is to certify that this project report “**Ambikasuthan Mangad's *Enmakaje: A Postcolonial and Ecological Study***” is a bonafide work of Thomas Joseph, who carried out the project work under my supervision. This project has not been published or submitted either in part or in whole, for any other degree.

Mr. SARATH KRISHNAN

Department in charge

Ms. ASWATHI KRISHNA

Project Supervisor

## **Declaration**

I, Thomas Joseph, hereby declare that the project work entitled “**Ambikasuthan Mangad’s *Enmakaje: A Postcolonial and Ecological Study***” has been prepared by me and submitted to Kannur University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Aswathi Krishna of the department of English of Don Bosco Arts and Science College.

I also declare that this project work has not been submitted by fully or partly for the award of any degree, title or recognition before any authority.

**Angadikadavu**

**THOMAS JOSPEH**

**DB18AEGR048**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Sl. No.</b>		<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>2. Chapter One</b>		<b>8</b>
	Post Colonialism: Human Consequences and Exploitation of Lands	
<b>3. Chapter Two</b>		<b>18</b>
	<i>Enmakaje: Story of Victims of Colonial Exploitation</i>	
<b>4. Chapter Three</b>		<b>26</b>
	<i>Enmakaje : A Post Colonial Study</i>	
<b>5. Conclusion</b>		<b>26</b>
	<b>Works Cited</b>	<b>27</b>

## Introduction

The main objective of this thesis is to study the novel *Enmakaje* with a postcolonial ideology. The novel is going to be studied in a different postcolonial perspective of ecological concerns, where Post colonialism is the critical study of cultural legacy of colonialism. These studies have focused particularly on the Third World countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean islands, and South America. It studies the process and the effects of cultural displacement and the ways in which the displaced have culturally defended themselves.

The novel is written by the prominent writer Ambikasuthan Mangad. Some of his other works are *Rathri*, *Marakkappile Theyyangal*, *Randu Malsyangal*. One of his most prominent work is the novel *Enmakaje*. The novel is based on the real incident of endosulfan tragedy that occurred in 1978, caused massive disruption to the ecosystem including massive deaths in bees, fishes, birds and deformities in animals and humans.

There have been many studies that have been carried out to prove that the novel *Enmakaje* contain post colonialism. One among the studies has been done by Sreevalsan Thiyyadi and has explored the possibilities of post colonialism through his work '*Heavens Poured Poison*'. The paper tries to convey the impact of endosulfan among the people of the affected area. The paper portrays how it is badly affected the common people. Another study by U.V. Yamuna also showed it through her work "*Toxic Discourse in Enmakaje- An Eco-Feminist Exploration. A Tool for Making Sense of the World and Evoking Sensibility in the Heart of the World*". This paper examines how the male dominated development models rooted in hierarchical dualism oppress women, indigenous community, and nature through modernization in agriculture implemented through mono-crop farming and pesticides.

When compared with all these theoretical studies, this thesis seeks to investigate the novel with a different perspective. What makes this thesis different from other theoretical studies is that, this thesis focuses on the postcolonial elements and ecological concerns in the novel. The main objective of this thesis is to examine the human consequences and the ecological concerns of the place. The thesis thus, tries to focus on post colonialism and ecological concerns through the protagonist Neelakandan.

The thesis is divided into five chapters including an introduction and conclusion chapter. The introduction chapter explains the relevance of the topic. It explains the main objective of the thesis and gives background information of the same. The first chapter concentrates on the theory of post colonialism. Post colonialism is the cultural legacy of colonialism. The second chapter introduces Ambikasuthan and his book *Enmakaje* based on which the thesis is carried out. It also shows the different perspectives and motifs of the author. The third chapter focuses on how the theory of post colonialism is applied in the novel *Enmakaje*. On the basis of this theory, the novel is studied and analyzed. The final chapter is the conclusion chapter in which a conclusion is derived based on the analysis and study that is carried out in the third chapter.

## Chapter One

### Post Colonialism: Human Consequences and Exploitation of Lands

Post colonialism is the critical study of cultural legacy of colonialism. It has been seen as the critical analysis of the history, culture, literature, and modes of discourse that are specific to the former colonies of England, Spain, France, and other European imperial powers. These studies have focused specially on the Third World countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean islands, and South America. An important text in establishing the theory and practice in this recently developed field of study is *Orientalism* (1978) by the Palestinian-American scholar Edward Said, which applied a revised form of Michel Foucault's historicist critique of discourse to analyse what he called "cultural imperialism." This mode of imperialism imposed its power not by force, but by the effective means of disseminating in subjugated colonies a Eurocentric discourse that assumed the normality and pre-eminence of everything "occidental," correlatively with its representations of the "oriental" as an exotic and inferior other. It studies the process and the effects of cultural displacement and the ways in which the displaced have culturally defended themselves.

