EDITORIAL

It is heartening to note that today, in the age of Artificial intelligence and Robots, people are passionate towards literature and reading. The 21st century, has witnessed the bloom of brilliant literature and excellent writers. New methods of reading and criticism have also emerged. Twentieth century English literature was characterized by the emergence of major literary and cultural movements like Modernism and postmodernism has been the biggest influence on 21st century writings. The literature of the past century was a record of the tendencies of the post-World War generation- their insecurities, disillusionments and eccentricities. The 21st century has come under almost two decades. Yet, the history of the previous generation remains the outstanding concern of literature. Contemporary issues such as international conflicts, immigration and counter immigration, gender role reversals, free culture, climactic and nuclear devastation do not monopolise the thoughts of 21st century writers. Although English language and literature has entered into a new millennium, writers seem to find greater imaginative impetus in the past, than in the present and the future.

The research papers included in this journal are a testimony to the rereading of the past and a renewed approach to the present and future. I dedicate this journal to all the passionate readers, writers and lovers of English Language and literature.

Dr. Joy Ullattil
Contents

English Drama: Before And After Shakespeare
Dr. P. A Mathai

Technology Mediated Teaching for Students’ Writing Skill in English
Dr. Sr. M. J. Philomina and Dr. S. Amutha

The Ubiquity of Violence in Zones of Conflict: A Conceptual Study of Sarah’s Key and A Thousand Splendid Suns
Priya Philip

The Construction of Neo-Colonial Subjecthood in Manjula Padmanabhan’s ‘Harvest’
Roshin T. Roy

Globalized Racism in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s Americanah
James Joseph and Dr. E. Celine

The Hungry Tide: A Literary Exploration of Environmental Conservation and its Related Social Costs
M. Y. Rejin

The Cultural Legacies of Colonialism and Imperialism in J.M. Coetzee’s Waiting for the Barbarians
Fr. V. C. Kuriakose

Meaning in Meaninglessness: A Study of Samuel Beckett’s Waiting for Godot in the Context of Flood Affected People in Kerala
Saritha Xaviour

An Analysis of Nursery Rhymes through the Theories of Roland Barthes and Claude Levi-Strauss
Theres Divia Sebastian

Engagements with Modernity in Hermann Hesse’s Steppenwolf
U. R. Reshmi

Interactive Fiction of Grand Theft Auto: Antagonistic Style and its Influence
Chrysto George Mathew, Jittu Varghese and M. V. Krishnanunni
Power Dynamics and Female Subjugation in P. Sivakami’s *The Grip of Change*  
M. D. Jisha  

60

Benyamin’s *Goat Days: A Forgotten Catastrophe of Masara*  
E. K. Noufal Muneer  

65

NLP for Revitalizing the Prospective English Teachers with Instructional Competency  
Dr. I. Joseph Milton Paulraj and Dr. S. Amutha  

71

A Search for Gender Equality in Meena Kandasamy’s *Touch*  
Athira Jayan  

78

The English Education in Princely Mysore  
Dr. N. Mahadeva Swamy and Sri. C.S. Honne Gowda  

83
ENGLISH DRAMA: BEFORE AND AFTER SHAKESPEARE

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Abstract:

Drama, as you know is one of the earliest genres of literature which became very popular and is still popular. Drama is indeed quite different from all the other kinds of literature. It appeals to the viewers as it shows their own lives and dreams on the stage. Literature is an art dependent on words and drama is a special kind of literature as a multiple art using words, scenic effects, music, the gestures of the actors and the organising talents of the dramatist. The dramatist depends on human factor and the machinery; whereas the poet or novelist can proceed with the writing materials, the playwright requires players, a stage and audience.

Keywords:

Drama, Special Kind of Literature, Multiple Art

INTRODUCTION:

Drama as a form of literature and art developed simultaneously in the west and the east closely related to their mythology and religion which gradually extended to secular life and later in modern, post modern and post millennium periods and movements became sheer secular out casting religion or even as a weapon against religion and faith. It emerged as a man centred on probing into the meaning and meaninglessness of life. From religion to reality and through romanticism, naturalism, expressionism, existentialism etc. it developed in modern and post modern periods. Tremendous changes in moods and modes, content and form and in approach and application occurred in drama.

Here, the attempt is to have a glance at English drama before and after Shakespeare. English drama claims to have its own origin but it is very much influenced by the Greek and Latin drama. Dionysus, Aeschylus, Sophocles et al in Greek and Seneca, Plautus, Terrence et al in Latin gave some model for English and other European dramas.

Religious in origin like that of the Greeks, the drama of modern Europe arose out of the rich symbolic liturgy of the medieval church. A gradual dramatization of important events evolved into fully developed and widely popular religious plays such as Mystery and Miracle plays.

Mr. Symonds described religious drama in England as the DAME SCHOOL.

A little later another kind of deductive drama arose and flourished in the morality or allegorical play applying the scholastic philosophy of middle ages found expression. The morality
plays like *Everyman* presented characters that were abstract vices and virtues. A morality play, by John Skelton, *Magnificence* had a secular theme. A short kind of plays named ‘Interludes’ were made for entertaining the intelligent Tudor gentry. Henry Medwall’s Fulgent and Lucre’s is one of the best of them. *Pirandello* was so advanced in its structure. The miracle plays, the morality plays and the interludes remained popular even when new drama captured the stages.

The renaissance phase with its learned tradition brought a classical revival in drama. The first comedy *Ralph Roister Doister* written by Nicholas Udall and *Gorbodoc*, the first extant tragedy written by Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton were performed in England in the inner temples a few years before Shakespeare was born.

The beginnings of English drama are rather obscure despite the above said instances. The change from the rudimentary drama to the great achievement that culminated in Shakespeare is still a matter of speculation. Though there were the Greek and Latin influences, the English drama boasts of strong native elements. Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlow and William Shakespeare led the campaign.

Plays with more vigorous action found expression in the popular chronicle or history plays and they were more native production. The famous victories of Henry the Vth, the troublesome reign of John king of England are good examples. The vigour of native tradition and the style and arrangements of Senecan tragedy was combined in two dramatists—Thomas Kyd and Christopher Marlow when they wrote *Spanish tragedy* and *Dr Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta*. While tragedy developed in the hands of Kyd and Marlow comedy was moulded perfect by John Lyly, the author of *Eupheus, Galathea, Midas, The Women in the Moon* etc. All the plays were in prose except the last one which was a verse play satirizing women. Robert Green, a man of all trades also mastered comedy with his plays likes *Friar Bacon* and *Friar Bingay*. It was Green who devised plot in which characters drawn from different social groups and actions in varying degrees of credibility were drawn into unity by a romantic atmosphere.

Another playwright George Peel was a figure more difficult to define but mostly belonged to Lyly’s tradition. His best remembered play is the ‘*Old Wives Tale*’ where a charming romantic opening was allowed to lead into dramatic satire.

All these predecessors and contemporaries of Shakespeare were known as the University wits for their learning and improvisations and with their vigorous efforts the theatre by the end of the sixteenth century was fully established.

The plays performed in inn yards moved to a theatre constructed at Shore ditch, a suburb. In 16th century the theatre in city was Black friars where only the child actors performed. In Shakespearean or Elizabethan period the companies of players were known as the Queen’s men, the Lord Admirals men or the Lord Chamberlain’s to the great names that gave them legal status.

They legendary English playwright Shakespeare came to London from Stratford in 1584 and worked as an actor cum playwright and dominated the realm till his death in 1616. The author of the 37 plays of wonderful variety left the world with the magical wand. The two fellow players John Heminges and Henry Condell gathered his works together in the folio edition in 1623. Not mentioning his great contemporary will be an injustice to him. The scholar Ben Jonson never attempted to surpass the genius of Shakespeare. Jonson was indeed a classist, a moralist and a
reformer of drama. Ben Jonson’s characters were the ‘humours’ characters, the prominent humour was exposed for ridicule. *Everyman in his Humour*, *Valpone*, *The Silent Women*, *The Alchemist*… thus goes the list of unique plays produced by him. It was the idolatry of Shakespeare deprived Jonson’s place upon the English stage in 18th century.

George Chapman also held a place with Shakespeare and Jonson for his translations of Homer more than his dramas. The drama in seventeenth century had elements of realism which Jonson mastered and was pursued by a number of playwrights. Thomas Dekker gave a romantic sentimentality in *Shoemakers Holiday*. Thomas Haywood, notably in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* adapted tragedy to the sensibilities of the rising middle classes.

John Fether and Francis Beaumont created some plays in happy collaboration. They, as playwrights, suffered as critics compared their works and worth with that of Shakespeare’s, the tragic comedy *Philaster* and two tragedies, *The Maid’s Tragedy* and *A king and No king* show them at their best. Among most performed tragedies were the plays written by John Webster who is remembered for his two tragedies- *The White Devils* the *Dutches of Mulfi* both dealing with sheer revenge in them. Webster succeeded in treating sinister world of Renaissance in Italy with cunningness and intrigue. Apparently more melodrama in his plays were filled with horror and violence and tried to expose the merciless nature of the universe. Cyril Tourneur in the *Revenger’s Tragedy* and the *Atheist’s Tragedy* drew a world more abnormally than that of Webster.

There were some more contemporary playwrights who were versatile in a bewildering way. Most of them worked in collaboration and is difficult to assign any exact responsibility for authorship. Thomas Middleton is such an example. The outstanding play, *The Changeling* was collaborated with William Rowley, a compound of Shakespeare and Webster. Philip Messinger, John Ford, James Shirley, William Wycherly, Sir George Etherege, William Congreve, (a most elegant one) Jerome Collier, Sir John Vanbrugh George Farquhar, Thomas Otway et al also made their contributions. Meanwhile the political and religious changes in the society gave a setback to literature in general and drama in particular with the civil wars since 1642. The greatest period in English drama came to a close. The wars radically changed England and English drama. English drama literally lost its brilliance and grandeur and lost alliance with the whole of the national life.

Although Charles had enjoyed and encouraged the arts especially drama in the form of Masques it was during Charles II who came back with Restoration of 1660 the theatres were reopened. It was in comedy that the restoration found its peculiar excellence. The comedies came in abundance and surprising varieties especially, comedy of manners. William Congreve deserves special mention as he had a completeness of vision. Congreve, a great and brilliant artist who succeeded with the spontaneous humour wrote *Love for Love* and achieved more suitable effect in *The Way of the World* in which he created Millamant, one of the greatest comic figures of the English stage.

Nothing in the Restoration period matches the comedy. The heroic drama of Dryden et al of the period is remembered only in the text books of literature. The heroic play was too bizarre a fashion to live long. Dryden who wrote *Aurengzebe* (1675) is more known a poet and critic.
Thomas Otway wisely turned to the Elizabethan manner in the *Orphan* (1680) and in *Venice Preserved*.

The drama of 18th century does not reach the same height as the novel. Gold Smith and Sheridan have their seats safe but not to match with Tom Jones or Tristram Shandy. The Licensing Act of 1737 that restricted the freedom of expression by dramatists could be a reason that drove a good number of fine men out of the theatre. John Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera*, (1728) was indeed outstanding. The comedy in the early 18th C. suffered a sad decline into sentimentalism which triggered the power to feel. In religion, on a count of the movements of Methodism and social life, the increased realization of hardships and miseries the majority of the mankind has to suffer. In literature its effects were numerous and in comedy disastrous. Richard Steele sowed the seeds of sentimentalism. George Lilo gave him good company. Hugh Kelly and Richard Cumberland put the drama in the depth of sentimentalism and it was Gold Smith and Sheridan who rescued the English drama from the deep well where every human issue could be obscured in the welter of emotion. The Good Natured Man preserved their places on the stage especially on the amateur stage.

Richard Brinsley Shridan (1751-1816) has an extra ordinary dramatic career whose fame rests mainly on three comedies- *The Rivals*, *The School for Scandal* (1777) and *The Critic* (1779). The world is shallow without any new interpretation of human nature. The mastery, the verbal dexterity and the laughter which his well planned scenes created took him to the heights helping English drama regain its name and fame and bring the boisterousness of English men after Shakespeare.

REFERENCES

TECHNOLOGY MEDIATED TEACHING FOR STUDENTS’ WRITING SKILL IN ENGLISH

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Abstract:

Writing is a fundamental component of language. In order to improve writing skills of English language learners, educators must consider new and innovative methods for their instruction. The present study aims to find out the Writing skill in English Language using technology as a tool. The study adopted experimental method. The investigators prepared a multimedia package, with 10 components of writing skill like phonemes, segmenting, substituting, blending, vowels & consonants, prefixes & suffixes, nouns, prepositions, verbs, articles SVO pattern and degrees of comparison for measuring the writing skill. The multimedia package has been experimented with 30 students of 5th grade from Wayanad District of Kerala state. Out of 30 students 15 were control group and 15 were experimental group. The control group has been given treatment with traditional chalk and talk method and the experimental group has been given treatment with multimedia package. There were 10 contents in a package and each content has been experimented each day. The researchers conducted pre-test and post-test for measuring their academic achievement. The results revealed that there exists significant difference between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test. There is no significant difference in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the pre-test. There is no significant difference seen in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test with reference to gender. There exists significant correlation between the components of segmenting and overall writing skills; nouns and overall writing skills; subject, verb, object and overall writing skills of the Experimental group in the post-test.
Keywords:

Writing Skills, Components, Multimedia Package, Writing Skills, Control Group and Experimental Group

INTRODUCTION

Writing has been considered as an essential skill in English language procurement. This priority is because of the fact that it accentuates vocabulary and grammatical structures that instructors aim to teach the students. This is the field in which learners need to concentrate adequate time to develop the writing skill. Hence more time have to be spent for language learning, so that students will be able to communicate effectively (Ismail, 2011a). Writing skills can develop when the learners' interests are acknowledged and when they are given frequent opportunities to actually practice writing (Ismail, 2011b). One of the main objectives of ESL (English as a Second Language) students is to learn to produce a sober piece of writing.

Educators have responded to new conceptions of student learning and the emergence of digital technologies with continual searches for effective teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of 21st century learners (Leu, 2001; McKenzie, 2000; Turbill, 2002). The assimilation of the new proficiency of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the curriculum has become a goal for literacy educators (International Reading Association & National Council of Teachers of English, 1996; International Society for Technology in Education, 1998; International Reading Association, 2001; Kinzer, 2003). Socio-cultural theories of literacy recognize and acknowledge the importance of the social context along with the background experience and skills of students (Bruner, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). Much of the study on writing indicated that students with the help of computers improve their writing skill. (Bigge & Shermis, 1999; Cochran-Smith, 1991; Daiute, 1988).

Teachers' philosophy, pedagogy, and instructional practices with regard to ICT use directly influence outcomes (Russell, Bebell, Cowan, & Corbelli, 2002). If there is a shift to a more collaborative approach in the environment of a classroom, then the role of the teacher supporting the writing process is also transformed (Cochran-Smith, Paris, & Kahn, 1991; Mercer & Fisher, 1992).

In order to improve writing skills of English language learners, educators must consider new and innovative methods for their instruction. The rise of technology integration has significantly contributed to the change in teaching, reading and writing in a second language. Such integration in second language learning teaching demonstrates a shift in educational models from a behavioral to a constructivist learning approach (Kasapaglu-akyol, 2010). These recent developments reveal that rapid changes in literacy have taken place as a result of the arrival of the computer and the development of other new technologies. Consequently, the pressure on teachers to keep up with such developments and to raise standards in their classrooms is ever present (Feiler & Logan, 2007). Not only does it motivate and encourage ESL students to engage in reading and writing, but the various ways it is used proves beneficial in cultivating writing skills among this
population of students (Lee, 2012). By interviewing students, Ghandoura (2012) found that students thought computers made the procurement of writing skills rapid and accessible.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Bromely (2005), Martin (2008), Kinzer & Verhoeven (2008), Halsey (2007), Lee & O’Rourke (2006), and Van Leeuwen & Gabriel (2007) claim that technology has affected both what is written and how it is written and continues by claiming that because technology has made it easier to compose and revise. Cramer and Smith (2002) researched two groups of middle school students, one group followed a traditional style curriculum for writing while the other followed a technologically rich writing curriculum and synthesized to improve students writing, and found out that technologically rich curriculum is effective to improve students writing skill.

Scott and Mouza (2007) claim that “the rapid evolution of new technologies in the last two decades, however, has transformed the ways in which people communicate, collaborate, read, and write and offers new possibilities for supporting and improving student writing. Word processors have introduced new ways of generating, organizing, and editing text, thereby making tedious revisions tasks easier”.

Gatzke and LeDrew (2008) interviewed children after completing an assignment on writing a book on the computer. The majority of the children informed them that they “loved using the computer to write their books. It made the writing, spelling, and changing easier”.

Parvin & Salam (2015) Interactive multimedia software based on national curriculum of English grade 4 were evolved and tested in government primary schools. The pre-intervention survey revealed that the teachers do not have the language capability to positively expedite English classes using the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. The results of the study showed that the use of audio-visual content has strong potential for augmenting and promoting interactive language classes.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To find out the level of writing skills of primary school students.
2. To determine whether the gender plays any role in the writing skill in English at primary level.
3. To evolve recommendations from the findings for future policy making in enhancing the writing skills of primary school students.

**HYPOTHESIS**

1. There is no significant difference between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the pre-test.
2. There is no significant difference between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test.
3. There is no significant difference between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test with reference to gender.