If colonialism appropriated non-European lands for its own economic purposes, the postcolonial condition in many nations of Africa, South America and Asia has been marked by a linkage between the nation-state and global, transnational corporations that utilize these same natural resources and lands. This utilization is primarily exploitative of the natural resources in the interests of global capital and secondarily of the labour of the non-European people. Numerous works from Native Americans, African tribes, Aborigines and First People from postcolonial nations as well as settler colonies like Australia and Canada demonstrate a disillusionment with postcolonial politics where

their traditional lands and ways of life have been taken away from them. Restricted to reservations and ghettos and modernization, sometimes, against their will, these First People battle not only a colonial legacy but also postcolonial indifference and a neo-colonial structural exploitation. Rob Nixon (2007) has astutely pointed out that because high-profile postcolonial theory – exemplified by Spivak, Bhabha, Appiah and others – showcases hybridity and dislocation, ecological writing, with its ‘bioregionalism’ do not quite fit into the ‘theory’. Nixon argues that bioregional writing demonstrates a locatedness and embeddedness that militates against displacement and also seems to suggest a certain xenophobia. However, Nixon argues, that one cannot think of a post colonialism which does not address the question of the environment because lands, natural resources and people continue to be exploited by First World structures and mechanisms, just as it used to be in the colonial age.

European Enlightenment or Modernity, according to Anthony Giddens, prioritized rational and optimal utilization of resources in order to ensure maximum profits, and this also forms the economic basis of capitalism. Even today, this colonial legacy continues in postcolonial nations, as Fanon puts it, propagated by the elite classes of that society. Although power struggles between the colonial master and the native subject that has ended with political independence of the colonies, it re-emerges in a postcolonial society in a different form. Native elites occupy the spaces of power once occupied by White masters; and the corruption, oppression and exploitation of the have-nots continues, and this is termed as neo- colonialism.

Colonisation and Imperialism carried out by the West is still taking place in an altogether different dimension today, where the land and its material resources are no longer captured by military or despotic powers, but the traditional and indigenous knowledge is exploited and looted away. To cite an example, the ‘aryaveppu’, a

medicinal plant which is known to ward away pests is being harnessed and utilized by western companies who have developed almost 75 patents out of it. They have perceived the baneful effects of chemicals and stopped using it, replacing it with organic and bio- fertilizers, while thrusting it upon the third world countries in the name of increasing agricultural productivity. Hence, there occurs a kind of double jeopardy or neo-colonisation in the guise of globalization.

Post colonialism demonstrates how colonialism had its impact not only in the political and economic arena but in the cultural domain as well. Colonial domination of regions as diverse and expansive as India was possible not only because of their (England's) superior military strength but also because of their clever ways of manipulating the cultural domain: literature, the arts, architecture, the law, education, history-writing, anthropology and ethnography. Colonialism studied, categorized, archived and disseminated native cultures before enacting laws, affecting changes and undertaking 'reform' in these domains. Colonialism masked its exploitative structures under the guise of paternalistic benevolence, coding colonial domination as acts of generosity, reform, 'development', welfare and stability. Over a period of time, these 'codes' sedimented as beliefs among the natives who then began to see the colonial masters exactly as the masters wanted themselves to be seen: gentle, firm, just and benevolent protectors. These codes constitute the ideology of empire and colonialism. Colonialism was marked by a discourse of territorial discovery, exploration and conquest. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902) with its story of the European's presence in and penetration of this space becomes a paradigmatic text in the spatial theme of colonial writing. Other colonials focused on the native space as ruined, as only bearing depleted reminders of a glorious past. Practically, every single European traveller to India in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries described Indian as ruins.

Several postcolonial writers seek to call into question not only these clichéd ‘European expansion’ and ‘European discovery’ themes, but also seek to rewrite it, to reclaim a measure of control over space. In V. S. Naipaul’s *An Enigma of Arrival*, it is the native who travels. ‘Travelling’, here, also serves Naipaul as a spatial metaphor for the journeys of his writing career. What he does in this part-autobiography, part-novel or part-travelogue is to call into question the myths of Edenic spaces. Naipaul reverses the standard Christian, imperial trope of the English garden when he shows how the Wiltshire countryside is in a state of decay. The Eden is a ruin, and is symptomatic of a collapse of English social order and civilization itself. Reversing also the stereotype of the Westerner’s right to name (Crusoe designating the native ‘Friday’, the colonial naming of places in Africa and Asia), Naipaul finds himself unfamiliar with the nomenclature: fields are ‘wet meadows’ and hills are ‘downs’. Here is a postcolonial, also embarking on a voyage of discovery – what he ‘discovers’ is the ruins of imperial Britain. The settings are tragically comic: ‘Jack was living in the middle of junk, among the ruins of nearly a century’ (1987). Naipaul suggests the ruins of a great civilization. The cottage – emblematic of English culture and history – is situated in the midst of ‘junk’, thereby suggesting decay.

The rejection of the master-narrative of Western imperialism—in which the colonial other is not only subordinated and marginalized, but in effect deleted as a cultural agency—and its replacement by a counter-narrative in which the colonial cultures fight their way back into a world history written by Europeans. The influential collection of essays, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (1989), ed. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffins, stresses what it terms the hybridization of colonial languages and cultures, in which imperialist importations are superimposed on indigenous traditions; it also includes a number of

postcolonial counter texts to the hegemonic texts that present a Eurocentric version of colonial history.

An abiding concern is with the formation, within Western discursive practices, of the colonial and postcolonial "subject," as well as of the categories by means of which this subject conceives itself and perceives the world within which it lives and acts. The 'subaltern' has become a standard way to designate the colonial subject that has been constructed by European discourse and internalized by colonial people who employ this discourse; "subaltern" is a British word for someone of inferior rank, and combines the Latin terms for "under" and "other". A recurrent topic of debate is how and to what extent, a subaltern subject, writing in a European language, can manage to serve as an agent of resistance against, rather than of compliance with the very discourse that has created its subordinate identity.

A major element in the postcolonial agenda is to disestablish Eurocentric norms of literary and artistic values and to expand the literary canon to include colonial and postcolonial writers. In the United States and Britain, there is an increasingly successful movement to include in the standard academic curricula, the brilliant and innovative novels, poems, and plays by such postcolonial writers in the English language as the Africans Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka, the Caribbean Islanders V. S. Naipaul and Derek Walcott, and the authors from the Indian Subcontinent G. V. Desani and Salman Rushdie.

## Chapter Two

### ***Enmakaje: Story of Victims of Colonial Exploitation***

Ambikasuthan Mangad, a Malayalam writer, was born in Baragramam, Kasargod in 1962. He is currently working as Malayalam lecturer at Kanhangad Nehru Arts and Science College. He has written over forty books including novels and short stories. His major works are *Marakkappile Theyyangal*, *Enmakaje*, *Randu Malsyangal*, *Sadharana Veshangal*, *Rathri*, *Jeevithathinte Mudra* and *Othenante Vaal*. He has bagged many awards including Ankanam Award, Ithal Puraskaram, V. P. Sivakumar Keli Award and Edasserri Memorial Award. He also won an award for the best story writer from Kerala State Government for the telefilm 'Commercial Break' in 2002.

*Enmakaje*, a work of fact and fiction, is a novel by Ambikasuthan Mangad which carries mythical and real incident of endosulfan tragedy. Malayalam novel *Enmakaje* was translated into English by J. Devika, titled *Swarga*. The novel is based on the real incident of endosulfan tragedy that occurred in 1978 which caused massive deaths of bees, fishes, birds and deformities in animals as well as humans. In 1979, the media and farmers raised their voice against this trouble. The study conducted in affected areas revealed that there were rising incidence of mental illness and deformities. As a reaction against this, in 1998, the spraying was temporarily stopped with the effort of Leelakumari Amma. Many studies were conducted between 1998 and 2002 which proved the neurobehavioral disorders, malformations and abnormalities in young ones. It was in 2002 that the Kerala high court banned the use of endosulfan.

The story is centered on lives in Enmakaje, a place of hills and forests. Author has made use of real events, characters and organizations to narrate the epidemic of deadly pesticide. First part of the novel focuses on two lost souls who decide to escape

to nature's lap but are haunted by human sufferings. Later, the focus shifts to the resistance of endosulfan. The main characters of the novel, Neelakandan and Devayani are searching for place to escape from human beings. They decide to live together without getting married. Neelakandan believes that the world is unfit for life because it's corrupted. Other characters of the novel are Dr. Arun Kumar, Sreeram Bhatt, Jayarajan, Leelakumari Amma and Sadananda. All of them join the struggle against endosulfan. Srirama suggested the need of environment committee to fight ills like ESPAC (Endosulfan Spray Protest Action Committee). Jayarajan is the active participant of the endosulfan movement. He gives multiple facts about the endosulfan poisoning. Sukumaran Master along with the other characters is the real representative.

The story revolves around myth and reality. The myths of Swarga include tale of jadadharibhoota, the local deity; story of Sivolli Brahmins performing black magic to trap the bhoota in a copper pot- the truth steps, if you climb them, you must tell the truth; water flowing in thousands of water channels and the story about Basava. The Mahabharata characters like Aswatthama, Krishna, and Pandavas etc are also cited. It also tells us about the uniqueness of serpenthill, Jadadharihill and Janghri Cave. The reality is that a lot of people got affected severely due to heavy intoxication of waterbodies in Swarga as added by the writer – “The abundance of water which made this place heaven is what's making it hell now”. Due to poisoning, leopard, snakes and bees disappear from Enmakaje. Beekeepers struggles to get honey as bees were Getting killed by poison.