4. There is no significant relationship among the following components of writing skill in the post-test of Experimental group.
   - Phonemes
   - Segmenting
   - Substituting
   - Blending
   - Vowels and consonants
   - Prefixes and Suffixes
   - Verbs
   - Nouns
   - Prepositions
   - Articles
   - SVO Pattern
   - Degrees of comparison

**METHODOLOGY**

The present study adopted experimental design for data collection. The investigators prepared a multimedia package for collecting the data, using the components like phonemes, segmenting, substituting, blending, vowels & consonants, prefixes & suffixes, nouns, prepositions, verbs, articles SVO pattern and degrees of comparison for measuring the writing skill. The multimedia content has been prepared based on the 5th grade English Text book of the Kerala State. The package has been given to experts for establishing content validity and face validity. The multimedia package has been experimented with 30 students of 5th grade from Wayanad District of Kerala state. Out of 30 students 15 were control group and 15 were experimental group. The control group has been given treatment with traditional chalk and talk method and the experimental group has been given treatment using multimedia package. There were 10 contents in a package and each content has been experimented each day. The researchers conducted pre-test and post-test for measuring their academic achievement.

**Table 1**

Mean S.D and t-value showing the differences in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre-test Control Group</th>
<th>Pre-test Experimental Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over all writing</td>
<td>42.87</td>
<td>11.783</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Not significant at 0.01 level**
It is inferred from the Table 1 that the calculated ‘t’ value between pretest of control group and experimental group writing skill as is 0.533 which is less than that of the table value 2.58 at 0.01 level of significance. Thus the Null hypothesis that ‘there is no significant difference between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the pre-test’ cannot be accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference seen in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the pre-test.

Table 2
Mean S.D and t-value showing the differences in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Post-test Control Group</th>
<th>Post-test Experimental Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over all writing</td>
<td>65.73</td>
<td>10.918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.01 level

From the table 2 it is evident that the calculated ‘t’ value between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test is -7.595 which is higher than that of the table value 2.58 at 0.01 level of significance. Null hypothesis that ‘there is no significant difference between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test’ is accepted. It is concluded that there is a significant difference seen in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test.

Table 3
Mean S.D and t-value showing the differences in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test with reference to gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Post-test Control Group</th>
<th>Post-test Experimental Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over all writing</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>64.60</td>
<td>10.648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>68.00</td>
<td>12.349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Not significant at 0.01 level

Based on the gender it is inferred from the Table 3 that the calculated ‘t’ value between the overall writing skills of male &female in the post-test control group as -.554 and the experimental group as -.365 which are less than the table value 2.58 at 0.01 level of significance. Null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test with reference to gender cannot be accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference seen in the writing skills of control group and experimental group in the post-test with reference to gender.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Curriculum frame workers should give ample emphasis for technology enhanced classroom practices in English language teaching.
2. Teachers should use a variety of approaches to integrate ICT into the teaching of English.
3. Policy makers must evaluate the purpose and requirements of the technology components in the classrooms.
4. Teachers must be given guidance for preparing and using multimedia packages.

CONCLUSION

Bromely (2005), Martin (2008), Kinzer & Verhoeven (2008), Halsey (2007) and Lee & O’Rourke (2006), claim that technology has affected both what is written and how it is written and continues by claiming that because technology has made it easier to compose and revise, student are becoming better writers and readers. The majority of participants in the research made the same distinctions about technology and writing. The data that was retrieved from the study revealed that students are motivated and interested towards technology integrated teaching and learning. Hence it is lucid that technology integrated teaching will enhance the interest and outcome as well.

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THE UBIQUITY OF VIOLENCE IN ZONES OF CONFLICT: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF SARAH’S KEY AND A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

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Abstract:

The rise of American hegemony, the unprecedented growth of Europe in the latter half of the twentieth century, decolonisation, the rise of Asian nations and the advent of global capitalism have created a new form of detached nihilism. Explicit political texts, especially texts questioning the credibility of political decisions with universal ramifications, have been rare in literature. However, there have been exemplary exceptions. This paper focuses on two literary works from two continents- Europe and Asia, to highlight the tragedies experienced by generations of citizens due to misogynist ideas of those in authority. This paper has attempted to be a bridge between the intimate, anecdotal and explicit political discussions in the novels Sarah’s Key written by Tatiana de Rosnay and A Thousand Splendid Suns authored by Khaled Hosseini. Both these works have been acknowledged as twenty first century classics for delineating the anguish of citizens in zones of conflict and for being candid portrayals of the angst of human existence torn between conflicting ethnic and political ideologies.

Keywords:
Detached Nihilism, Political Discussions, Zones of Conflict and so on

INTRODUCTION:

Conflict produces its own zone of literature. Conflict zone literature is interwoven and entangled not just by the thoughts and perspectives of that geographical territory but also by its myths, history, and politics; its religious and cultural ideologies. Romanticism and disillusionment punctuate the narratives on conflict zone literature. The zone of conflict transcends from being a mere territorial backdrop for fiction and metamorphoses into a universal metaphor for the anguish of mankind. This idea is very obvious in the novels Sarah’s Key and A Thousand Splendid Suns written by Tatiana de Rosnay and Khaled Hosseini respectively.

French literature written in the latter half of the twentieth century was characteristically disengaged from explicit political discussions. However, Tatiana de Rosnay’s Sarah’s Key created a new cult by portraying modern French history- its emotions and superlative inspirations. Sarah’s Key (2006) is a work of fiction about a young girl, Sarah Starzynski. Sarah’s Key is an absorbing, heart-wrenching, powerful and emotional novel that reveals the harsh realities of anti-Semitism which was prevalent in France and reminds the reader about the horrors and atrocities faced by
the Jews in France in the year 1942. The novel touches upon a very emotional perspective of the Holocaust, from the view of young Sarah. The author heightens the emotional experience by interlocking the stories of 10 year old Sarah and 45 year old Julia Jarmond, a journalist who decades later does a journalistic piece on the same incident. The story unfurls on the darkest night of Sarah, who was a sad victim of Nazi invasion of France. At the same time story also deals with Julia Jarmond, an American journalist living in Paris, investigating the round up.

Sarah’s story starts from the time of her arrest during the roundup named *Operation Spring Breeze* on July 16, 1942, when the French police arrested thousands of Jews throughout Paris. The girl and her family were sent to an internment camp where people were held before being sent to Auschwitz where they were executed. Sarah locks her little brother Michel in a cupboard which was their hiding place during their playtime. Sarah promises him that she would come back soon and places the key in her pocket safely. In the internment camp, Sarah is continuously haunted by the thoughts of her brother and wondered how long he would survive. After a few days she was cruelly separated from her parents too. Sarah experienced the ‘survivor’s guilt’; which decades later Julia would experience.

The novel looks at the French side of the atrocities and the seeming refusal of French citizens sixty years later to accept responsibility. The readers get the unbiased view of a child unmarred by divisive ideas. As the American, Julia Jarmond researches the events of the Vel’ d’Hiv in 2002, she repeatedly encounters French citizens who ‘do not remember’ or ‘do not want to remember’ the French involvement. Few are willing to acknowledge the responsibility for the inhumane treatment and murder of the thousands of Jews who had also been French citizens. Julia feels the need to find out everything she can about Sarah and her family; she feels sorry for “being 45-years old and not knowing” (Rosnay, 2008). She represents the redemption desired by the later generations who have been candid enough to admit errors in the judgement of their predecessors. It is also astonishing to Julia that this tragedy was caused by the French and not the Germans.

Tatiana de Rosnay reveals in her novel “[…] the harsh realities of Vel’ d’Hiv roundup, a Nazi directed raid and mass arrest of Jews, in which the French police arrested around 14,000 Jews including 4,000 children, and detained them for days under horrifying conditions before deporting them to Auschwitz”(Bein,1990). Rosnay brilliantly uses hyperlink narrative technique through which she joins two stories held over the time period of 1942 and 2002. The two stories alternate throughout the book. By alternating both points of view, Rosnay allows the reader to learn factual information and also go on an emotional journey. The author uses the people closest to Julia to demonstrate the extent of French apathy. Julia’s husband is unconcerned and her father-in-law is stoic about the story of Vel’ d’Hiv. They refuse to feel guilty as they claim that a lot of people were involved and that virtue has no role to play in times of war. The primary significance of the roundup was the killing of innocent people because of their ethnicity. However, there is an infinite political and social significance to the ‘round up’ because the Vel' d'Hiv has remained a symbol of national guilt and of national outrage. Ethnicity became a divisive force and curse for the Jews. Vel’ d’Hiv is an undeniable blasphemy in the name of ethical bias (Zimmermann, 1987).

Khaled Hosseini, the Afghan born American novelist who enjoys immense readership in the 21st century has been candid in admitting the pivotal role played by Afghanistan’s war torn
history in shaping his literary destiny. Hosseini visited Afghanistan in 2003 after decades of living in the US, and "heard so many stories about what happened to women, the tragedies that they had endured, the difficulties, the gender-based violence that they had suffered, the discrimination, the being barred from active life during the Taliban, having their movement restricted, being banned essentially from practicing their legal, social rights, political rights."(Ayotte and Husain, 2005) Hosseini’s idea for a work of fiction germinated from the idea that “[...] conflict uproots and recasts the lives of millions of men, women, and children. The pain suffered during the immediacy of conflict is often preceded by months and years of growing tension and anxiety.”(Preston and Wong, 2004)

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) is set in Afghanistan from the early 1960s to the early 2000s- a period which records the history of Afghanistan that struggled for independence from various invading nations throughout its history; in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries alone, England, the former Soviet Union, and United Nations peacekeeping forces, primarily consisting of U.S. soldiers, have occupied the country. As a result, thousands of people from Afghanistan migrated either by force or by choice to different countries.

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* serves as a haunting lament on the plight of the Afghani citizens living on the frontline of political, fundamentalist and domestic terror. Khaled Hosseini provides a vivid portrait of a country shattered by a series of ideological leaders and wars imposed on it by foreign and internal forces. Hosseini’s women, much like the country of Afghanistan itself, appear to be propelled by the whims of outside forces, familial and societal, with little chance of influencing their own lives and futures. The novel according to noted literary critic Scarlett Baron is the novelist’s exploration of “Afghanistan’s relentlessly gut-wrenching recent past”. The word “relentless” encapsulates the repeated and incrementally horrifying forms of violence, oppression, and misfortune which are suffered by Hosseini’s protagonists and which dominate the world of his fiction and Afghanistan’s war-torn landscape.

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* can also be read as a female ‘*bildungsroman*’, the story of Mariam and Laila and their lives - maturity, marriage, and maternity. Hosseini’s two women are strategic contrasts physically, socially, and psychologically. Their common fate is to become co-wives of the same misogynistic, brutal man. Hosseini’s portrayal of Laila and Mariam and their dreams, trials, and challenges presents a complex view of women in Afghanistan that goes beyond oppression and the stereotype of the veil. Hosseini’s novel consistently shows the patriarchal despotism where women are agonizingly dependent on fathers, husbands and especially sons, the bearing of male children being their sole path to social status.

As Hosseini spins out their fate, their sharp individual differences only serve to demonstrate the breadth of commonality among Muslim women in Afghani society during the drastic political upheavals of the 1970’s to 2003- a king deposed, a communist coup, a Soviet invasion, a civil war, a faith-based Taliban dictatorship and an invasion by American and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces. The direct carnage of military violence is not even the main occupation-related threat facing most Afghan women because their socio-economic and political status remains poor. A growing culture of criminal impunity, weak law enforcement institutions, poverty, and many other factors had contributed to increasing violence against
women, such as rape and torture, as well as their being forced into marriages against their will. Nowhere else has a war on women been illustrated so starkly as in Afghanistan (Nile, 2008). Flagrant abuses of Afghan women’s most basic human rights in the sectors of education, health, and civil and political participation have been widely documented (U.S. Department of State 1999; Amnesty International 1999, 1995). The Taliban have been the most recent perpetrators of these injustices, but violence against both men and women in Afghanistan has been ongoing for over two decades. (Hans, 2004)

CONCLUSION:

The growing body of conflict zone literature powerfully exposes and theorizes the ways in which war is elementally destructive in its discourse and affects its institutions, and the social framework. The damage it inflicts impacts economic globalization, induces social restructuring, free trade, and the international division of labour. It also affects gender relations and its interaction with social formations such as culture, religion, class, race, ethnicity, and nationality provide a grim picture of the ubiquity of violence. Conflict zone literature encapsulates the universality of human agony, fatality of pseudo idealism, destructiveness of war and absurdity of political divisiveness. Ordinariness of the settings and characters enhance the quality of reader response. Both the authors, Rosnay and Hosseini have succeeded in portraying the experience of two nations, their cultures, their people, their psyche, their fears, their insecurities, their dreams, and their courage even in the face of despondence, their optimism even in the face of repression, exploitation and pervading political terror. It is the candidness and flesh and blood portrayal of reality that makes conflict zone literature truly admirable.

REFERENCES

THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEO-COLONIAL SUBJECTHOOD IN MANJULA PADMANABHAN’S ‘HARVEST’

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Abstract:

Manjula Padmanabhan’s acclaimed play Harvest is a dystopian representation of the neo-colonial world where human beings lose all agency before the all-consuming power of corporate market. Human body is reduced to a commodity for sale. The neo-colonial enterprise produces subjects who are enchanted by the magnificent images of the virtual world so that they fail to critically examine the exploitative power relations in which they themselves are situated. The ‘benevolent’ first world does not ever acknowledge its own sterile nature and continues to take nourishment from the resources of the third world. These exploitative networks are sustained by different mechanisms that put the vulnerable sections under constant surveillance.

INTRODUCTION

The neo-colonial enterprise of the globalized world has mastered the art of assigning every being with a subject position that consents to its economic and political interests. The colonial rulers used state and ideological apparatus to enforce their regime, and the newly ordained winners have continued with that mission, even though they prefer the manipulation of social, cultural and economic factors over the use of physical force in order to sustain power. No space can escape its grasp and the private and public spheres both have been co-opted into the virtual realities projected by market forces. In Manjula Padmanabhan’s acclaimed play Harvest, the domestic space turns into a stage for acting out the commercial. Human body becomes a commodity for sale, while the people involved are woven into a narrative of the market.

The private space of the house gradually transforms from a situation of scarcity to one of “gleaming surfaces” in the play (34). The characters act out their roles as decided by larger power structures, maintaining the pretensions of normality. An analysis of the different characters would reveal that they occupy subject positions suited to the capitalist enterprise; even those who achieve partial agency at times are prone to be co-opted into the process gradually. The structures of power lure them into subjugation through careful manipulation of their desires. The proliferating array of images that flood the vicinity through media and other means functions as an ideological apparatus that create consent.

Om Prakash, the bread winner of the household, is the “donor.” Being the donor is equated to being an employee at certain moments, but imagining his engagement with the
corporate firm as of a labourer being paid for the labour he invests into the processes of production would be a reductive approach. The selection process that makes him move in a queue with six thousand other nameless beings and puts him in cages for examination is a degenerative apparatus that reduces a person to his mere body. His value is limited to that of his body, the only resource that he can offer to the market. He is “human resource” – in all the possible meanings connoted by the term. The donor – receiver relation maintained in the enterprise is a reflection of all exchanges that happen in the neo-colonial world. The developing nation is always the source of resources – human and otherwise – that satisfies the needs of the super powers and helps sustain its abundance. However, when it comes to the projected images, the first world looms as the generous benefactor who nourishes the others’ lives. Om’s identity is limited to being a tool for satisfying the needs of the corporate power. He is denied any agency in the process, and he exclaims, “I didn’t choose. I stood in the queue and was chosen!” (63).

The subjective identification transforms from that of the patriarchal villain to that of the all-devouring consumer in the case of Ma. She consumes images incessantly, and in the end, willingly enters the tomb-like video sarcophagus. The passivity that engulfs her half way through the events is the numbing effect created by images that sell. One of the programmes that she watches is on happy families. Ma talks of it enthusiastically, but turns an indifferent face to the struggles of her younger son. The world of unreal images created by market forces numb the sensitivity of those involved and makes the maintenance of hegemonic structures more viable.

In the course of the play, we witness a complete transformation in the character of Jeetu. He is the rebel turned accomplice. The exercise of freewill and the projection of libertarian ideas that represent him in the beginning is negotiated later with the utilitarian logic of the dominant structures. He is ready for compromises once the world of virtual magnificence is opened before him. The lost eye sight is replaced by an unreal vision of his object of desire. The heroic turns into mockery, as he finds the glamour of the capitalist world and the white body irresistible. In the initial scenes, we come across him announcing, “I don’t mind being bought. But I won’t be owned!” (31). Later on, when he succumbs to the pleadings of the female figure in the vision, the decisions are left for someone else to take.

The woman who is neglected and scorned through most parts of the play, Jaya, attains central position towards the last scene. She is the only one who protest against the onslaught of the virtual on their everyday reality. Her wish to be “alone” is a call for disentanglement from the stifling chains of domination. “I’m going to enjoy myself,” she says after challenging the virtual man to appear in real (92). Even then, the success is only about plunging into a world of pills, TV and sumptuous food, the material splendour of the market-led world. There is no other world to escape to. Voicing protest and registering dissent is an end in itself; a privilege to be sought for with an awareness about the inevitability of merging into the world of your dissent.

Ginni and Virgil are two sides of one entity – the projected image and the real one. Ginni is cheerful, charitable, beautiful – the manifestation of every quality that the West claims itself to be. The hypocrisy of such a benevolent image is revealed in the persona of Virgil. Jaya opines that the westerner perceives humans from developing countries as food served on a table. Everything is moulded perfectly to provide maximum satisfaction to his self. Even though Virgil is the one
determiner of all action and manipulates people’s lives like commodities, he lacks the essential power to sustain a progeny. It is this lack on his part that makes him obsessed with the bodies of the other world. He needs them for survival, just as the developed nation relies on the unjust exploitation of the other world to sustain its growth. The “first world” cannot be without the “third.”