The novel delineates how a small panchayat in Kasaragod district, Enmakaje, finds itself caught in an ecological maelstrom with the use of the organochloride endosulfan starting from the 1970s. The panchayat with its poisoned waters and land, diseased humans and animals, disappearing insect and reptile world is a veritable

ecological hell-hole which is shunned by many. It centres on fictional characters like Neelakandan and Devayani who become a part of the fight against the PCK which is responsible for the aerial spraying of the pesticide; and also on characters who have real life correspondence with some of the activists on the forefront. The state owned Plantation Corporation and the State machinery are portrayed as the key aggressors in the novel. When people are uncertain, filled with anger and do not know how to proceed, they can turn into a corrosive community. Mangad effectively captures this impotent anger in Enmakaje.

The child or infant is, similar to any other natural creature, a developing being that needs an appropriate habitat to develop into a proportionately formed entity. But in Enmakaje most of the children are deformed beings or face mental retardation and are dependent on support from all. The use of pesticide and the resultant environmental degradation becomes detrimental to their health and subsequently they are denied their right for health. Children who were exposed to the pesticide in Kasaragod either in the foetal stage or as young children have severe disabilities and health issues. Nearly every home in the village of Swarga has a sick child with genetic mutation. There are children with tongues jutting out of the mouth well below the chin, children with enormous heads, mentally ill children, children covered with sores, children with fingers like octopus's arms, children with eyes that have no pupils, children who look and act like monkeys and children in whom menstrual cycle begins as early as seven. Though the novel might be a work of fiction, the children in them correspond to real life characters.

The first sign that something is amiss in the land occurs to Neelakandan in the initial pages when he wonders why butterflies were so rare in the forestland, Jadadhari hill in spite of brimming with a variety of flowers. In fact, the central characters

Neelakandan and Devayani are able to spot only one large butterfly. The local population is deprived of their access to natural resources which is in turn connected to their subsistence. One of the first protests in the novel against the Plantation Corporation is triggered by the group of people who are depended on bee keeping as their source of livelihood. When a few characters sit together to eat the juicy jackfruit from the famed and legendary jackfruit tree, the activist Jayarajan asks much to the disbelief of others, “Do you know how many ppm endosulfan can be found in this aril”? Mangad emphasizes in the novel that the use of endosulfan beyond the permissible limits proves detrimental to life and jeopardises the quality of food accessible to human beings in the immediate surroundings. Infants are dependent on breast milk for sustenance. But the pesticide is found in dangerous limits even in the breast milk of the residents amounting up to approximately 200 times the permissible level.

In Enmakaje, there are no wells but tunnels, which are called surangas in local parlance, dug from the hills to each house. Srirama, a resident and freelance journalist of Enmakaje notes in *Swarga*, in Pedre village alone, there are more than a thousand surangas. This abundance of water which made this place heaven is what’s making it hell now. For twenty – five years, the poison has been spraying over those waterbodies. If it were a well, one could cover it. The poison that falls on the hill gets into the surangas and reaches people’s home. This is why this place is full of sick people. Through the indiscriminate use of endosulphan, the water in *Swarga* proved deadly not only for human beings but also for all the other biotic components. In the fight against chemicals, insects and reptiles give up early on. Mangad captures their eerie conspicuous absence through several instances in the novel: “He looked closely at the water for some time to see if he could spot a fish. Not even a tiny one? And none of the

other creatures of the water either” ... “Now there’s no fish or frog or snake in this water. Used to be plenty before. In this vast expanse, he could not sense the presence of a single living creature. Not even a lizard or a chameleon or a frog or snake or mongoose, but the thought that not even a cockroach was to be seen was truly scary”. The waters of Enmakaje which once had curative powers, as testified by the tribal chief Panji Moopar turns into water “in which no fish, no frog, grow”. The mutations that are seen in the children are also seen in the form of three legged or two headed calf. Due to the aerial spraying the chemical is deposited in the open waterbodies that run down the hill into the tunnels. The malaise of the humans and animals of Enmakaje lie in the contaminated water that reaches their ponds through the tunnels and flows through the Kodankiri canal.

The degradation of the natural environment due to monoculture is supplanted in the novel with a rich cultural environment that has existed in Enmakaje over centuries. Cultural heritage must be conserved for future generations. Through the form of the novel, Mangad records the cultural heritage of Enmakaje. The knowledge and practice that the Panji has learnt from his grandfather Koguan and father Kukku; the legend behind the curse of the Jadadharihill; serpent worship; the various Bhoota groves; the remnants of the Jainas, Mayilars and Mogeyars and the sakijaal or truth steps are instances of the rich culture enmeshed in the otherwise oppressing tale of a group of wronged people. There are two specific instances through which the author integrates the current plight of the people and the beliefs of the people. The first example is that of the truth steps. It is believed that one’s days are numbered if one spoke untruth while climbing the truth steps. Immediately after Neelakandan learns about the plight of the people of Enmakaje, he also discovers that the truth steps of Enmakaje are broken. The novelist observes here: “Enmakaje’s seat of truth had been ravaged. No one could climb up the

truth steps and bow down to the truth anymore". The chemical disaster that befalls Enmakaje is intertwined with the disruption of an important cultural practice of the land.

The second instance is with regard to the composite nature of the story of Bali. One of the notable elements in the narration of the novelist is that he contrasts between the attendant effects of endosulfan and the use of diverse folklores connected to Mahabali or Onam. These two might appear disconnected, bearing no relation to each other. However, both the thematic concerns must be treated as interlinked and as the author's affirmative demand for diversity. By showing that in Enmakaje, Onam is celebrated in the Malayalam month of Tulam on the new moon day, that his mother comes first in the month of Karkitakam, that Bali's wife and children also arrive in the previous month of Chingam to visit Kerala, that two people-instead of one-had condemned Bali to the underworld all highlight this diversity in culture. This is in contrast to the popular depiction of a single strand of narrative in connection with Bali found in the rest of Kerala. It is such a land with diverse culture that is destroyed by a monoculture plantation. Not surprisingly, the author fittingly ends the novel with Bali, who is considered as the primordial ancestor, welcoming Neelakandan and Devayani to his cave and addressing life in general.

This novel is also an instantiation to how natural resources of the future generations are compromised, thereby taking up the cause of intergenerational justice. Mangad inscribes the idea of the need for environmental justice in the novel. He juxtaposes the moving tale of those affected with the empirical information about the adverse effects of the pesticide. People like Anvar and Fathima have to grapple with restricted mobility, stunted growth, octopus' arms and fading eye sight. SivappaNaik's daughter Bhagyalakshmi cannot eat any solid food as she cannot close her mouth.

Tumanna Shetty's mentally ill children have to be kept in fetters and is watched over by their dog. While on the one hand, the novel abounds in such instances drawing the readers' ire at the state of affairs, on the other the narrative is filled with discussion of reports from various committees like the Achutan Committee, Dube Commission, Shanbaug report, reports of NIOH and CSE. While the former two are favourable to the Plantation Corporation, the remaining reports strengthen the need for a ban on endosulfan. These reports point out that genetic change would be repeated over generations and the current level of endosulfan in the soil of Enmakaje was enough to contaminate it for over the next five decades. When the contents of the reports are discussed by the characters in the novel, it becomes distilled palpable information. That genetic mutations would take place even in unborn foetus and is an indication of how human life has been imperilled. Such discussions are important as often policy makers are forced to redesign their policies.

In the novel, the committee ESPAC is at the forefront in bringing justice to the people of Enmakaje. They remove the belief circulated among the people that it is the curse of Jadadhari that is responsible for their malady. They are able to garner the support of the visual media and effectively use the print sphere to expose the pesticide lobby and draw attention to themselves. Through meticulous research, members discover that Enmakaje is not a single isolated occurrence of endosulfan disaster. Similar ecological catastrophes have been wrought by the over use of pesticides in places like Sudan, Philippines and Alabama. Through such responses to Enmakaje's crisis, the novelist elevates environmental issues to a transnational level.

Mangad captures how airing grievances in front of authorities is a difficult task even if supporting evidence in the form of scientific research is given. In order to shake the state machinery from its complacency, the activists in a chilling fashion gather the

children who are the victims of endosulfan and present them in front of the agriculture minister as the “kani” -the first auspicious sight in the morning. Though no seismic shift in the attitude is expected, the reaction of the minister is equally shocking, “Who gave you the authority to surround and obstruct a minister? Endosulfan is no poison, it is medicine! If you are ill, go to the doctor.... Take them all away... all of these corpses”. One of the sentences that is often repeated by the representatives of the state machinery be it members of the Plantation Corporation or the elected representatives is that “endosulfan is no poison, it is medicine”. Perhaps it is with the futile plea of the state to assure the people of its innocence, that such a misconception is repeatedly circulated. The Plantation Corporation pretended to be “innocent until proven guilty” and blocked their negative image of being ecological plunderers. The expenditure statement of the Plantation Corporation from 1985 to 2009 shows that cashew cultivation has not been profitable to it, and that cashew production came down considerably during this period. After studying the purchase pattern of the Plantation Corporation, Irshad and Joseph conclude that “the PCK has been actively aiding the endosulfan industry rather than the pesticide aiding cashew production”. It is this statistical detail that the novel converts into concrete detail in the form of the unnamed leader. The novel highlights how the state machinery fails in carrying out its obligations and maintains a dangerous complacency over the issue thus exposing the dysfunction of the state. With intensified resistance, it is the frugal material assistance that is doled out to the affected populace. Reparations for this atrocity are not addressed.