There are entities with only the utilitarian agenda instilled in them, people who are traitors to the world they inhabit. The guards of Inter Planta Services who lack any element of humanity and act mostly like machines, and the agents of Video Couch Enterprises feed upon the life spirit of the people. They are the minions of the market. They act complacent in their own realms of operation and expertly lull the customers into passivity.

The characters fit well into the framework of neo-colonialist strategies, except for a few instances at certitude demonstrated by Jeetu and Jaya. The play provides certain insights into the elements that facilitate such a submission to the norms. The Contact Module installed in the middle of the room is the primary factor that determines the behavioural patterns of people. The surveillance established with and without their knowledge is utilised to exercise the other’s power over the inhabitants of the household. The one who is on the other end of the Contact Module certainly enjoys a privileged position. The ever-present surveillance mechanisms of modern world are primarily instruments that serve the market and its benefactors.

The obsessive desires that the characters entertain, in turn, determines their choices and their identities. Om has a fascination for everything western and is blind towards their insensitive nature. He believes that “they’re not small, petty people,” but are benevolent benefactors who “care” for the other and “spend” for the other’s welfare (47) – an idea that reminds one of the myths created by the colonial masters to justify their “civilizing mission.” For Ma, fulfilment of material pleasures counts as the greatest achievement. She is fixated by the illusory images circulated by corporate media and pawns her whole life in the process of grabbing more images. Jeetu yearns for love and recognition in physical relationships, which take different courses and lead him to tragic ends. Jaya’s desire for children remains unfulfilled by both the men in her life, and unsurprisingly, it is this desire that gets manipulated by Virgil when he approaches Jaya with his schemes. In the case of Virgil, the masterly player, his desire is for continuous success and a sustained progeny. To fulfil this, he needs the subservient other world always at hand. The lack of vitality in his own world creates a void in his self which can be filled only by the resourceful other that considers a child as another mouth to be fed.

The narratives of colonization continue to hold good in the neo-colonial age of global market also. The ambivalent positions endowed upon the individuals submit them to different subjectivities marked by their desires and lacks. The earlier binaries of the colonized and the colonizer are, however, replaced by the dialectical opposites of corporate power and the consuming public. The economic exchanges are inseparably interlinked with the social, cultural and political structures of the new world, as it was in the colonial age.
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GLOBALIZED RACISM IN CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE’S AMERICANAH

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Abstract:

Colour has played a major role in deciding human dignity and dividing societies. The black white conflict – the black as evil and uncivilized and white as good and civilized – is a major issue to be solved. Even after the abolition of slave trade and giving franchise right for the ‘negros’ there still remain many areas of delineation between the blacks and the whites in the globalized world. An African has to make lot of negotiations to survive in America. The entire life style has to be adjusted to the new surroundings and people. To get a job in any of the American shops is rather a difficult task for an African native. One has to become used to keeping the dirty clothes for one week before getting them washed. There is a special training needed to familiarize the accent. The difference in the usage of certain words, the difficult climate and the atmosphere and the strangeness experienced from the natives give challenges to the African dwellers in America.

Keywords:

Colour, the Blacks and the Whites, African Native

INTRODUCTION:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s narrates the lives of the immigrants of Africa through her third novel Americanah. Ifemelu, a medical student, went to America after receiving a fellowship. She had to adjust to the American conditions and struggle hard to live with her scarce income. After spending a good span of her life in America she wanted to come back to her native land Nigeria. She had to face the negligence in her class rooms, in the places she searched for job and from the roommates. In order to adapt to the situations she had to ignore some of her moral principles without any prick of conscience. She learnt to lie to the strangers to show her status as a wealthy and modern woman. One day Ifemelu met Aisha, a Senegalese woman and told her that she would go back to Nigeria to see her man. Aisha told her that she had two Igbo boyfriends and insisted Ifemelu to tell either of them to marry Aisha when she would see them. Ifemelu found it...
strange and thought of it as “a Peculiar Case of a Non-American Black, or How the Pressures of Immigrant Life Can Make You Act Crazy” (Adichie 18).

The mindset of the Africans living in America has changed and they too want to live as Americans. Like the trend in other countries they too want to give European or American education to their children. Once when there was a discussion about giving education to the children of some of Obinze’s acquaintances in the Chief’s party, he just commented, “Didn’t we all go to primary schools that taught the Nigerian curriculum?” (29). His comment was considered a joke and they continued in the discussion of sending the children to the best school that taught British curriculum. In this situation “he felt like an intruder in his new circle, of people who believed that the latest schools, the latest curriculum, would ensure the wholeness of their children. He did not share their certainties. He spent too much time mourning what could have been and questioning what should be” (29). What children learnt was to be self dependant and to become aware of their rights. Aunty Uju once told Ifemelu: “This is how children like to misbehave in this country. Jane was even telling me that her daughter threatens to call the police when she beats her. Imagine. I don’t blame the girl, she has come to America and learned about calling the police” (109). She has something more to say about the American way of education as she failed her last medical exam in America: “I have never failed an exam in my life. But they weren’t testing actual knowledge; they were testing our ability to answer tricky multiple-choice questions that have nothing to do with real medical knowledge” (109).

Another complaint against the American system of education was that lower class children never learnt any principles or equations of mathematics. Once Ifemelu asked Dike what he had done in school before summer and he said “Circles”. They would sit on the floor in a circle and share their favourite things. Again she asked him whether he knew divisions. His reply was “I’m only in first grade.” To this she replied that when she was his age she could do simple divisions. The conviction lodged in her head was that American children learned nothing in elementary school, and it hardened when he told her that his teacher sometimes gave out homework coupons, if you get a homework coupon, then you could skip one day of homework (112).

It is strange to see that in countries where they follow European or American model of education, children in lower grade are forced to study a lot of things including division and other sciences. However, in America or in Britain their children are kept away from such burden and enjoy a free learning style. Everyone is molded into a system for the benefit of a few rich people who decide the future of the country. In this system the interests of a very few are maintained. Indigenous knowledge that was followed by the generations based on the condition of the land and the people are ignored and gradually removed from the main stream knowledge.

The observation of Adichie regarding the education system of Americans shows the superficial and demoralizing nature of their learning:

School in America was easy, assignments sent in by e-mail, classrooms air-conditioned, and professors willing to give make-up tests. But she was uncomfortable with what the professors called “participation” and did not see why it should be part of the final grade; it merely made students talk and talk, class time wasted on obvious words, hollow words,
and sometimes meaningless words. It had to be that Americans were taught, from elementary school, to always say something in class, no matter what. And so she sat stiff-tongued, surrounded by students who were all folded easily on their seats, all flush with knowledge, not of the subject of the classes, but of how to be in the classes. They never said “I don’t know.” They said, instead, “I’m not sure,” which did not give any information but still suggested the possibility of knowledge. And they ambled, these Americans, they walked without rhythm. They avoided giving direct instructions: they did not say “Ask somebody upstairs”; they said “You might want to ask somebody upstairs.” When you tripped and fell, when you choked, when misfortune befell you, they did not say “Sorry.” They said “Are you ok?” when it was obvious that you were not. And when you said “Sorry” to them when they choked or tripped or encountered misfortune, they replied, eyes wide with surprise, “Oh, it’s not your fault.” And they overused the word “exited” …. On her first day at school, she had visited the health centre, and had stared a little too long at the bin filled with free condoms in the corner.  

(134)  
The cultural difference between America and Nigeria is seen in family relations. There is an increasing number of divorces in Nigerian women in America than that of Nigerian women in Nigeria. Even if it can be attributed to the freedom that women gain in America and to the laws that protect women’s rights, much of it is due to the living style and the difference in the concept of family and due to the loose family relations that exist in America. Nigerian men living in America would seek a nurse or a doctor as wife to take back to America to earn more money (117). But the relation may end up once each of them become self dependant and not wanting the other for any financial support.  

Globalization has done much to the native culture of Nigeria and to the life style of Nigerians living in America. After passing the United States Medical Licensing Examination Aunty Uju had to change her hair style to appear before the interview board. Her reason for the change was that “If you have braids, they will think that you are unprofessional…. I have told you what they have told me. You are in a country that is not your own. You do what you have to do if you have to succeed”. Ifemelu felt that “Aunty Uju had deliberately left behind something of herself, something essential, in a distant and forgotten place” (119).  

Certain lexical combinations used in America have more of sexual overtones. The free approach towards sexual matters is reflected in the vocabulary used by the American. The term ‘boning’ in America means ‘to have sex’. But in Nigeria the term means ‘carrying face’. The word ‘half-caste’ is a bad word which is used in Nigeria for ‘biracial’. When someone, especially a girl, tells she ‘has issues’ she would be mocked for having babies (124). A fresher from Nigeria like Ifemelu had to suffer humiliation from her classmates before understanding the connotation of such words. Most often the double-meaning words are given its secondary or negative meaning rather than its first meaning. It shows that there is a play of language in suppressing the identity of an African.  

The taste for dress also changed when the Nigerian girls reached America. Once, Ginika and Ifemelu go to a shop to buy some clothes. Ginika selected a sparkly dress as the salesgirl said
it just came in. After wearing the dress and walking on tiptoe Ginika said she loved it. To this Ifemelu said that it was shapeless. To her it looked “like a boxy sack on which a bored person had haphazardly stuck sequins”. Ginika said to her that it was postmodern. Ifemelu wondered if she too would come to share her taste for shapeless dresses and whether this was what America did to her (126). On another occasion when Ifemelu attended a fraternity party, she noticed that the students who came there, wore torn and determinedly worn dresses. Chimamanda writes:

Years later a post would read: When it comes to dressing well, American culture is so self-fulfilled that it has not only disregarded this courtesy of self-presentation, but has turned that disregard into a virtue. “We are too superior/busy/cool/not-upright to bother about how we look to other people, and so we can wear pajamas to school and underwear to the mall”. (129)

There is a pretention at work in every American, rather than what he feels in reality. After buying the dress, Ginika and Ifemelu were asked by the cashier whether they were helped by anybody to select the dress. There were two girls at the shop to assist them; one was a black lady and other a white. Even though the cashier asked them many questions about the identity of these girls, Ginika did not tell that the girl who helped her was the black or the white. Later Ifemelu asked; “Why didn’t she just ask ‘Was it the black girl or the white girl.” To this Ginika said; “Because this is America. You’re supposed to pretend that you don’t notice certain things” (127). In real life there is racial discrimination; but it is not shown publically in order to show that the Americans give importance to human dignity and freedom, no matter what be the race or caste.

As Ifemelu was trying for a job she had to face many humiliating experiences from the white employers. Finding it difficult to pronounce the African names the white men at the interview would shorten the names of the African candidates for their convenience.

The monopoly of Americans was reflected in the way they spoke English. They did not accept the accent of a foreigner while he/she spoke English. Ifemelu felt humiliated at the registration counter for new comers. Cristina Tomas, a white lady at the registration counter deliberately spoke to Ifemelu in slow pace, giving a pause after each word as if Ifemelu did not know English. When Ifemelu said that she knew English, Cristina said; “I don’t know how well” (133). All her life she had spoken English, led the debating society in secondary school, and always thought the American twang inchoate. After that experience she began to practice an American accent (134).

Even when Americans boast of hygiene and neatness, they don’t have any shame in keeping the dirty clothes in the cloth basket for three-four days before putting them in the washing machine on Friday evenings. At home she used to clean her dirty clothes daily; she never waited till the weekends. The poverty of the Africans does not mean everything in the continent is ugly and unhealthy; the affluent culture of America does not mean all that it does is neat and healthy.

The deliberate attempt to weaken the self-image of the Africans by the white is visible in the film industry as well. Once some scenes from the movie Roots was screened in the history class by “Professor Moore, a tiny, tentative woman with the emotionally malnourished look of someone who did not have friends” (136). During the screening Wambui, a Kenyan girl, noticed that the word ‘nigger’ was bleeped out in the film. While asked about it, Prof. Moore simply
evaded the question by giving this answer: “Well, this is a recording from network television and one of the things I wanted us to talk about is how we represent history in popular culture and the use of the N-word is certainly an important part of that” (137). To this answer Wambui, with the firm voice said; “It makes no sense to me... I mean, ‘nigger’ is a word that exists. People use it. It is part of America. It has caused a lot of harm to people and I think it is insulting to bleep it out” (137).

What the Africans faced in another country was securing a good job. Ifemelu had attended many interviews to earn a living and pay her rent. The owners of the houses and the shops where she went for the interview seemed polite and gave her expectation about the job. But none of them called back appointing her on the job. She even tried to call agencies that needed women for a job that equaled prostitution. She dropped the idea because even here the employee got only the quarter of what she earned; the agency took the rest. When it was time for her to pay the rent she did not have anything in her hand. So finally she went to a tennis coach, who offered her hundred dollars for a ‘massage session’. His only demand was: “Keep me warm. I’ll touch you a little bit, nothing you’ll be uncomfortable with. I just need some human contact to relax” (153). Finally she succumbed to his demand and ended up on his bed. The trauma of the incident had changed her normal life. In order to make a living in a foreign country she had to sacrifice the most cherished virtue of her life. The incident affected her very deeply causing mental depression:

She woke up torpid each morning, slowed by sadness, frightened by the endless stretch of day that lay ahead. Everything had thickened. She was swallowed, lost in a viscous haze, shrouded in a soup of nothingness. Between her and what she should feel, there was a gap. She cared about nothing. She wanted to care, but she no longer knew how; it had slipped from her memory, the ability to care. Sometimes she woke up flailing and helpless, and she saw, in front of her and behind her and all around her, an utter hopelessness. She knew there was no point in being here, being alive, but she had no energy to think concretely of how she could kill herself. (156)

She would not call this stage of her life a depressive state because according to her “depression was what happened to Americans, with their self-absolving need to turn everything into an illness” (157). Yet, after that incident she was out of her mind; when her mother called her from Nigeria and said that there had been no light for two weeks, it seemed suddenly foreign to her, and home itself a distant place (159).

Ifemelu thought that in America nobody cheated; but her understanding changed when she appeared for her driving licence. She noticed the instructor erasing the wrong answers in the answer sheet and marking the right answers. In that test everybody passed and they were all given the licence (164). She once again understood that development of a nation does not include moral development. Corruption and other malpractices are accepted as part of the system that focuses on economical development.

Even when Americans boast of giving high education to their children many of their children fail to see the different aspects of a reality. They are directed in a single path whereby they become ignorant of the real thing. Once there was an argument between Ifemelu and Kimberly’s son, Taylor, regarding the orange which Ifemelu gave him. After putting a piece into
his mouth, Taylor said that it was bad because it has got stuff in it. The stuff he mentioned was the seeds of the orange. He had never eaten oranges with seeds in them and never knew that there are oranges with seeds in them (165). A boy of his age – eight years – should have the knowledge that many of the fruit trees including orange grow from its seed; no doubt, he knows about the new space war video game.

The economic affluence of Americans gives them an upper hand over other people. Because of their richness they can easily give charity and boast of it in public meetings and gatherings. They speak of donations and various charitable activities they do in the African and Asian countries. Once Ifemelu was invited by Kimberly to attend a party of Americans. Many of the ladies introduced themselves as donors of charity in African countries like Malawi, Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania. Another woman who introduced herself as the chair of the board of charity in Ghana told; “We work with rural women. We’re always interested in African staff, we don’t want to be the NGO that won’t use local labor. So, if you’re ever looking for a job after graduation and want to go back and work in Africa; give me a call” (169). Ifemelu thanked her for her generosity; but she “wanted, suddenly and desperately, to be from the country of people who gave and not those who received, to be one of those who had and could therefore bask in the grace of having given, to be among those who could afford copious pity and empathy. She went out to the deck in search of fresh air” (170). She did not want to lose her dignity due to the lack of money. She felt within herself the richness of her own country which she did not want to measure with the economic affluence of the Americans. Having lived a couple of years in America she was able to weigh the blown up richness of America with the condensed wealth of African countries. Yet in the presence of these American ladies she felt the strength of her identity oozing out.

Life in America for Ifemelu was a period of experiments. She had switched over to many men whom she came across in her life there. She broke up these relations after having intimate physical contacts. She did not feel any remorse for engaging in these activities. She wrote many articles on race issues and received many comments. Yet she kept her relations with white people. She began to live according to the situation and did not care for the moral principles she had practiced at her home. Though she had tried to accommodate all the new situations there was nothing standing in her life. Once she reached home she had to go back to the traditional way of life and live as a rural Nigerian girl.

Obinze, the intimate friend and classmate of Ifemelu, had left for London in search of job. After a few months of stay there he did not get a decent job. At last he had to do the “cleaning of toilets, wearing gloves and carrying a pail, in an estate agent’s office on the second floor of a London building” (236). In order to avoid deportation he used the National Insurance card of Vincent, a Nigerian, and lived in his identity with the condition that he had to pay the latter thirty five per cent of his earning. Thus Obinze became Vincent. Later on, to settle down in London and to get a citizenship, Obinze wished to marry a lady much above his age. Though Obinze and Ifemelu were lovers situation made them ignore their mutual love. Later Obinze went to America, became rich, and married Kosi against his own desire for Ifemelu. The life in America changed his attitude towards family. After the study Ifemelu came back to Nigeria. This aroused the buried
desires of Obinze and he frequently visited Ifemelu and made love with each other. Kosi knew his relation with Ifemelu and reminded him of the sacramental sanctity of marriage;

It’s about keeping this family together! You took a vow before God. I took a vow before God. I am a good wife. We have a marriage. Do you think you can just destroy this family because your old girlfriend came into town? Do you know what it means to be a responsible father? You have a responsibility to that child downstairs! What you do today can ruin her life and make her damaged until the day she dies! And all because your old girlfriend came back from America? Because you have had acrobatic sex that reminded you of your time in university? (464)

Even after her advice he could not resist his passion for Ifemelu and finally he decided to divorce Kosi, his faithful wife. He decided to move away from his house and live in his flat at Parkview. He wanted to be responsible to his daughter Buchi; so he would see her everyday and do her what she wanted. He began to define family according to his new understanding – a concept of family life he learned from the American and London culture. He was now a globalized Nigerian.

Globalization has changed the customs and habits of the Africans in America. One migrant from Africa has to transform into an American in order to survive in that country. Even when the Americans boast of their assimilation of the Africans into the mainstream politics and administration the hardcore elements of racism still survive in their blood. Globalization has not changed the lifestyle of the Americans, but the African Americans or any foreigner wanting to live in America have to struggle. Thus we can see racism continuing in another form in a globalized world in a stronger and more complicated way.

REFERENCES

THE HUNGRY TIDE: A LITERARY EXPLORATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND ITS RELATED SOCIAL COSTS

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Abstract:

This paper argues that Amitav Ghosh's novel The Hungry Tide (2004) is a sustained attack against the borders that divide nations, human beings, cultures, and disciplines. The novel dwells on the pathetic condition of the marginalized human beings who have no option but to live a life of alienation and insecurity in the Sunderbans, a territory dominated by the tigers and other creatures of the wild. The Hungry Tide is set in the Sunderbans, an "immense archipelago" in the Ganges delta and tells the largely forgotten history of the forced evacuation of refugees from the island of Morichjhãpi in 1979. The condition of their living is much inferior to animals. The predicament the inhabitants suffer due to unwanted, unexpected tidal surges and tiger attack shows a serious ecological calamity on earth. The settlers are accused of 'illegally' occupying the land reserved for tigers. Their status was much less than that of the tigers and was treated brutally by both the mainstream society and wild nature. They become the voiceless and the unhistoricized. Although the novel acknowledges that wildlife conservation is an admirable goal, the novel is ultimately wary of how those conservation efforts play out. In exploring how governments can use the name of ecological preservation to justify violence against vulnerable people, the novel asserts that the conservation efforts must help both the natural environment and the people who make that environment their home.

Keywords:
Marginalization, Identities, Ecological Preservation and so on.

INTRODUCTION:

Amitav Ghosh is considered as one of the most technically astute writers of twentieth century Indian writing. Ghosh’s ambitious novels use complex narrative strategies to probe the nature of national and personal identity, particularly of the people of India and Southeast Asia. Ghosh is not just a documenter of tales but also a social anthropologist. The Hungry Tide (2004), is the fifth English-language novel by Amitav Ghosh and, like his earlier works, it reflects the author’s expertise as a sociologist, his broad general knowledge, and his insight into the colonial past. Ghosh’s elegant style and absolute control of the narrative and intricate structuring make The Hungry Tide one of the most promising novels of this century. His literary mission is driven by
two significant commitments—fictionalization of historical facts and figures; and expression of a concern over physical environment (Gopal, 2010).

_The Hungry Tide_ is a very contemporary story of adventure and unlikely love, identity, and history. The novel constructs nature by using interweaving legends, experience, myths and history to reveal human interaction with the non-human world. It also makes an attempt to find out his conscious engagement with the natural world that draws our attention to impending calamity of the global environment. It explores the symbiotic and antagonistic relationship between man and nature. Embedded in _The Hungry Tide_ is a detailed historical account of colonial and postcolonial settlement in the Sunderbans, which describes in rich detail this region’s “perpetually mutating topography” (Gupta, 2002).

_The Hungry Tide_ is set in the Sunderbans, the lower region of the Ganges delta, which extends over 250 km from the Hugli River estuary in West Bengal, India, to the banks of the Meghna River in Bangladesh. The characters in Ghosh’s novel refer to this region as “the tide country”; the flat, marshy islands on which they live are part of an “immense archipelago” (Ghosh, 2005) in which “islands are made and unmade in days” (Ghosh, 2005). Ghosh sought both to tell a fictional story set in the Sunderbans and to present a rigorously researched factual account of the region’s extraordinary history. The novel involves just a few weeks in the lives of a few characters. The time frame is greatly expanded, however, through accounts of past events, sometimes presented by the characters and at other times by the narrator through a journal written thirty years before and through a myth which originated in a far distant past.

It is an environmentally oriented book getting its physical environment set to suggest that human history is caught up in natural history. It also presents the pen picture of wildlife versus human suffering. The novel explores the plight of displaced people, the struggle for land and survival in an endangered ecosystem. (Mondol 2010) While drawing our attention to an episode from Indian history such as Morichjhapi incident, 1979, Ghosh discovers simultaneously two provinces---an endangered ecosystem where men live and fight with animals and tides; and a region in the human heart. The form of the novel is memorable for its interfusion of two brilliant aspects—place and histories.

The novel tells a very present day story of adventure, identity and history and love. Ghosh here presents nature not as a setting of picturesque beauty alone it also appears as hungry of human blood. The tide and its surges stand for all the devastating aspects of nature. The work is purely of both natural and human environment. The Tide country i.e. Sunderbans to which the whole of the work is devoted is not only a far-flung land of intimidating physical environment but also a place of dealings among an assortment of communities—ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural and socio-psychological. These are islands where inhabitants live in fear of drowning tides and man-eating animals.

Introducing a rediscovered diary as primary source, the novelist refers to the historic tragedy in 1979 of refugee settlers on the island of Morichjhapi in the Sunderbans and skillfully brings in a post-colonial political conflict between demands of wildlife conservation and needs of the inhabitants of the Sunderbans. The author shows that the inhabitants of the tide country are part of the local ecology having instilled with its malevolent and benevolent calls every day. They
are well-acquainted with smell and pulse of its soil since long back. However, the model the westerners pursue to conserve wildlife i.e. tiger in the land in accordance with their political activism brings dissatisfaction and untold miseries to the settlers. They wonder if it is a protection for wildlife conservation and beautification or ironically a systemization to put the local people daily into the mouth of death.

The historical event that lies at the core of the novel and guides its pivotal action at Morichjhapi is the event of Bangladesh independence in 1971, which had led to a huge influx of refugees into India. While the event is neither a contemporary reality nor did it occur in the recent past, its aftermath constitutes the lived reality of the people. The inhabitants of the Sundarbans on both sides of the border are the poorest of the poor. It is therefore that the elitist nationalist forces on both sides of the border attempt to silence them. The refugees who came to India in the wake of violence unleashed at the time of Bangladesh war of independence are presented in the novel in choric voices: “When the war broke out, our village was burned to ash, we crossed the border because we had nowhere else to go” (Ghosh 2004). But the government reacted by saying that refugee settlement in Morichjhapi was “unauthorized and violation of the Forest Act” and added persistently that the permanent settlement would “disturb the existing and potential forest wealth and also create ecological imbalance in the area.” (Ghosh 2004) The uprising and its ruthless quelling, in a bid to preserve the flora and fauna of the Sunderbans that were allegedly being destroyed by the refugee settlers, sparked off a number of debates and the controversies continues till this day as to whether it is human enough to preserve forests and wild animals at the expense of the tribal people and the dispossessed who have nowhere else to go and who, while living on the edge, struggle to eke out a meager living from the protected forest.

Kusum, an Indian deciding to fight for the cause of the refugees, feels aghast at the irrationality of the nation state, which is willing to butcher people to save animals. Disgruntled, she wonders: “The worst part was not the hunger or the thirst. It was to sit here, helpless, and listen to the policemen making their announcements, hearing them say that our lives, our existence, was worth less than dirt or dust. ‘This island has to be saved for its trees, it has to be saved for its animals, it is a part of a reserve forest, it belongs to a project to save tigers, which is paid for by people from all around the world.’ Every day, sitting here, with hunger gnawing at our bellies, we would listen to these words, over and over again. Who are these people, I wondered, who love animals so much that they are willing to kill us for them? Do they know what is being done in their names? Where do they live, these people, do they have children, do they have mothers, fathers? As I thought of these things it seemed to me that this whole world has become a place of animals, and our fault, our crime, was that we were just human beings, trying to live as human beings always have, from the water and the soil…..’” (261-262) Kanai also sees the inhumanity of the government’s endeavour, when he tells Piya: ‘Because it was people like you,’ said Kanai, ‘who made a push to protect the wildlife here, without regard for the human costs. It’s not hard to ignore the people who’re dying – after all they are the poorest of the poor….’ (Ghosh 2004).

Amia Loomba observes, “Nations are communities created not simply by forging certain bonds but also by fracturing or dividing others, not merely invoking and remembering certain versions of the past but making sure that others are forgotten or repressed.” (Loomba 2005) Thus
a historical incident, a state-engineered massacre of hundreds of people in the name of protecting the tiger reserves, is reduced to mere memory. Pankaj Sekhsaria opines in his article in The Hindu that wild life and wilderness do face a severe crisis but he wonders whether the tribal people alone can be held wholly responsible for it. The government often justifies its policy of tribal eviction by propagandizing that they are a threat to forest life, especially to the tigers sanctified as the national animal worthy of veneration.

CONCLUSION:

The relationship between man, nature and other natural beings is rather tentative and exists on the periphery of conflict. The late twentieth century and the early twenty first century have witnessed many geo political uprisings which fed on the displacement of indigenous citizens from zones ear marked for wildlife conservation. *The Hungry Tide* is a candid exposition of the narrow and near sighted approach towards conservation of wild life zones because it criticizes the plight of the human population displaced from those zones. To live a life of alienation and insecurity in areas like the Sunderbans is unimaginable. Political plans often do not include the ramifications experienced by the targeted population. Writers like Amitav Ghosh have been instrumental in identifying and questioning the hazards involved in such inconclusive measures which do not take into account the consequences of human and wild life conflict and human dislocation. In exploring how governments can use the name of ecological preservation to justify violence against vulnerable people, the novel asserts that the conservation efforts must help both the natural environment and the people who make that environment their home. Ghosh seems to be intent on creating a humane outlook towards the settlers of the Sunderbans. We can clearly state that Humanism also should be considered while taking actions to preserve ecology is an important message conveyed by the novel *The Hungry Tide*.

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THE CULTURAL LEGACIES OF COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM IN J.M. COETZEE’S WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the postcolonial elements like the cultural legacies of colonialism and imperialism in J.M. Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians*. J. M. Coetzee was an important novelist who explicitly portrayed the African colonial conditions and damaged South African life under apartheid. South Africa is one of the most brutally and violently exploited territories. For centuries, white colonial identity and its supreme position and imperial power exploited the native inhabitants of South Africa economically and culturally and destroyed their traditions, values and culture. The black nations were doomed to live in slums in terrible conditions while whites lived in the most modern areas and conditions. While Africans were struggling with poverty, hunger, unemployment, illnesses, the minority whites were busy with their idea of colonization. In this respect, when human beings are imprisoned and controlled both physically and mentally, it is quite normal for them to experience self-alienation and identity crisis. The novel, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, presents a portrait of an encounter between the colonizer/colonized, and the oppressor/oppressed in which the colonizer always think of himself as idealized and idolized since he is dominant and supreme but the colonized undergoes a kind of alienation and degradation because of the imperialistic behaviours of the colonial powers.

Keywords:

Colonialism, Imperialism, Native Inhabitants

INTRODUCTION

Colonialism is a process of dominant groups who employ their supreme power and domination over the colonized people through the medium of exploitation, degradation and torture. It is the extension of a nation's sovereignty over territory beyond its borders by the establishment of either settler colonies or administrative dependencies in which indigenous populations are directly ruled or displaced. Colonizers generally dominate the resources and markets of the colonial territory and may also impose socio-cultural, religious and linguistic structures on the conquered population. Colonialism is often used interchangeably with Imperialism the latter is sometimes used more broadly as it covers control exercised informally as well as formally. The term colonialism may also be used to refer to a set of beliefs used to legitimate or promote this system. It was often based on the belief that the traditions and values of
the colonizer. The white colonial identity and imperial powers exploited and violated the colonized people economically and culturally by disregarding their traditions, values and culture and replacing them with their own values.

The term ‘postcolonial’ was originally used by the historians to describe the period after colonization. In literary criticism it has been used since the late 1970s to discuss the various cultural, political, and linguistic effects of colonialism. According to Bill Ashcroft post colonialism, “has subsequently been widely used to signify the political, linguistic, and cultural experience of societies that were former European colonies” (Ashcroft 186). As a leading South African novelist J.M. Coetzee belonged to the category of post colonial writers. Regarded as important postcolonial writer his emphasis is mostly on the opposition of colonizers. However, Coetzee has been criticized by Nadine Gordimer for being far from presenting direct and straightforward historical and political doctrines and ideas. In a similar way, Vaughan criticizes Coetzee for not offering a solution to the problems of colonialism.

As his third novel, J.M. Coetzee published *Waiting for the Barbarians* in 1980. It tells about unknowable barbarians who never arrive or exist. The novel, in fact, does not give an explicit account of South African history but rather it is a successful allegorical representation of apartheid regime in any place in the world. The setting of the novel is an unspecified geographical place where the readers are told the story from the voice of unnamed magistrate who serves as a binary model of self/the other. The issues of colonizer/the colonized, torturer/tortured, self/the other are used recurrently in the novel. The title of the novel creates the sense of disturbance and pain. The novel opens with the arrival of Colonel Joll with a band of soldiers from the Third Bureau to declare their superiority over the invisible barbarians. In this respect, in the beginning of the novel, there is an encounter between the colonizer/colonized, and the oppressor /oppressed.

The story of the Magistrate of the Empire is narrated in the first person. He is identified only by his role as a Magistrate and is never given a significant name. He is a figure on the margins of both the Empire and the barbarians and has led a very comfortable life for years in the outpost. He is content and satisfied with the record keeping and paper work that he looks into for the Empire. He says “When I pass away I hope to merit three lines of small print in the Imperial gazette. I have not asked for more than a quiet life in quiet times” (8). But, the Magistrate no longer holds on to this sweet state of complacency when once Colonel Joll sets foot on the outpost. The Magistrate questions his own identity comparing it with the man from the Third Bureau, sent by the Empire to investigate and find the truth through torture, of the rumours of the Barbarian uprising. Barbarianism and civilization are opposed concepts. It is through the notions of the barbarians that the superiority of the civilized is established. The Magistrate despairs and feels deeply for the prisoners that Colonel Joll has brought as captives. He asks the soldiers who go along with Colonel Joll in the barbarian hunt ride “Did no one tell him, the difference between fishermen with nets and wild nomad horsemen with bows? Did no one tell him they don’t even speak the same language?” (19).The barbarians in the novel are depicted as desert nomads and settled farmers, herdsmen and fisher people. They live near the imperial settlement and they live far out in the unmapped lands afar. They speak languages that are known, and languages that are unknown. They are peaceful and aggressive, pitiable and fearful.
Here, Coetzee explores the moral, political and personal dilemma facing a colonized nation. The Magistrate’s identity with the Empire keeps changing even from the beginning of the novel. He shows his reluctance to listen to screams of torture on the prisoners by Colonel Joll. And this becomes the Magistrate’s first sign of refusing to belong to the Empire and thus a beginning for his transformation.

Colonel Joll, who is described as ruthless and merciless, interrogates the natives in the town, and labels them as “barbarians” and he thinks that they are a great threat to the town and the existence of the Empire. Colonel Joll's way of interrogation by using torture is a similar process that occurs in the historical process of colonization that is, between the torturer and the tortured, the colonizer and the colonized, the self and the other, etc. Shaffer states that Colonel Joll’s “interrogation is the Bureau’s euphemism for torture [.] and, Joll [.] appears to take pleasure in his gruesome work” (126).

The magistrate, who is not disturbed by the existence of barbarians, also becomes an enemy for his own people and a victim and is being imprisoned and tortured by the soldiers of the Empire. Having been cursed as a traitor for his non-existent cooperation with the barbarians, the magistrate is imprisoned and pushed into death. His position and authority in the town are lessened to a simple object whose existence is ignored by Colonel Joll and his soldiers. As a peacetime governor for this town, the behaviours of the magistrate indicate that he revolts against the violence and the torture that the soldiers of the empire employ against the native folk. When he is interrogated by Colonel Joll, the magistrate accuses Colonel Joll of being the real enemy. “Those pitiable prisoners you brought in – are they the enemy I must fear? You are the enemy; Colonel [. . .] You are the enemy, you have made the war, and you have given them all the martyrs they need- starting not now but a year ago when you committed your first filthy barbarities here” (125).

In this respect, “it becomes clear that the “civilized” are the real barbarians in Coetzee’s novel; the more they insist upon their difference from the “barbarians”, the more barbarian the civilized themselves become” (Shaffer131).