Seeking environmental justice or fighting violations are daunting tasks for activists. Often false charges are foisted upon them. There is also the danger of branding them as extremists or Eco terrorists and are even intimidated or silenced. In addition, their activities are closely monitored. The past of Neelakandan and Devayani

are unearthed which is used as a weapon of intimidation, their houses are razed down, false charges are foisted, Dr Arunkumar is silenced and Jayarajan is murdered for his obstinate determination. The activists in the novel are radicals but not eco-terrorists. The murder of Jayarajan and police aggression is indicative of the danger of radicals resorting to violence to settle grievances in the future if their pleas and non-violent means go unheard.

One of the important absences in *Swarga* is the voice of the sick. Numerous sufferers in the novel are children who might find it difficult to articulate their woes. The only parents who articulate on behalf of their child Pareekshith (Vijayakrishnan) are Neelakandan and Devayani, the protagonists. The other fathers like Damodara Shetty or Tumanna Naik are either resigned to their fate or can only mouth their impotent rage. Mothers and elderly women of the house are the people on whom the domestic drudgery of looking after, cleaning, putting up with tantrums of their sick or mentally deranged children fall upon. Yet the voices of these mothers are never heard. The only strong voice of a woman is that of LeelaKumari Amma, a former employee at the agriculture department who was one of the earliest persons to secure a ban on aerial spraying of endosulfan and to file a case with the National Human Rights Commission. What might be the perspective of an affected child, adult or parent? In the novel they are a part of the group that protest against the Corporation but are never shown as individuals with distinct voices. Perhaps it is time to hear their voices.

## Chapter 3

### *Enmakaje: A Post Colonial Study*

The paper analytically follows the track that led to the Endosulphan pesticide tragedy in the district of Kasaragod in Kerala, with reference to Ambikasuthan Mangad's *Enmakaje*. The present paper is a reading of select portions of Ambikasuthan Mangad's fictional narrative of the atrocities sowed by the fatal pesticide named endosulphan in the *Enmakaje* village in the light of postcolonial theory. Such a study can be seen to be building up its own universal relevance through putting forth the finding that every formidable ecocide in the world today has its germ in the neo-colonial and capitalist agendas of the imperial West. *Enmakaje* renders an admirable storehouse of protests and resistances, to safeguard ecology and indigenous discourses of developing and underdeveloped territories in the best possible way regional literatures can perform the task. As an account of the holocaust begotten by the pesticide and its real global political causes, *Enmakaje* is a faction, fact + fiction, as exemplified by the Sri Lankan writer Carl Muller while prefacing with his novel *The Jam Fruit Tree*. When asked why does he term his works as factions, Muller said: "I use the word faction because, while I maintain that mine is a work of fiction, it is based on factual experiences and real-life characters who have been disguised but easily recognized". Such an inseparable merging has been borrowed as the pattern to build up the structure of this paper on *Enmakaje* too.

*Enmakaje* brings to light the repercussions of the State's manipulations to defend its commercial motives at the cost of life of nature: on one hand, private industrial firms with imperial roots are spared of questioning by the global public, while on the other, human beings bear the evil effects of ecocides. In the matters of

story, characters and the locale, *Enmakaje* is a fictitious work merely at a negligible level. The unscientific spraying of Endosulphan pesticide by the Plantation Corporation of Kerala over the cashew plantations in the district of Kasaragod and the disasters that this unpardonable governmental act brings about in the environment and human lives in the villages of Kasaragod are used raw as the sources to weave the story. The Report on Health Effects of Endosulphan and Progress of Rehabilitation Activities in Kerala, published by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Kerala on 20th April 2011, says: Endosulphan, a highly toxic organochlorine pesticide was sprayed in the cashew plantations in Kasaragod District since 1978, till 2001 regularly three times every year. The aerial spraying of Endosulphan was undertaken to contain the menace of the tea mosquito bug. As early as 1979, stunted growth and deformed limbs were noticed among new born calves. By 1990s health disorders of very serious nature among the human population came to the lime light. Children were found to be the worst affected with congenital anomalies, mental retardation, physical deformities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, hydrocephalus etc. Men and women were also affected with various chronic ailments, many irreversible and difficult to treat. From the mid of 1990's, the community living near plantations had been complaining against the spraying of Endosulphan.

The central concerns in this paper are *Enmakaje*, the place and Endosulphan, the pesticide. *Enmakaje* is, in reality, a village in the district of Kasaragod in Kerala. Rather than the name of a place, *Enmakaje* becomes a word that signifies an instance of historical resistance of the common people against the callous and profit-ridden activities of business establishments who are visibly supported by the ruling State. The struggle of the people of *Enmakaje* is to ward off the poisonous pesticide named Endosulphan from their heaven-like village. Various credible agencies conducted