Another victim who falls into the Empire’s ruthless hands is a barbarian girl who is brutally tortured and disabled during her questioning session by the Colonel Joll. The magistrate finds the blinded and crippled barbarian girl begging against the trunk of walnut trees. When he takes her to his house, he finds that the scars and the traces of torture on the body of the girl are unbearable. The magistrate says: “It has been growing clearer to me that until the marks on this girl’s body are deciphered and understood I cannot let go of her” (30). In his relation to the barbarian girl, the magistrate tries to eliminate the sense of otherness and understand the signs of torture on her body. The magistrate decides to return the barbarian girl to her people which can be regarded as a protest against the rules of the Empire. In his every attempt to question how she is tortured, the barbarian girl remains silent. When she is finally convinced to answer the reason of her blindness, the magistrate is still discontent. The magistrate tells:

I take her face between my hands and stare into the dead centres of her eyes, from which twin reflections of myself stare solemnly back. "And this?” I say, touching the worm-like sear in the corner. "That is nothing. That is where the iron touched me. It made a little burn. It is not sore.”
She pushes my hands away. “What do you feel towards the men who did this?” She lies thinking a long time. Then she says, “I am tired of talking.” (40-41)

During her stay at the magistrate’s house, there is a ritual of washing the disfigured feet of the barbarian girl that repeatedly occurs in the novel. When he is confronted by the body of the tortured girl, symbolically, he desires to purify himself and to clear away the feeling of guilt and dirtiness that the barbarian girl has been exposed to. One evening, while he is massaging her face, he recognizes the traces of torture that have left marks near her eye: “I notice in the corner of one eye a greyish puckering as though a caterpillar lay there with its head under her eyelid, grazing. . . Between thumb and forefinger I part her eyelids. The caterpillar comes to an end, decapitated, at the pink inner rim of the eyelid. There is no other mark. The eye is whole” (33). The Magistrate belonging to the dominating world of the oppressor may try to behave as the girl’s saviour that he tries to purify her after she has been defiled, first at the hands of Joll and then by living as a prostitute. Believing that the empire is a great threat to the existence of barbarians, the magistrate always disapproves the rules and order of the empire and believes that it is the Empire itself that deserves to fall.

Finally the magistrate decides to return the girl to her own people. It becomes very hard to reach to the mountains where the barbarian girl lives. The journey ends with the girl being handed over to several men on horse. However, when he returns to the town, his position in the town is reversed. He is no longer the magistrate of the town but a prisoner who is subjected to the same degrading torture and oppression as being employed to the barbarians. The magistrate endures terrible tortures and pain which may help to strengthen his tie of common human values and senses with the barbarians. After his own experience of torture, the magistrate finds a similar caterpillar-like scar that he observes near the eye of the barbarian girl, under his eye.

At the end of the novel, the magistrate concludes that the invasion of the Empire to prove its power over the native folk represents the possibility of colonial process of erasing the presence of non-Western people and denying the existence of alternative histories. Thus, the significance of the place for another culture is lost and the people who live there are reduced to non-existent inhabitants. Throughout the novel, the torture, violence, oppression and degradation that colonial and imperial actions imposed on the native inhabitants of the town who are struggling to live in peace among them can clearly be seen. The characters - the magistrate, the barbarian girl and fishing folk are forced to live out the boundaries of their native lands. Refusing to be included in the history of imperial colonizer, throughout the novel, the colonized other attempts to remain as an absence, a lack and invisible in the colonial record of the Empire. At the end of the novel, the magistrate, who is still struggling to comprehend the traumatic events, concludes his experience for the lost history of the colonial other as: “I wanted to live outside history. I wanted to live outside the history that Empire imposes on its subjects, even its lost subjects. I never wished it for the barbarians that they should have the history of Empire laid upon them” (169).
CONCLUSION

South Africa is one of the most brutally and violently exploited territories. For centuries white colonial identity and its imperial power exploited and dominated the native inhabitants of South Africa economically and culturally. It caused to destroy their traditions, values and culture. The black nations were destined to live in slums in terrible conditions while whites lived in the most sophisticated conditions. While Africans were struggling with poverty, hunger, unemployment, illnesses, the minority whites were busy with their idea of colonization. In this respect, when human beings are imprisoned and controlled both physically and mentally, it is quite normal for them to experience self-alienation and identity crisis. In this context J.M. Coetzee’s third novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* achieves much relevance. The story is narrated through the voice of an unnamed magistrate who serves as a binary model of self. He is not disturbed by the existence of barbarians, and he also becomes an enemy for his own people and a victim and being imprisoned and tortured. The existence of barbarians, which are feared by the Empire, is unclear. The attacks and violation of invisible barbarians are always expected in the town though nobody has ever seen them. The theme of torture is explicitly portrayed in the novel which is the hallmark of colonialism. The barbarian girl tortured by Colonel Joll and his soldiers refuses to speak about herself which exemplifies the identity crisis. The reluctance of the magistrate towards atrocities against the innocents presents the real victimization of colonized. The magistrate repeatedly washes the shapeless feet of the barbarian girl. He probably feels guilty of himself in the name of the tortures. So, he would feel a kind of purification, relief and peace of mind. By controlling physically and mentally the characters experience the self alienation and identity crisis throughout.

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MEANING IN MEANINGLESSNESS: A STUDY OF SAMUEL BECKETT’S WAITING FOR GODOT IN THE CONTEXT OF FLOOD AFFECTED PEOPLE IN KERALA

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Abstract:

Absurdity is a term widely used in Modern English literature. Meaninglessness of existence is shown through the term absurdity. Absurdity is contrary to reason. Human beings continuous search for meaning of his existence and his failure to find out meaning has shown through Beckett’s Waiting for Godot. This paper primarily focus on the meaning of existence by having a comparative study of Beckett’s Waiting for Godot and the natural calamity, flood, affected the people in Kerala in August 2018. The two tramps waited for Godot in the play, which was futile. The victims of flood waited for Godot and it was fruitful. Beckett found modern universe an irrational one, where human beings do not have the ability to find meaning in their life. People face alienation in an absurd world which leads them into chaos and confusions. They become weak and pessimist. Through this study I found meaning in the existence of the people who are rational and optimistic.

INTRODUCTION

Literature is a reflection of society. Contemporary society is presented as absurd in literature. Human beings are isolated and are alien in their existence. The irrational has to think rationally to find meaning for their existence. In an absurd world it is difficult to find meaning for truth. Absurdity is a term used for feeling of loss and purposelessness. Post modern society is the one with chaos, confusions, boredom, and spiritual crisis. Absurdity of human existence is shown in literature through everyday characters, events and settings. Natural calamities help the people to think rationally, to find out meaning for their existence.

PLOT OVER VIEW

Samuel Beckett’s Waiting for Godot is a two act play of two tramps, Vladimir and Estragon waiting for Godot under a bare tree. While they wait they engage in conversation. They have some confusion regarding the time and place. They are tired of endless waiting. The tyrannical Pozzo and Lucky his slave arrives. Lucky is forced to think and dance to entertain them. First act ends when the boy announces that Godot will arrive only the very next day. All the characters depart from the scene. Second act set under the same tree but it’s sprouted with a few leaves. Vladimir and Estragon waiting for Godot and they are distracted by Pozzo who is blind.
and Lucky, dumb. They are not even certain of the request that they made to Godot or what Godot has to do for them. Lucky and Pozzo leave and again boy arrives and announces the message from Godot. The two tramps continue their waiting with a mixture of hope and fear.

BRIEF REPORT OF FLOODS AFFECTED PEOPLE IN KERALA IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2018

In the month of August, 2018 severe floods affected people in Kerala. All fourteen districts in Kerala were under red alert. From August 9 to 15 Kerala received 255 per cent more rain fall than normal. The Kerala government reported that most of the people in Kerala were directly affected by floods. It was mainly due to thirty three dams which were opened due to heavy rain. It lead to the death of many, many of them lost their houses. Around five hundred people died due to landslides caused by the floods, and around 1.2 million people had to move to temporary shelter in schools and other places. Many people joined together to rescue the people in flooded area. The people from neighbouring states, people in Kerala: students from various institutions, army, navy officers, police men, fishermen, etc came to help Kerala people. The Electrical and Electronic Engineers opened a new site to pass information to various districts in Kerala to rescue the people who were in trouble and to help them by providing some relief materials.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WAITING FOR GODOT AND FLOODS

Here through this study I would like to find meaning in meaninglessness, by comparing Samuel Beckett’s Waiting for Godot to the flood affected people in Kerala in the month of August 2018.

Human existence is always related to waiting. The critics and playwrights of twenty first century are of the opinion that our waiting is meaningless. In the play the two tramps waited for Godot, who is not familiar for them. They think Godot may be God, or someone else but they were asked to wait there. They were not sure about the place where they wait. They waited for two days and the boy announced that Godot will not come to meet them at the end of second day. So they were forced to wait on the third day. They were not sure of the purpose of their waiting. The play is an absurd play because the result of their waiting is meaningless, no one came to help them.

Godot stands for nothingness, death, God in the play. In Waiting for Godot man is portrayed as alienated from truth, God etc.

In the case of flood in Kerala the two tramps stands for the people in Kerala who were the victims of flood. They waited for some hours, a day, a week etc. The victims included new born child, pregnant ladies to old ones. The victims of flood waited for Godot. The Godot stands for death, God, or the one who came to help them. When the people in Kerala waited for Godot, Godot arrived as neighbours, army, police officers, fishermen, doctors and other people who were ready to do service to the society. Though Vadimir and Estragon not sure about the purpose of their waiting, the victims of flood waited for life, food, shelter, clothes, medicine etc.
In *Waiting for Godot* tree has an important role in both acts. In first act tree represents pessimism that is, death and in second act the tree sprouted with leaves represents optimism that is, life.

In Kerala the people had experienced both pessimism and optimism during floods. They waited for death because of heavy rain, as helpless, no one to help them. Just as the leaves sprouted from the tree they found meaning in their life when the saviour came to rescue them in the form of army in helicopter and fishermen in boat etc.

Pozzo and Lucky, master and slave. When they enter to the scene Lucky has a rope round his neck and Pozzo drives him from behind. Pozzo stands for authority. Master behaves cruelly to the slave but slave is not ready to move away from his master. Pozzo no longer needed Lucky because he became old. This creates trouble in their life. Pozzo and Lucky appeared blind and dumb in the second act.

In Kerala too victims of floods had reluctant attitude towards the one who came to rescue them. This shows though the people love freedom, continuous training under their master prevents them from moving towards freedom. The victims of floods got information from various people about the disaster and asked them to move to safe place but they stayed at their home, which shows they were more conscious about what they possess than their life.

Hope and fear has an important role throughout the play. Vladimir and Estragon have fear while they waited for Godot. It is shown through the words of Estragon who suggest to suicide by hanging themselves from the branch of a tree. The hope prevents them from suicide and also forced them to wait on the next day. This mixture of emotion makes the reader to think that Godot may be death. Death, the word itself creates fear though it is inevitable in the life of the one who is born to this world. Hope gets its importance when the boy announces Godot will not come that day. The entrance of Pozzo and Lucky create fear and hope in two tramps as they think them as Godot.

The victims of floods also had this mixed feeling of fear and hope in them. They were in confusion regarding their waiting, whether it for death or life.

CONCLUSION

In modern society human beings are alienated as they do not have proper communication with others. Man is self centred, they though educated narrowed to one self. They not even ready to develop healthy relations with their fellow beings. They appear irrational and they lack proper feelings and emotions in their life. Human beings reduced into mere machine.

Disaster brought the people together. It made them rational, helped them to identify the meaning of their life. Flood taught the people in Kerala to lead a meaningful life of love, togetherness, unity, care, co-operation etc. Being a rational creature human beings have the freedom to chose virtue or vice in their life. Virtue provides meaning to our life. In the life of Vladimir and Estragon waiting is not absurd it appears awkward only for the reader, for them it has some meaning so they wait for Godot with fear and hope in them. When the boy announces
Godot will not arrive that day, they are not ready to give up their waiting. It shows they have some hope in their waiting and this waiting is inevitable in their life.

God can be found in virtues that we do to the society. Virtuous deed helps to find meaning in our life. Human beings get identity through the experience and perception they have in their life. The victims of floods and the one who helped them acted and reacted in a rational way. Man struggles to find meaning in their life and the disaster helped them to find meaning.

Waiting is a continuing process. The playwright ends the play without mentioning the result of their waiting. While I compare Waiting for Godot with the floods affected people in Kerala I found that there will be result at the end of waiting and it will be meaningful.

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AN ANALYSIS OF NURSERY RHYMES THROUGH THE THEORIES OF ROLAND BARTHES AND CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS

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Abstract

Nursery rhymes are a great way to teach children language and its uses. Since children are prone to sweet tooth and most of the rhymes deal with food. It helps them to imagine and visualize. However are they simply language teaching techniques? Don’t we impart cultural rules and regulations through these rhymes? In this paper I would like to analyse rhymes that deal with food and the role of imagery provided by these food images. My attempt is to read the food imagery in nursery rhymes through the perspective of Barthes and Levi –Strauss.

Keywords:


INTRODUCTION

Nursery rhymes set to music aid in a child's development. Research also supports the assertion that music and rhyme increase a child's ability in spatial reasoning, which aid mathematical skills. Katherine Elwe in her book The Real Personages of Nursery Rhymes assumes that children songs were a peculiar form of coded historical narrative, propaganda or covert protest and rarely considered that they could have been written simply for entertainment. But the evidences she assumes have no validity at all. I would like to analyze rhymes about food and what they refer to.

Barthes in his essay "Towards a Pyschosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption "had analyzed food as follows:

- For what is food? It is also, and at the same time, a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations and behavior. (Barthes 29)

Barthes has given that food has escaped from its function of nutrition and has become a mode of communication that is language. It is also a tool to instruct and learn. Nursery rhymes about food teach one about many things other than food. For example, in the famous rhyme "Johnny Johny Yes Papa" Johny is being questioned whether he has stolen sugar. Here parenting is more stressed than having sugar and a gentle reminder to never lie to one's parents. The rhyme which supposedly originated in India has been accepted as a protocol of behavior.

"Humpty Dumpty", believed to have originated in England at the beginning of 19th century, is about a personified egg which has fallen down. "All the king's horses and all the King's men" means that nothing can ever put a broken egg back to its original form. Though there are
claims that the rhyme is about hunch backed King Richard III and about a Canon ball there are no supporting evidences for the claims. Most of the rhymes books and videos portray "Humpty Dumpy" as a personified egg. It teaches children to be careful with heights. "On Top of a Sphagetti sat a meat ball" describes what happened to the meat ball when someone accidentally sneezed when the Spaghetti was served. It led to a long journey rolling from hither to thither and finally turning mushy. Spaghetti is an Italian staple food and meat is often added for both taste and nutrition. Thus sneezing destroyed the food and its quality. It is a clear indication of table manners - never to sneeze in front of food.

The rhymes "Oats beans and barley grow" and "Blow wind blow" deal with agriculture. It teaches them about how food is grown. In the song "Oats beans and barley" the steps of farming such as sow seed, water the seed, hoe the weed and harvest the yield(also action oriented words) effects in deep rooted knowledge of farming than the nutritional quality of food. The rhyme "Blow wind, blow "enunciates action of windmills and the result - baker will make cake for everyone." Go banana" is described in steps about going wild with anger with various stages in order- peel banana, chop banana, smash banana- as exactly as idiom indicates. Of course food imagery is very vivid and the easiest imagery to kindle imagination in young minds but my point is how food becomes a mode of communication. It carries various informations, etiquettes and rules of manners.

C. LEVI-STRAUSS AND RHYMES

Levi-Strauss in "The Culinary Triangle" has diagnosed on how various modes of cooking is related to the binary opposition nature/culture. According to him, boiling is a cultural practice which is elaborate, "endo-cuisine", prepared by women folk for domestic purposes. And roasting is more akin to nature since it is unelaborated, "exo-cuisine", often done by men for guest or large groups. Regarding the use of utensils the critic says, "The boiled is cooked within a receptacle, while the roasted is cooked from without" (Strauss37). Receptacle being a symbol of civilization makes boiling more cultural practice. If we go through the nursery rhymes which involve any cooking procedures we can find that all of them are near to the cultural practises i.e. rhymes always perpetuate culture.

For example the rhyme "I 'm a little teapot" is about teapot which is "short and stout" and which serves tea through its spout. This American rhyme also hints about American tea culture. Another rhyme which serves the purpose is "Peas porridge" which enunciates about porridge cooked in pot. One can either serve it hot or cold and use till nine days, a method of preservation. "pat-a-cake" deals with baking and pricking it with B or T, but again the method cooking involves a receptacle though it is near to roasting. Baking involves additives to ferment the dough making it more cultural.

Thus the so called rhymes not only teach language but also strictly adhere to cultural dimensions. Unaware they shape and prune the young generation making them 'presentable' to the world. As mentioned earlier food is the best choice to enlighten young minds and through food it
also adorns them invisible shackles of manners and culture. Obviously those practises which are near to natural methods of cooking are never mentioned in the rhymes.

REFERENCES


ENGAGEMENTS WITH MODERNITY IN HERMANN HESSE’S STEPPENWOLF

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Abstract

Charles Baudelaire wrote in his essay, “The Painter of Modern Life (1863)”, “Modernity is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is the one half of art, the other being the eternal and the immutable” (Harvey 10). The term ‘modern’ alludes to “of or pertaining to the present and recent times; as distinguished from the remote past” (OED). In Hesse’s Steppenwolf, one can perceive the distinct discontentment arising out of one’s inability to cope with the present that is divergent from a state of prevailing tradition. Discontentment—both with the state of present society and with oneself—forms one of the central themes of Steppenwolf. The conflict between the ephemeral present (which is in constant flux subject to the advent of modern innovations) and the pristine eternal past, which the protagonist of the novel, Harry Haller assumes to be venerated territory, becomes a central concern in the novel. The emergence of Modernism in the early twentieth century can also be interpreted as a distinct response to new forms of mass production (along with rampant urbanisation, mechanisation and industrialisation) and the onslaught of consumerism in the modern age. In this study, I attempt to trace out such psychological multiplicities and socio-critical aspects persistent in the novel to distinct conflicts arising amongst the early twentieth century society struggling to grapple with advancing elements of modernity. Harry Haller’s struggle to grapple with the changing face of modernity is here deliberated as emblematic of the struggle of the entire age.