surveys to study the situation and discovered that the pesticide Endosulphan is the villain in *Enmakaje* and neighbouring villages. However, the Plantation Corporation disregarded the survey reports as they were determined to serve the capitalist forces like the pesticide manufactures. The government therefore brought forth cooked-up and biased survey reports to provide Endosulphan with a good conduct certificate. Among the sixteen groups which studied the Endosulphan tragedy in Kasaragod, the first one, after their survey in 2001, concluded that the sufferings of the people have nothing to do with the pesticide. The Committee also added that the cashew plantations, where Endosulphan was used, should be maintained well at any cost as the produce brings 2500 crores of dollars for the country. Without any authentic and scientific study, those committees with vested interests underpinned the claim of the oppressive establishments and social systems like capitalism and bureaucracy. Another body, Fredrick Institute of Plant Protection and Toxicology (FIPPAT), received seven lakhs rupees from PCK in June 2001 and held a study concluding that the presence of the pesticide in the affected areas is negligible. To the surprise of all, the FIPPAT report was released in a press conference by the head of the organization of pesticide manufacturers. When FIPPAT representative appeared before another committee formed later, he was accompanied by the representatives of the organization of pesticide manufacturers.

This chapter analyses how the theory of Post Colonialism can be incorporated into the book *Enmakaje*. Postcolonial criticism can carry out a subtler and specific study of the terrors that the bond between the State and capitalism can bring to the people through disturbed physical environments. A good portion of the land in *Enmakaje* has been made cashew plantations by the Plantation Corporation of Kerala which is a body under the government. The ecological equilibrium in *Enmakaje* got

disturbed after the plantation corporation started spraying the pesticide named Endosulphan in the cashewnut plantations using helicopters. People started succumbing to mysterious diseases and numerous babies were born with deformities. The number of mentally retarded children increased and suicide rates due to physical ailments hiked. Birds, insects and other animals started disappearing after Endosulphan made the soil, water and air of *Enmakaje* feel its presence. In the novel, Neelakandan, who migrates to *Enmakaje*, sees children with tongues sticking out permanently, endlessly open mouths, inability to eat anything solid, and unnaturally big or small legs and hands and head. He saw water bodies which once had the purity of medical quality to cure minor skin diseases but which have now become fatal for even little aquatic animals and amphibians. Cancer, epilepsy, physical and mental disabilities, skin diseases, schizophrenia, etc. are found ubiquitous in the locale. Even domestic animals like cow give birth to young ones with deformities; honey bees die. Neelakandan probes deep into the situation and shockingly finds that the villagers believe these maladies to be the curse of Jadaadhaari, the deity whom they worship. Neelakandan succeeds in collectively leading the villagers to the truth that the diseases are a result of spraying a pesticide named Endosulphan in the plantation by the Plantation Corporation. The State has always succeeded in diluting the agitations against the destructive effects of various industrial projects through projecting the developments that they assure. Development and progress, therefore, often can be seen as not going hand-in-hand with the welfare of nature and the public. The unscrupulous oration of a PCK officer in the novel is an instance of this:

“Is it possible to spray after covering all the lakes and rivers of this place? We are officers of the PCK. The PCK belongs to the government. If you have any complaint, inform the government.

When the produce is good, government's economic status would be safe. Government means you, the people, isn't it? Therefore, we are working hard for your welfare. Got it?" (85)

The experiences of the villagers in *Enmakaje* do not teach them that the State's progress in economic and other matters is their welfare. But in the history, the ruling system and the officials in the industrial sector have relentlessly struggled to make the common people convinced of the claim that, while a few suffer, the majority can harvest gains and comforts through destructive commercial projects in the nation under the supervision of foreign powers. The people, who are all either victims or close relations of victims, assemble under Neelakandan and, protests and resistances went to the extent of attempting to harm the PCK officers and the helicopter used for spraying the pesticide. The State employs the usual or widely used strategy to deal with the protesters ---they are all labelled as Naxalites, extremists or terrorists. The State could then use the oppressive system called the police to torture common people and their leaders. The State and its power lay its oppressive hands over the powerless common people to accomplish its mercenary designs. The authorities from the part of the administration threaten the social activists and revolutionaries who gather people against Endosulphan in order to please the pesticide lobby.

The author of *Enmakaje* has himself written in an article titled "Neethikedinte Thadavarakal" (Prisons of Injustice), published in Mathrubhumi weekly: The shocking physical deformities of children born with strange bodies are not created by the media through 'morphing'. Instead, they are lives that got shattered when the poison was sprayed from the helicopters over the innocent people of Kasaragod, for long twenty-five years, by the PCK with the vile support of changing governments. Not only PCK, but also the manufacturers of the strong venom and the agricultural scientists who

suggested pouring it over the people are the culprits. In this era of neo-colonial forces and ideologies, chemical products from imperial countries are not mere commodities; the ruling classes of developing and under-developed countries become either unaware of or deliberately disregards the hidden agenda that aims to penetrate the economic world of the host nation. The industries with colonial roots do not show the obligation to ensure that their smooth running does not disturb nature and the people there. Dr. ShaanBhog, a professor of Pharmacology at Manipal Kasthurba Medical College, and a well-known human rights activist in Karnataka, conducts a study of issues in *Enmakaje* and brings forth a report. In the fortieth chapter of the novel, there is a discussion on ShaanBhog's report among Sreerama and Neelakandan. Sreerama points out:

“I'll say another fact that's interesting. Neelakandan, have you noticed the names of the chemical pesticides which the corporate powers release into the markets? Their names have the language of war, violence and cruelty. Round-up is manufactured by Mansanto in America. What is the meaning of 'round-up'? To catch people by encircling! Hope you know Machete is another pesticide manufactured by Mansanto. 'Machete' means knife. Lasso is another one, meaning a rope with a noose to trap. I'll tell you the names of some products of another American corporate tycoon named Home Products---Pentagon, Prowl, Lightning, Assert, Avenge.... they are like these. There is a cruelty in every name. Actually, Hiroshimas and Nagasakis are happening in India.... Only that they happen silently. Industries and chemical products are, indubitably, inevitable constituents of the present world of commerce, which maintains the economic progress of a nation. Therefore, production and utilisation

of chemical products cannot be absolutely desisted. Factories like the Union Carbide India Limited involved in the Bhopal gas tragedy and an effective pesticide like Endosulphan both have significant spaces in the aforementioned vital world of commerce. Therefore, every questioning done in the matters of the Bhopal gas tragedy, the Endosulphan tragedy and the like will be visibly directed towards the concept of development today” (152).

Postcolonial theory advocates ecocentric epistemologies and development models geared to local needs and conditions. Policies across the world today that lay emphasis on increasing the number of commercial establishments and enhancing manufacture with the aim of national economic prosperity in the matter of economy must be incorporated with the emerging idea of sustainable development. Every country has, as a resource, efficient professionals who can design the implementation of commercial and industrial projects in such a way that they suit the environmental conditions prevalent in the host nation. Presently, lack of proper planning and disregard for the voices and interests of the minorities have almost become subsidiary factors to new industrial projects. Sustainable development ensures that no positive ambience in the host nation is disturbed on account of new developmental projects and the primary emphasis is on replacing every used resource; these guarantee the prosperity of the present generation and the forthcoming generations. The new interest of the academic corridors in the study of culture has brought to prominence the knowledge that tribals and such indigenous groups make effective use of the concept of the sustainable development while exploiting the resources of nature. Ambikasuthan Mangad’s *Enmakaje* problematises the economic vision manipulated by the profit-ridden desires of the State and foreign capitalist powers. A land and its populace become the ground

for the novel to reveal a matrix involving the unholy tie-up between the State and colonial capitalism, ecocide and eventual human maladies.

The Endosulphan tragedy is an instance of harm done to nature at the regional level hereby the Western industrial forces. *Enmakaje*, as a place, can be seen as a representative of regions that both suffer ecocide and build resistances. Endosulphan, the pesticide, becomes a tool in the hands of commercial establishments with colonial motives. Place-based literary Eco critics aim to inspire or suggest the importance of a sense of place and emphasize the ecological as well as social aspects of place all through a reflexive narrative scholarship comprised of reading literary texts and reflecting autobiographically on themselves as inhabiting the place in question. The environmental activist and the novelist become complementary to each other here; rather, the separation between the two vanishes. Here, Ambikasuthan Mangad makes Neelakandan his mouthpiece to word the approaches and attitudes of the global community towards nature in a post-globalisation era. The novel leaves various rays of hope through the portrayal of innumerable, mighty verbal and non-verbal protests even by a layman against giant international pesticide manufacturers.

## Conclusion

This project was aimed at analysing the book *Enmakaje* by Ambikasuthan Mangad with a postcolonial perspective, where Post colonialism is the critical analysis of history, culture, literature and modes of discourse that are specific to former colonies of European super imperial powers. The paper analytically followed the track that led to the endosulfan pesticide tragedy in the district of Kasaragod district in Kerala. The present paper is a reading of the portions of Ambikasuthan Mangad's fictional narrative of the atrocities sowed by the fatal pesticide named endosulfan in the *Enmakaje* village in the light of postcolonial theory. The purpose of this research paper is to demonstrate the human consequences and ecological concerns in Ambikasuthan Mangad's novel *Enmakaje*.

*Enmakaje* brings to light the repercussions of the State's manipulations to defend its commercial motives at the cost of life and nature. In the matters of the story, characters and the locale, *Enmakaje* is a fictitious work merely at a negligible level. Post colonialism can carry out a subtler and specific study of the terrors that the bond between the State and capitalism can bring to the people through disturbed physical environments. The central concerns in this paper are *Enmakaje*, the place and endosulfan, the pesticide. *Enmakaje*, as a place, can be seen as a representative of regions that both suffer ecocide and build resistances. Endosulphan, the pesticide, becomes a tool in the hands of commercial establishments with colonial motives. With help of the above facts the thesis analyses that *Enmakaje* is a work which carries postcolonial perspectives as well as ecological concerns.

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