Keywords:
Modernism, Modernity, Hermann Hesse, Industrialisation, Consumerism, Commoditisation, Popular Culture

INTRODUCTION

How does ‘modernity’ or elements of modernity affect the psyche of the conflicted individual? Does drawing parallels between the individual and the conflicted society aid in conveying a sense of psychological realism? The psychological dualism portrayed here may be perceived as the distinct recognition and subsequent clash between the ideal and the reality. Here, I juxtapose Haller’s rejection, later experimentation and the final dubious acceptance of elements of modernity with the Modernist elements of esotericism and its later incursion into popular and mass culture.
THE PROBLEMATIC DUALITIES

Steppenwolf’s protagonist, Harry Haller struggles to grapple with the ‘modern’ elements of society and the tribulations of a war-torn twentieth century (something that the pacifist protagonist cannot comprehend). Yet, the rebel that is Haller continues to be fascinated by the immaculate cleanliness of the bourgeois society where men and women live in “spotless mediocrity,” content with their little habits and behaviour. Haller’s fascination with the araucaria plant, symbolic of the Bourgeois immaculate routine, bespeaks his enthrallment for a society that he scorns. Haller’s fondness for non-change or the non-corrupted past is evident even in the choice of bar that he frequents—Haller prefers an “ancient tavern” which hasn’t changed much since Haller’s first visit twenty five years ago. The novel constantly delves into deliberations on time and eternity.

Haller’s rigid belief in the ephemerality of certain progressive elements of modernity and the timelessness of certain eternal classics also becomes evident in Haller’s varying reactions towards music: he merely listens to Handel whereas he is entranced by Bach—this rigid dichotomy is gradually broken as the novel progresses—Haller even begins to enjoy the intricacies of contemporary jazz. However, one finds that Haller conspicuously adopts the coping mechanism of fragmentation right from the beginning of the novel—individuation gains prime focus as Haller identifies an alter ego within him that is an embodiment of the forces of the brute—the Steppenwolf.

Thus, representations of chaotic and fragmentary modern life, which was mirrored through linguistic fragmentations and disjoint narratives in many Modernist works, find expression in Steppenwolf in the form of psychological aberrations—as a self who views oneself in multitudes. As flux and constant change begins to form the basis of the material basis of fragmented modern life, one realises that the characterisation of a modernist aesthetic will depend crucially upon the artist’s positioning with respect to such process. One often finds that a singular subjectivity is unable to cope with the crisis pervading the early twentieth century world, enabling the deconstruction of the psychology of the individual and well as the general psyche of society. Haller’s inability to cope with the reality that he perceives is apparent through his urges to commit suicide, which in turn is prevented by the Bourgeois constituent within him which seeks to preserve the ‘self’ above all else. This leads to the protagonist discovering and developing another personality that he didn’t know existed—the Bourgeoisie who is capable of enjoying life’s sensual and hedonistic pleasures.

One can perceive the futility of extreme intellectual theorising here. As Haller gives himself up to bodily pleasure through dancing and other indulgences, he begins to discover a certain kind of timeless transcendence that was undiscovered by him despite his unyielding belief in his intellectual superiority. Thus, Harry Haller, as a person unable to “find contentment in himself and his own life” (Hesse 25) resorts to adopting contradictory and dualistic personalities that ultimately aids him in grappling with the societal changes that he perceives around him. For instance, a simple piece of an engraving of Goethe that he perceives in an acquaintance’s house prompts him into divulging into a rant against the artist’s liberalism regarding representation of a
timeless figure. Such incompatible forms of personality become attributed to the brutish alter-ego within him—the Steppenwolf. Similarly, throughout the novel, one can construe the multiplicities of selves that Harry Haller seems to possess. For instance, the figure of Hermine could be interpreted as a manifestation of Haller’s own struggling self in order to experiment with the Bourgeois ideal that he inherently despises (but still remains fascinated by). Therefore, the figure of the Steppenwolf—construed as the personified figure through which he coped with the rapidly changing society—gets replaced by the overwhelming presence of the figure of Hermine (an almost androgynous figure who aids the protagonist in striking a balance as he tended to divulge into highly extremist tendencies) who guides him in a path of sensual and hedonistic pleasure that he didn’t even know existed. As Haller learns to revel through dance, he learns that even the purposiveness of bodily movements enable him reach a state of timelessness.

Here, Hesse attempts to describe the basic dilemma that people who reject modernity would eventually have to face, where one might try isolating oneself from the values and the psychology of the mass culture, but a foray in the direction of mass cultural indulgences are inevitable if one has to avoid self-destruction through alienation or live in self-denial. Thus, here, one might ruminate over the possibility of a conflicted twentieth century man coping with the problematic changing society by merely becoming one with the mass. This is comparable to supposed esotericism of certain Modernist texts and works, and the movement’s later conscious recognition of the primacy of popular culture in an age of consumerism. Perhaps a reading into the subtle nuances of the novel will aid us in drawing a parallel between the Modernist scorn for and later embracing of popular culture. Modernity constantly tends to push people into dichotomous extremities of conformity or alienation. One witnesses both these aspects in the novel as Haller expresses his scorn for, and later attempts to embrace the progressive symbols of modernity. Unlike many Modernist authors’ foray into the realm of their own versions of aesthetics through themes and modes that are distinctly rebellious in nature, such as decadence, futuristic language, nonlinear plots and surrealism, Steppenwolf offers the ambiguous narrative of a man who desists, experiments and later accepts the entities of modernity. In many Modernist texts, mourning for the loss of order in an age of modern chaos is also not uncommon. For instance, WB Yeats writes in “The Second Coming”, “Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.”

Bradbury and MacFarlane write “Modernism is our art because it is the one art that responds to the scenario of our chaos.” Perhaps the twentieth century hugely problematized the idea of change and progress like no other century—the destruction of the Great War largely shattered the illusion of optimism associated with change and ‘progressive’ states of modernity. The inhumanity of war is portrayed with tinges of dark humour in the absurd sequence that takes place behind the door inscribed with the sign, “Great Hunt in Automobiles” where “the long-feared war between men and machines have finally broken out” (Hesse 117). Here, identities become invalidated—in the scene of mass manslaughter, a victim is revealed to be named “Tat Twam Asi” (in fact, all victims are revealed to be named thus)—a witty play with words revealing “Thou are that.” This could be allusive of a neutral state where people are stripped of their
privileges or a thinly veiled comment on the modern tendency of popular consumerist culture where mass production has stripped people of individual identities.

However, in the novel, the final solution offered as a solution to one’s discontentment with elements of modernity and the state of contemporary society is almost one of bathos. The coping mechanism that possibly goes on to illuminate the life of the protagonist in the end is not highbrow theorisation like many Modernists who were proponents of ‘high culture’ were expected to offer—but the simplistic idea of laughing at things that are beyond the scope of individual control. During Haller’s encounter with the “immortal genius” of Mozart, the musician explains, “Learn what is to be taken seriously and laugh at the rest.” One can distinctly discern an attempt to break through the bondage of high culture and see through the humour of it all.

Haller’s unconvincing attitude towards elements of modernity had become evident through many instances earlier in the novel. When the landlady indicates towards the wireless set that her nephew is working on, Haller responds that the “wireless would be of no more service to man than as an escape from himself and his true aims, and a means of surrounding himself with an ever closer mesh of distractions and useless activities” (Hesse 65). As Walter Benjamin explains in his celebrated essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” the modern technological and scientific capacity to reproduce and market ‘art’ to large audiences has enabled the eradication of the ‘aura’ inherently present in works of creative art. Thus, commoditisation of entities in modern age provoked a wide range of aesthetic responses ranging from “denial, through imitation to speculation on Utopian possibilities” (Harvey 23). Despite the absence of art enriched with ‘aura’, it has manged to survive the “age of mechanical reproduction” by not denying the elements of modernity, and by interpolating such elements of modernity into the realm of art itself, amassing the realm of popular culture into realms of art that had earlier remained untouched by consumer culture.

CONCLUSION

The novel espouses that change and transitoriness are necessary and inevitable conditions of the ways of the world. A new age almost always replaces the old order with a certain amount of destruction of the existent order involved—a new order can almost never be created without the destruction of the old order. Thus, Steppenwolf can be construed to indicate the ineluctability of technological and mechanical progress. The general complexities of the Modernist age as it struggled to cope with the sudden influx of changes prevalent in the early twentieth century is elucidated by the following quote by Bradbury and McFarlane, where they express that Modernism was,

An extraordinary compound of the futurist and the nihilist, the revolutionary and the conservative, the naturalistic and the symbolistic, the romantic and the classical. It was the celebration of a technological age and a condemnation of it; an excited acceptance of the belief that the old regimes of culture were over, and a deep despairing in the face of that fear; a mixture of convictions that the new forms were escapes from historicism and
the pressures of the time with convictions that they were precisely the living expression of these things. (qtd in Harvey 24)

In the novel, the experience in the Magic Theatre becomes inherently purgatory in nature—laughter is ultimately revealed as the perfect coping mechanism, as the world around you progresses in spite of your denial of the presence of the ‘new.’ The novel ends with the protagonist being temporarily banished from the theatre because he “broke through the humour of it” and spattered the “pretty picture-world that is the theatre with the mud of reality” (Hesse 143). The illusion of the theatre may have been shattered but the ending can be interpreted as remarkably positive—the protagonist leaves the Magic Theatre which demands one’s mind as “price of admission”, hinting that Haller is giving up his tendency of resorting to multiple personalities and transforming into a subject capable of accepting the outside world to be less than idealistic. The conception of a subjective ideal world and the world of reality do not become muddled. This becomes possible through the simple idea of humour—the technique of learning how to laugh—something which Harry Haller (no longer the Steppenwolf) is unable to do at present.

REFERENCES

INTERACTIVE FICTION OF GRAND THEFT AUTO: ANTAGONISTIC STYLE AND ITS INFLUENCE

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Abstract

This paper delves the antagonistic style and its effects in the interactive fiction of the Grand Theft Auto series of games. Over the past years, digital gaming has been gaining much popularity and from its inception in 1958 till now, almost all the games have been following with its digital codes, a well-established literary script. If we look at the recent statistics of the games sold, games with a good storyline have brought in more profit to the developers than the rest. This is a clear proof of the acceptance of such digital games. Storylines in digital gaming industry follow a similar pattern like that of a movie or even a play. People usually look down on video games as a mere form of jolly entertainment. But just like a good book or a good movie, a well scripted video game has the potential to influence the player. With this paper, we aim at bringing out the effects of the antagonistic narratives of the Grand Theft Auto line of games and its effects on the player.

Keywords

Ergodic literature, Interactive fiction, Grand Theft Auto, Racism, Xenophobia, Stereotyping, Misogyny, Antagonism

INTRODUCTION

Video Gaming, apart from being a mere form of amusement has evolved itself into a part of popular culture. From its inception in 1947, its growing market is a symbol of how significant games can be. The history of video games can be traced back to the first interactive game in 1947, the first true video game in the early 1950s to the booming of early arcade video games in the 1970s.

Almost all the video games are following the principal of having a narrative or back story as its foundation. Just like any other form of literature, video games too feature characters, themes and other general elements. Here arises the question of whether considering video games as part of literature. Espen Aarseth, a renowned figure in the field of video games studies and electronic literature, came up with an answer to this puzzling question by coining the term ‘Ergodic Literature’ in 1997. Ergodic literature simply means anything that stands out of the traditional form of literature. The term ‘Ergodic’ is derived from the two Greek words ‘ergon’ and ‘hodos’. Ergon means work and hodos means path. The most commonly cited definition by Aarseth on
Ergodic literature is: “non-trivial effort is required to allow the reader to traverse the text. If ergodic literature is to make sense as a concept, there must also be non ergodic literature, where the effort to traverse the text in trivial, with no extranoematic responsibilities placed on the reader except (for example) eye movement and periodic or arbitrary turning of pages” [1]. In the world of written literature, the reader unlocks the story in a more set pattern. But in a video game it gives a more immersive experience, thereby allowing the player to explore the story in a more active way.

This active participation from the part of the player makes the video games more of an ergodic literature. The real focus of the study here is about the behemoth franchise, Grand theft Auto in the gaming industry; the antagonistic themes and its influence. Over the two decades, this franchise has been ruling over the gaming industry. Rockstar North, the developers of the Grand Theft Auto line of games holds the record for the most sold game in every platform, Grand Theft Auto V. The franchise has also erected a very active online community. The game is still continuing its dominance despite all the controversies it sparked.

VIOLENCE IN GTA

The mass popularity of the Grand Theft Auto line of video games has well reflected in its sales. As one of the fastest growing franchise in the gaming industry, Rockstar North has released twenty six various titles in the Grand Theft Auto line. Though these games differ in their titles, the core objective of each of these is to advance through different antisocial scenarios ranging from drug dealing, carjacking to mass murder. The major images presented in all Grand Theft Auto games are of brutal violence and other explicit contents.

Violence thus emerges as one of the prominent themes associated with the Grand Theft Auto games. The name Grand Theft Auto itself suggests the crime of carjacking. From the first game itself, the developers were more interested in how the players could hit and run rather than mere driving. The developers’ obsession with violence is well evident from the initial Grand Theft Auto game, GTA I to the latest addition to the franchise, GTA V. With each new game being released, they are only upping the ante.

Violence has always been the face of the Grand Theft Auto line of games. Anything violent could be done in the game. Cop killings are a common feature in all of the Grand Theft Auto games. Throughout the years, due to the game’s influence, many people have tried to imitate the in-game carjacking in real life. Obeying traffic rules are never a part of these games. There are many cases reported in the U.S of citizens holding underground races and violating traffic rules. A major U.S daily, ‘The Washington Post’ shares such an incident back in November 2016, when an eleven year old boy being inspired by playing Grand Theft Auto took his family car out for a spin. A high speed chase on a busy Toronto highway left many lives at stake. Upon inquiry, The Washington Post reported “it was a joy ride that the boy told officers was inspired by playing the video game Grand Theft Auto” [3]. Such incidents strengthen the arguments made against the antagonistic style of the game.
More than half of the missions provided by the GTA games require a gun to complete. Gun killings have always been an unavoidable part in these games. Though the developers justify these acts by stating that these are all mere satires on the western society, but in reality, these actions only add fuel to the fire, encouraging gun violence, hate crimes and such. Fox News reported such a case in 2005, where a lawsuit was filed against the developers of GTA when a teenager shot down three police officers. Fox News claims “Grand Theft Auto led a teenager to shoot two police officers and a dispatcher to death in 2003, mirroring violent acts depicted in the popular game” [4]

The 2013 GTA V was also brought under fire for the inclusion of a torture scene. This sparked a worldwide controversy. Many human rights groups including Freedom for Torture and Amnesty International (FFTI) came out against them for including this particular mission in the game. The torture scene comes as a part of the “By the Book” mission where the player is ordered by the FBI to torture a suspected terrorist to gain information. A number of torture methods are at the player’s disposal. The player could try to gain the truth from the terrorist by any means including electrocution, waterboarding, and removal of teeth with pliers, and beating with a wrench. Even if the victim dies during the torture, the game equips the player with a shot of adrenaline to bring him back for more torture.

These torture methods made available to the players are old CIA torture techniques which are illegal. The violent portrayal of these graphic scenes could have been avoided but the mission only ends with the player using all the given torture methods at his disposal. This is as if the developers wanted the player to explore through all these torture techniques. There is no choice for the player to skip this mission. The player is given a free choice to choose the order in which he could use these techniques. No matter what order he chooses, the mission only ends after all these techniques have been used.

RACISM, STEREOTYPING AND XENOPHOBIA

In 1997, the initial release of GTA I sparked a huge controversy all around the world. The game included a gang of pedestrians, dressed in vibrant orange clothes, called the ‘Hare Krishna’. If the player could run over a crowd of Hare Krishna, he could gain game points and the word “GAURANGA” would flash on the screen which means ‘Be Happy’. This is a direct reference to the ‘Hare Krishna movement’ started in India about 500 years ago by ‘GaurangaCaitanyaMahaprabhu’. The movement also got roots in the US in the 1970s. The ‘Gauranga Bonus’ can also be achieved by gunning down a line of ‘Hare Krishna’ with a machine gun.

The manual to the second GTA game, GTA II, states that “The Hare Krishnas loath technology” [2] and “nothing more to defend yourself than a tambourine.” [2] The portrayal of ‘Hare Krishna’ as mere pedestrians in the first game and as a criminal gang in the second, and how they loath technology point towards them being savages. From their name, ‘Hare Krishna’, to their traditional orange outfits, and the instrument they possess, are all direct references to them being representations of Asian monks, Indian to be precise.
This is in fact the game’s take on anti-immigrant attitude in the US soil. Most of the GTA games take place on places that resemble United States. GTA I and GTA II are no exceptions. The anti-immigrant sentiments are being revealed through the portrayal and treatment of Hare Krishna. Whether the player notices it or not, the game is indirectly incorporating the idea of how they could not tolerate foreign presence. The treatment of Hare Krishna in the game stirred a controversy when GTA I came out, but the developers remained indifferent.

Another popular title in the Grand Theft Auto series is ‘GTA Vice City’. The game features two prominent rival gangs, ‘The Cubans’ and ‘The Haitians’. Throughout the game, both the gangs are depicted as violent criminals fond of drug dealings, illegal arms trade and carjacking. Indirectly the Haitians are a representation of the black community, and the Cubans represent Mexicans or Latin Americans, virtually the minorities and the immigrants respectively. Through the missions involving these two gangs, racism and many other stereotypical notions are being propagated. The existence of some hidden politics cannot be denied as it incorporates violence and other hate crimes in the game. In GTA Vice City, the players could gain extra points by completing side missions, known as ‘Rampage Missions’. The Rampage Missions direct the player to kill the members of any gang under the given time limit, in a roundabout way encouraging violence upon such people.

In 2004, Rockstar North and Grand Theft Auto hit the headlines again, but this time for a revolutionary step. GTA San Andreas came out in the year 2004 and featured a black protagonist, Carl Johnson, the first of its kind in the game in its seven year history. Though this move was well celebrated and glorified all around the world, the game revolved more around a stereotypical storyline. During the mission, "High Noon", officer Eddy Pulaski, a white police officer orders, the Afro-American protagonist, CJ to dig a grave while pointing a gun at him. This is a direct reference to the dark times of the 19th century, a time during which the people of African race were owned by rich Europeans and Americans as slaves. The slaves with a rebellious attitude where put to dig in the earth while pointing a gun at them and where shot in the head by their owners. The cutaway shown in the mission “High Noon” is an exact reenactment of that custom. This is again portraying the supremacy of the white race over the blacks, in the American soil.

During the early stages of the 2008 game GTA IV, Liberty City is said to be under a terrorism warning due to a recent attack. When the game begins, the protagonist NikoBellic who is of Yugoslavian origin is not advised to cross certain regions. Though we see other non-playable characters, who are American by race crossing the bridges, if Niko crosses any of the bridges, uses subway tunnels or swims across before the borough segregation is lifted, Niko is granted a six-star wanted level and he will be treated as a terrorist. None of the non-playable characters who cross are treated as terrorist, but the problem only arises when Niko, an immigrant crosses it. Also interesting is that in either “The Lost and the Damned” and “The Ballad of Gay Tony”, Luis and Johnny who are Americans by birth are able to cross the bridges without inviting any trouble.

Immigration has been a burning issue in the U.S because a lot of people from the third world countries are migrating to the US to be a part of the American Dream. This has been treated as a threat to the US citizens and their concern is very well portrayed through this. Another such well evident incident regarding this is when Niko hangs around Northwood, and Algoquin, the
residents would taunt Niko about him being Eastern European. These behavioral patterns shown by the non-playable characters could influence the player to indulge in hate crimes.

In GTA V, the players are given the freedom to play as three characters, the American Michel, the Canadian Trevor and the Afro-American Franklin. The racism in GTA V revolves mainly around Franklin and it ranges from how pedestrians react to different things he does, to the attitude of the police officers. Though Rockstar North denies any such claims regarding this, there are countless videos on the internet depicting police officers attacking Franklin for no apparent reason, this may be due to his ethnicity. When the player decides to explore the rural areas with Franklin or Trevor, the non-playable characters who try to attack the protagonist would taunt them depending on the choice, for Franklin the taunts are for him being black and for Trevor for being Canadian.

OBJECTIFYING WOMEN

The portrayal of women in all the GTA games have been in a negative shade and thus it was subjected to countless criticism. This even led ‘Target Australia’ to file petitions to remove GTA V completely from all shelves in Australia. GTA games also celebrate prostitution. This controversial element of prostitution is not required by any part of a mission, side quest or the storyline. It is something that the game offers due to its sandbox style game play. The game gives the players the freedom to have sexual intercourse with prostitutes and a small amount of money is deducted from the player for this. The inclusion of prostitution itself is quite controversial but the developers take it into another level by even allowing the players to retrieve their money from the prostitutes by killing them.

The issue of objectifying women takes a serious turn in GTA San Andreas, where the protagonist CJ dates multiple women for mere material gains. For example, he dates the police officer Barbara to keep his weapons and money after being busted, he dates the workshop girl Michelle for free car repairs and so on. Sex is also a reward given to the player for his progress in having dates with these ladies. There are even cheat codes in GTA games to seduce women; ‘FANNYMAGNET’ in GTA Vice City is such an example. Women in bikinis and swim suits are the most common posters for GTA games. These are all indications of how the game views women. It is of no doubt that the game will inculcate a misogynistic attitude to the player. From buying women to portraying them as mere sexual dummies, the game stands out from its competition in objectifying women.

CONCLUSION

Being one of the greatest franchise in the gaming industry, GTA is played by almost every gamer out there. The popular themes portrayed can be influential and what in a majority showcased is negative or antagonistic. Although it appears that the game is giving you a free choice, in reality there is no real choice given to the player. The players are tricked into believing that there are no hidden agendas behind these themes. But when we crack down these themes, we
could understand how the most negative themes from the developed country get shipped into the third world. Through these themes, there are wide chances of terror, violence and culture getting appropriated into the young minds. Ideas that we may not notice get cultivated inside our heads. In the wake of hate crimes and gun killings, anything and everything should be under suspicion.

It is an undeniable fact that these games even changed the trend in the 2016 U.S Presidential Elections, which made Mr. Donald Trump the new resident of the White House. Trump’s campaign went through all the themes that GTA games propagated. Xenophobia, bigotry, misogyny, and racism were the popular parts of interest in his campaigns. Many great technological marvels are happening day by day. Games too are evolving. Sports game franchise like FIFA help people get connected from different part of the world and feel the same culture of football. There are positives to gaming. But what the real player has to keep in mind is that there are people out there who are trying to take advantage through this form of interactive fiction. Responsible gaming should be the watchword for gamers.

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POWER DYNAMICS AND FEMALE SUBJUGATION IN P. SIVAKAMI’S THE GRIP OF CHANGE

M. D. Jisha

Abstract

This paper tries to analyze the power dynamics and female subjugation in the novel The Grip of Change by a Dalit woman writer P. Sivakami. Tyrannous use of power exists at all levels and the women suffer the most. This paper foregrounds the exploitation of Dalit women by upper caste men and men of their own community. They suffer caste discrimination, gender discrimination and economic oppression. As a result they face triple marginalization. The misuse of power by male Dalit leaders is also discussed here. Kathamuthu represents such a leader. Thangam’s story depicts how a Dalit woman gets oppressed by caste, class and patriarchy. Gowri, an educated Dalit girl in the novel, is represented as the mouthpiece of the author herself and it is proved that only by changing themselves they can be an instrument of change. The author sees the possibility of the emergence of new movement for the Dalits. So she presents the youth of the community as eager people who are ready to fight for a change. Chandran, the ideal leader, is presented to prove this. Only with commitment and sincerity of action Dalits can be uplifted. Thus the author of this novel gives voice to the voiceless.

Keywords: Power, Subjugation, Marginalization, Patriarchy, Change, Uplift.

INTRODUCTION

P. Sivakami, Tamil, Dalit writer, is a member of the Indian Administrative Service. She took voluntary retirement from Government service and from then she has been working for the uplift of the Dalits. She is the first Dalit woman to write a novel titled Pazhaiyana Kazhidalum in 1989. This novel was translated by the author herself and published in English as The Grip of Change. She has published four novels and four short story collections and she is a regular contributor to a literary magazine.

Gangadhar Panterwne, a Dalit journal editor, says; “Dalit is not a caste. He is a man exploited by the social and economic traditions of their country.” This remark is only about the ‘men’ of Dalit community. Here the ‘women’ are ignored. The voice of Dalit women is rarely heard in literary world. In this situation, Sivakami takes up the task of telling stories of her people in her own words. She tries to give voice to the voiceless. As a woman she projects Dalit women in her writings and the indifference to the plight of the Dalit women is also explored. As a Dalit woman she could foreground the differences in experience of Dalit men and Dalit women.
As a Dalit woman writer Sivakami has dual responsibility. She has to write against the atrocities of the caste system and at the same time gender discrimination also should be highlighted. Sivakami writes from her own experiences and all her novels are centered on Dalit and feminist themes. She states in the preface of this novel that it is a process of understanding the dynamics of caste system and the ‘woman’ who was inextricably involved in the process. It is natural that she writes about Dalits and women as these two factors decided by birth. To write about these factors she places herself within a circle, influencing the politics surrounding those factors. Sivakami says, “I understand that it is the need of the hour and the requirement of the future.” So she continues with her efforts both in creative writing and in other spheres.

The violence on lower caste people and the power relation between the Dalit woman and her landlord are the age-old stories. Arrogant attitude towards Dalit community, violence, women and politics are discussed in her writings. The sufferings of untouchables are never ending chain but writers like P. Sivakami tries to give an identity to the people whose existence has been underestimated by the society. Dr. Kleetus Varghese says;

“The power determines the position of social group and the individual depending on the power and position of social groups; they are placed either at the centre or on the fringes-margins- of a given society.”

Power and economic background are the main source for hierarchical structures of caste. Those who have power and position have become the dominant groups whereas the poor and powerless are considered marginalized. Through her writings P. Sivakami finds awareness in her people. As a result, her novels prove that it is not a question of experience but also perspective. In her novel she includes the theme of patriarchy also. Dalit women, as the other women, are dominated by the men in their community. They are treated as a slave, as an inferior. She presents characters to change the social structure in her novels.

In *The Grip of Change* P. Sivakami foregrounds the sufferings of Dalit community and this voices the plight of an exploited low caste woman. She projects the exploitation of Dalit women by upper caste men and men of their own community. The novel is divided into two parts. The first part is a fictional representation of caste infested rural society. The second part is ‘Author’s Notes’; the motive behind writing the first part. The novelist presents the character, Thangam, to depict how a Dalit woman gets subjugated by patriarchy, caste and class. Thangam is a victim of the triple marginalization in the form of caste, class and gender. These keep the Dalit women at the bottom most position in the pyramid of power hierarchy. They suffer as they are poor, landless and wage laborers. Thangam symbolizes all Dalit women brutally treated by the upper caste land lords. In this novel, Thangam’s life captures the life of unseen, unedited side of Dalit patriarchy.

Meena Kandasamy, in her reading on this novel, says that the significance of the novel lies in the fact that it speaks for the most vulnerable members of the Dalit community- its women. Thangam’s body bears the testimonies to the difficulties faced by Dalit women. As Simon de Beavoir says one is not born woman but rather becomes one. This novel shows the dominance of patriarchy to make a woman an object of second sex. The important women characters in this novel are Thangam and Gowri. Thangam is portrayed as a subaltern Dalit widow and Gowri
represents the symptoms of growing awareness among Dalits. The novel is narrated through the eyes of Gowri. Thangam is a Parayar woman and all the incidents in the novel take place around her. The novel begins as Thangam is mercilessly beaten up by her landlord’s wife and brothers. After her husband’s death she was denied the right to inherit her husband’s property by her brothers-in-law. Instead of protecting her they tried to exploit her sexually. This forced her to seek work in the farm of Paramjothi Udayar. But one day she was raped by her master. She says;

“I remained silent, after all, he is my paymaster. He measures my rice.” (p.7)

Thangam is only a representation of the Dalit women who were brutally raped by upper caste land lords. They had to keep silence and they never tried to raise their voice against them because they financially depend upon men. These women are considered a mere toy in the hands of the upper caste men. In this novel the landlord makes it a habit to keep on exploiting her. But finally only she is blamed for having committed adultery not the landlord. He is saved by the people in the village. Even her brothers in law blamed her to have “seduced” the landlord. Paramjothi Udayar thinks;

“Even if she was hurt, she was hurt by the hand adorned with gold! A Parachi could have never dreamt of being touched by a man like me” (P31).

He feels that his touch is a boon granted for penance performed her earlier births. For him, having committed adultery with a low caste woman is not a problem but the exposure of an affair with a Paraya woman is humiliating; only the caste concerns made him anxious.

In this novel Thangam is exploited both by an upper caste man and by men of her own community. This exposes the patriarchy within Dalit community. Thangam reaches Kathamuthu, a respected Dalit leader, seeking his help. He is a leader who fights for the liberation of Dalit community but his behavior is like an upper caste man. He shows his dominance everywhere. Thangam’s story of sexual exploitation is not over with Paramjothy Udayar. She got justice only after sexually exploited by Kathamuthu also. He changed the entire story of Thangam to make it benefit for his political career. He simply made the story as Thangam was beaten by the upper caste when she walked along their street. After the police enquiry the upper caste people planned to hire workers from the neighbouring village. Later, some huts were burned down and the Dalits believed it was done by the upper caste people. Before a communal riot the police arrived and people from both sides were called for reconciliation. As a result, the upper caste accepted the demands put forward by Kathumuthu. They were advised to give ten thousand rupees for Thangam as compensation. They also agreed to increase their daily wages.

Later, Kathumuthu goes on to deceive Thangam for giving her shelter and assistance to get the compensation. He even physically abuses her and she is accepted as his third wife. So it is clear from this novel that Dalit women-poor, landless and wage labourers- have to suffer discrimination on the basis of caste, gender and class. This novel also projects that Dalit leaders exclude the interest of women while fighting against the upper caste’s domination. Society does not recognize and respect the self identity of a woman. Meena Kandasami states;

“In The Grip of Change most of the incidents occur in the body of Thangam. Her body becomes the sight for all kinds of contestations, symbolically making the body of a Dalit
woman, a territory on which any one can thread as against that of an upper caste woman whose body is inviolable”.

In the Author’s Notes Sivakami says that it was not simply the upper caste’s exploit the lower caste. A lower caste leader might exploit his own people. It is not only the upper caste men who prey up on lower caste women. The overall picture presented by the novel is that rich or poor, upper caste or lower caste, the seeds of corruption exists at all levels. The author of this novel has criticized the leadership of the Dalits. She presents Kathumuthu as a tyrannically dominating person. The novelist only wanted to portray the deep roots of caste oppression in villages and how violence erupted even within a caste group. She wished for a change in the leadership of the scheduled caste. Her wish was for a revolutionary leadership. That is why Sivakami presents Chandran who is accepted by the Dalits in this novel. They join together in a powerful movement. So we can say the novel presents a logical solution.

According to Meena Kandasami it is a unanimous expression of the youth of this oppressed community-eager and waiting for change. The author’s vision is a changed society and she believes that it is in the hands of the youth. Only organized, educated Dalit youth who will stand united with commitment and sincerity of action can uplift the Dalits. As the title of the novel indicates a new change is inevitable when the old things are cleaned up and thrown away.

John E. Mary states;
“In present-day-society a Dalit woman is also considered to be an equal to her man. Today, Dalit women, who constitute the major working force, are thrice alienated and oppressed on the basis of their class and gender.”

The novelist also stated that the women and their role in the society are changing and so the patriarchy and their role must be changing. So she presents the character Gowri as an epitome to such change. Through Gowri she sees the possibility of the emergence of a new movement for all the downtrodden people. Gowri realizes the exploitation of women in a patriarchal set up. She is educated and she studied well only to avoid marriage. She detests her father’s two qualities-his polygamy and coarseness. She often challenges the order of the society. By refusing marriage she violates patriarchal code concerning women’s role within the family. Through this character Sivakami urges women to come out of both caste and gender injustice. It will be possible only through education, work, ideological conscious, participation in collective, organized socially committed movements.

CONCLUSION

This paper projects the power dynamics and female subjugation in Dalit community. The portrayals of the dynamics of caste and sexuality deserve our applause. The novelist takes the roles of the critic and the author. In this novel she presents caste in all its dimensions. The oppression of women had been interwoven with the problems of caste. The lower caste should shatter their particular identities and then they can identify themselves as one class. If the struggle is centred on the Dalits, class and caste equality will be attained. As a Dalit woman writer P. Sivakami
depicted the reality encountered by Dalit women who are ignored by the outside world. But Sivakami has undertaken this complex and multi-faceted task very well.

WORKS CITED


BENYAMIN’S *GOAT DAYS*: A FORGOTTEN CATASTROPHE OF MASARA

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Abstract:

*Masara* is an Arabic word to mean farm. Generally farming or animal husbandry is not an activity of producing horror in the minds of human beings. Some of them see it as a profitable job, some others a pastime. But, unfortunately, there were men for whom masara was a place of extreme fear and horror. In the history of early Kerala Diaspora in gulf countries masara had been a haunting memory. *Goat Days (Aadujeevitam)*; a novel written by Benyamin is a prototype to disclose the lives of people caught in the fenced confinement of catastrophe. For Najeeb, the protagonist of the novel, masara was a demon to suck his young blood. It plundered in him all the humanly nature and left only a creature seems of netherworlds. Later in his life the very memory of masara suffocated, haunted and put him in to lose all his sanity. The present paper observes and comments on such a cataclysmic life experience of our forefathers who had spent the finest hours of their ripened being and sweated for the sunny days of their offspring. The memories of these catastrophes have been pushed in to a quiet oblivion. A huge forgetting has been occurred which may amount to a home peril of being in an air of extravaganza and less responsibility. The paper would also shed light on Kerala Diaspora and its early impact on individuals.

Keywords:

Diaspora, Masara, Catastrophe, Homeland, Confinement and so on.

INTRODUCTION

Men want to have a life of utmost happiness. Poverty and other natural or manmade calamities usually blur this. The 1970’s was an era that extensively kindled the flame of going abroad in the minds of Keralites to fulfill many dreams of their life. Historically the epoch, in relation with Keralites’ migration to gulf countries, has been termed as the ‘Gulf Boom’. At least a single member from every family of Kerala, especially from *Malabar*, went abroad to upkeep a livelihood. A few of them, by the eternal providence became rich in their homeland. A considerable number lost forever without any mark of their living on the earth. Nobody went to seek or enquire about them. Their kith and kin believed them as pushed in to the quiet oblivion. Most of them went to the Gulf not to make up an additional income to maintain an investment, but to prevent the hunger of their families. To fulfill many of their dreams otherwise will be sunken in the panic of life. They summoned the pay of travelling and visa by collecting money from their friends and neighbors as debts. Most often they sold a piece of land they inherited from their
parents or sold jewelry their wives possessed as their fixed assets. Abandoning their family, homeland and all beautiful colors of life they went in search of a sunny future.

Benyamin describes such a circumstance that Najeeb Muhammed, the protagonist of the novel *Goat Days* confronted. “I finally fixed up the total by mortgaging the house and the little gold Sainu had as jewellery, and by collecting small amounts from other sand miners and by borrowing from everyone I knew. Yes, ‘fix up’ best describes it” (37). Najeeb was a poor sand miner living at Karuvatta village of Alappuzha district in Kerala. Out of his wife’s (Sainu) insistence, he decided to go to *Riyadh*. As everyone does, Najeeb too fell in clutch of a profound dream of having enough money to enjoy his life. He says: “Meanwhile, I dreamt a host of dreams. Perhaps the same stock dreams that the 1.4 million Malayalis in the Gulf had when they were in Kerala- gold watch, fridge, TV, car, AC, tape recorder, VCP, a heavy gold chain. I shared them with Sainu as we slept together at night” (Benyamin 38). The dream replicates the posh vanity of the Gulf Malayalis. Though they were in utter poverty, the people at their home wanted them to be in feathers of glee. People of Kerala made themselves believe that a person who has been in Gulf should not do any unskilled labor at home. They wanted them see in gleaming attire, no political party or religious organizations left them free from endowments. No family members acknowledge their worth until they could bestow them materials they brought from abroad.

Unlike the wives of other Gulf Malayalis, Najeeb’s wife, Sainu, was affectionate and caring towards her husband. She was a sheer solace for him. But losing the home and all homely flavors is a hazardous memory for all migrants. Najeeb says:

But one sorrow remained. My son? Daughter? I would not be there for the birth. I wouldn’t be able to massage Sainu during her big pain. As if to make up for that, I kissed Sainu’s growing belly. My Nabeel, my Saﬁa-names I had chosen to call my child; my kunji, my chakki - pet names I had for them. Oh my son…my daughter…Your uppah will not be near to see you come into this earth with wide eyes. But, whenever I return, I will bring enough presents for you, okay? (39).

There begins the journey of Gulf Malayali without knowing what job is expecting him, for which *Arbab?*, in which place? Who will be his companions, a kind of total chaos? Najeeb landed in Riyadh on 4 April 1992. After a severe waiting for his sponsor, one came at last when the night has just fallen on the earth. Najeeb, who knew not what to speak, in which language? Went with his *Arbab*, a stranger in his posture and attitude. For the first time he obeyed the *Arbab* and got into the back side of his vehicle and kept mum for a long time where the vehicle past the warmthness of human closeness and got into the dense, fearful stench of *Masara*. Najeeb lost his mother tongue forever. He became a stranger. His identity as a free man slowly began to lose. How much terrible is to live in a circumstance in which nobody is there to hear us, at least share our tidings. Whenever one loses the opportunity to speak or understand a language he becomes slave. Najeeb couldn’t presume where the arbab was taking him. But he felt the danger in following him. The place was not one which Najeeb thought of Gulf, the arbab was not one who Najeeb heard of having the culture of Arabia. He realized the trap in which he has been appalled. But there was no way to escape from this horror of dark lone desert. He decided to submit before
the might of his arbab. This had been the last resort of so many poor migrants who lost their way in the desert for decades and decades. Najeeb tasted the first block against his dreams. He says:

I waited for the Arbab to return. Fear had really taken possession of me now, a feeling that I had entered into a dangerous situation. It was as though Hakeem had been imprisoned by the Arbab and that was my turn next. I would run before that, escape from this danger. But where to? All around there was only a vast expanse of nothing. Since I was unfamiliar with the terrain, if tried to run, not knowing the direction, or the way out, I would die wandering in this desert (57).

Masara, (Cattle farm in country side) is a symbol of oppression and confinement. In every migrant’s heart, there is a masara, the masara of mental or physical agony. Najeeb was an employee in such a masara in which only goats and camels were the inhabitants. Unlike his own village in Kerala, he could here only the bleats of goats and groan of camels.

There were many more goats than I had expected. The fence encircled a large area that was divided in two many segments, and in each segment there were hundreds of goats. Beyond the fence, the desert stretched out as far as the eye could see, touching the horizon. There was not even the shadow of a tree to block the sight (64).

Even in the masara he was not free to do his job according to wish. The Arbab had already decided every chore. Missing one of them was considered a severe crime. The duty of the employee was to obey the Arbab. No questions, no suggestions, wearing a thobe, the dress of a typical Saudi Arab man, a long sleeved and extending to the ankle, usually made out of cotton and a pair of boots, one has to enter masara and work hard from the dawn to dusk. “It was my initiation to the stench, the first step to becoming another scary figure. Although I could foresee my dark future, I obeyed the directions of the Arbab, so grateful was I for the khubus he had given me a while ago” (70). Arbabs considered their employees meager than the goats and camels. They never considered employees health, emotions, thoughts and even their basic needs. If they have used anything which is designed only for cattle or used without his permission the employee would be prosecuted. Water, which makes a creature live at least was the most prohibited stuff for them. It can be used only to drink, that was even at the time of utter necessity. No bath, no cleaning, not even the water can be taken to clean one’s backside after droppings. Najeeb describes such a situation as:

Before the first drop of water fell on my backside, I felt a lash on my back. I cringed at the impact of that sudden smack. I turned around in shock. It was the arbab, his eyes burning with rage. I didn’t understand. What was my mistake? Any slip-up in my work? Did I commit some blunder? The arbab snatched the bucket of water from me and then he scolded me loudly. Lashed at me with the belt. When I tried to defend myself, he hit me more ferociously. I fell down. The arbab took the bucket and went inside the tent (77).

The dreams and hopes that drove this poor, fate less ones are shattered. They had to bury them under the hot dunes of sands. They were born to suffer, but still some thoughts of an every dog’s day helped them tolerate every spit on face, every lash on back, and everything they were destined to endure. They longed for at least a merciful look from their arbabs, for a kind word or
a deed of love, but the futility of longing made them hate the life and thereby stoic in nature. The physical needs were not less the same. Najeeb says about the food menu in masara:

I understood what my menu for the days to come would be.
Early morning drink: fresh, breast-warm raw milk (only if one felt like it)
Breakfast: khubus, plain water
Lunch: khubus, plain water
Evening drink: fresh, breast-warm raw milk (only if one felt like it)
Dinner: khubus, plain water.
And plain lukewarm water from the iron tank to drink in between meals (only when very necessary) (84).

One had to lie on the sand in the desert of diabolic snakes and other poisonous creatures. These poor feathers destined to lie on without having a wink of sleep, but lost in the memories of good days in their homeland. A mere thought of their native village, from the dark lonely desert made them sob “pressing and bowing their weeping face upon their palms” ( Murukan Babu 4). Najeeb thought of rivers of his village, the hot steaming food his wife prepares for him. Slipping to fancy arose in him a longing to his homeland. Eventually he felt the pain of loss along with the futility in longing. Only when one stands far away from his kith and kin and the warm closeness of acquaintances knows the epistemology of loss. This is evident from Najeeb’s words. He says:

I was alone. My bag was my pillow. It had the scent of pickle. Suddenly, I recalled the people at home, Ummah, Sainu, our son (daughter) who grew inside her. They must be troubled not having heard of my safe arrival. I felt miserable. My heart felt like it was about to burst. How will I convey to them that I had reached? That I am fine? (Benyamin 85).

After some initial teething troubles to adjust with the new circumstances and slowly could imagine the reality of their fate, they would automatically melt in whatever comes before them. As the Palasthine poet Mahmood Darwesh observed the grim, broken, and shattered dreams of Palasthine citizens in his poem “In Memoriam”. He asks:

“Where should birds fly,
After the last sky?”

Najeeb started melting into the circumstances. He became indifferent toward everything once attracted and made considerable reflexes in his mind. Gradually his thoughts and imaginations grew off his home. Missions of his setting comfortable independent life at home went loose. Hopes were tamed under the powerful current of stoicism. He says:

Can you imagine what I had been thinking about that night as I lay down? About going to the masara early in the morning and milking the goats; controlling the goats as the scary figure did and coming out with a vessel full of milk; the arbab’s face lighting up when he saw me with the milk; and single-handedly herding the goats of a masara and bringing them back (95).

Now that the goats became his friends and companions, he started feeding and herding them outside masara and taking them back. He identified himself with goats. A human confined inside the four walls of barbed wires. He named some of the goats the names of his native village women. “I named the three head goats in the masara Lalitha, Ragini and Padmini” (116). When a
goat gave birth to a baby, Najeeb called the baby goat Nabeel, the name which he has reserved to call his own child. Goats in each masara knew Najeeb. They loved and affectionately rubbed the parts of their body with that of Najeeb. Nabeel had a special place in Najeeb’s eye, for it was Najeeb’s son here. But to the pain of Najeeb, Nabeel has been soon undergone for castration by the arbab and was labeled to the slaughter house.

Too much closeness and nearness would nurture in a person the attitudes and behavior of that habitat. In the case of Najeeb too, the same has happened. Living with the goats has peeled in him all the humanness. He became a goat and his life a goat’s life. “There was only one animal in that masara without smell, and that was me” (129). The arbab treated him and goats alike. For arbab both these creatures were the inhabitants of masara. Nobody was there and never would come to question him. Nobody dared to argue with arbab for the rights of goats and Najeeb. Nobody was there to kindle revolt against his might. “You couldn’t ask the arbab anything. You could only just listen to whatever he says. You must obey whether you understand his words or not. That is what I had been doing so far. Therefore, I was afraid to ask the arbab anything. I quietly followed him” (111).

In those days when I had only goats for company, there was an occasion when I shared with them not only my sorrows and pains, but also my body. One night, as I lay down, I could not sleep. I didn’t know why, but I was covered in sweat. I had an insatiable desire, a passion building up inside me like a desert storm. For some time, I had been impotent. I did not think I would have the urge to be sexually active again. But it happened. What had lain dormant for so long suddenly woke up. All my efforts to satiate it only made me crave it even more. Seductive nude female figures began to slither in front of my eyes. I thawed in that emotional surge. I needed a body to lie close to. I needed a cave to run into. I became mad. In the intensity of that madness, I got up and rushed out. When I opened my tired eyes in the morning, I was in the masara. With Pochakkari Ramani lying close to me (168).

Hardships in masara continued and their intensity grew doubly doubled. The attitude of arbab worsened day by day. Najeeb was haunted and daunted by ferocious and horrible dreams of masara. His longing for home and family kindled an inextinguishable flame of escape from that atrocity.

I was a lie when I said I had not been thinking about my homeland and home. An outright lie. My every thought was occupied by fantasies of my homeland. I had only buried them underneath the cinders of my circumstances. I could see them come ablaze as soon as the wind of a chance blew. I felt my heart ache. A draining heartache. I cried. I hugged and gave
Marymaimuna who was nearby a kiss. I am leaving, girl, leaving you. I am going. Don’t you have many Aravu Ravuthars and Moori Vsus here to keep you company? I don’t have anyone. My Sainu and I don’t have anyone. I need her. And she needs me (179).

Today, if you walk on the roads of suburbs and villages in Kerala, you may come across many multi storied, well-furnished mansions, inside them many people, leading calm, quiet and peaceful days, on the road young lads and lasses, extravagantly attired, perfumed, without performing any of personal or societal responsibilities, enjoying the life to the fullest. A culture built and developed on the graves of many untold, quietly buried, oblivious stories of diaspora in Gulf masara.

WORKS CITED

NLP FOR REVITALIZING THE PROSPECTIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS WITH INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCY

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Abstract

The chief aim of this study is to enhance the instructional competency of the prospective teachers with ideology of NLP because in today’s world future teachers are going to meet the students of diversified learners with different personalities for which they need to possess different skills. Unless the teachers are not equipped themselves with demanding capabilities of the world they cannot deal the students and win their confidence easily. Ultimately they will be an effective teacher. Here comes NLP with its techniques that are used successfully. Adoption of NLP principles in language teaching paves the way for developing their teaching efficiency (Antic Zorica, 2006). The application of NLP develops the effectiveness of teaching and speed with goal oriented learning (Dilts and Epstein, 1995) cited by Sumrall (2010). Some of the studies done in this area are also quoted here in the present study as a proof for the effectiveness of NLP in teaching and learning. Hence this study is of significance and warranted.

Keywords:
Instructional Competency, Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), Instructional Techniques of NLP.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Teaching has been regarded as the noble profession in this world. But the scenario at present is changing due to the impact of technology which is highly recognized as equal to teacher. Though there are so many reasons for this situation, teaching methodology of the teachers and their efficiency has got negative correlation in their effectiveness of teaching. Finding a new strategy / techniques in teaching has become necessary (Mohanty, 2012). This suggestion made the researcher to find a new strategy called NLP. NLP, the innovative approach, is the result of two eminent persons called Richard Bandler, a Psychologist and John Grinder, Assistant professor
of Linguistics of California University in 1970s. The basic question that led them for venturing into this ideology is what differentiates ordinary and extraordinary in their living. They started and analyzed the individuals (Tosey & Mathison, 2010). With regard to the ideology, it is indicated by (Tosey & Mathison, 2010) that a person is the one with whole mind-body system having connections between neurological processes (Neuro), Language (Linguistics) and behavior (Programming) (Ramganesh & Paulraj Joseph, 2015). It was found that their information processing system is basically different.

NLP, in the words of O Conner and Seymour (1993), is the art of personal excellence since each one has their own distinct personality and style in what they do. This is in other words termed as modeling, the patterns, skills and techniques (Trevor, 2005). Then this concept was gradually adopted in almost all the field such as business, coaching, medicine, sports and education too. To achieve ‘excellence of performance’ in language teaching and learning NLP suggests a lot of techniques. Further classroom communication, optimize the learner attitudes and motivation are fine-tuned and raises self-esteem, facilitate personal growth in students and change their attitude to life (Thornbury, 2001) cited by Millrood (2004). Adoption of NLP principles in language teaching paves the way for developing their teaching efficiency (Antic Zorica, 2006). It is unambiguous from this reviews that NLP certainly would contribute to develop the instructional competency of the prospective teachers.

Integration of NLP and its techniques to be applied makes teachers efficient (Antic, 2006). NLP application in education provides a basic framework with the empirical experience of learning and training situations. The application of NLP develops the effectiveness of teaching and speed with goal oriented learning (Dilts and Epstein, 1995) cited by Sumrall (2010). NLP is also said to encourage English Language Teachers to supply more variety in learning styles’ (Tompkins Baker, 2005) cited by Winch (2005). Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) (Hardingham, 1998) has been one of the resources to enhance the effectiveness of language instruction cited by Millrood (2004). NLP also helps students to overcome anxiety, undesired situations and create a positive atmosphere and motivate them in order to reach their outcome in life (Saman, 2006).

**NLP-AN INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCY ENHANCING TOOL**

The overall training teachers in content-free NLP influencing strategies modeled from hypnosis and family therapy appeared to improve math attainment for adult learners where there was a baseline of innovative math pedagogy involving higher amounts of active learning and group work in place (Allan, 2012). The study by Kudliskis, (2013) mainly deals with the identification of the processes associated with the immediate engagement of learning for students with mild special educational needs. The finding is that visualization interventions to change a state of mind from a negative state to a positive state can help with learning, particularly when working with the students with mild special educational needs and in relatively small groups reflecting a similarity to those in this study.
Iurea, Neacsu, Georgiana, Suditu (2011) conducted a research on the relation between the Teaching Methods and the Learning Styles – The Impact upon the Students’ Academic conduct. The aim of the study is to find out whether there is a significant relationship between the dominant learning styles of the students and their academic achievements. The interesting finding is that students have a greater satisfaction towards the methods used in the classroom and they are very appropriate and matching to their learning style. Naturally their academic performance is high. Izzettin (2013) made a research entitled on the Relationship between Learners’ Listening Comprehension Achievements and their Multiple Intelligence Groups. Aim of this paper is to find out whether Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) based listening activities have any effects on listening comprehension achievement of English Language learners with regard to Multiple Intelligence (MI) groups. Pishghadam, Shayesteh, Shapoori (2011) carried out a study “Validation of an NLP Scale and its Relationship with Teacher Success in High Schools”. Results indicated that there is a significant association between NLP and ELT teacher success. The findings of the study also give support to the use of NLP factors in education. In this perspective NLP is not only used and viewed in terms of counseling or medical context; rather it is used in terms of education especially teaching English.

INSTRUCTING IN THEIR CHANNEL

A core principle proposed in NLP is the notion of Preferred Representational System (PRS). It is suggested that individuals construct internal maps of the world by processing external information through five sensory systems: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory and gustatory (Roderique, Gareth-Davies, 2009). Of the five representational systems, visual, auditory and kinesthetic are the Predominating Representational System that contributes much to teaching-learning process. In the past 40 years, a great number of learning style researchers have made a strong claim that students can achieve better academic results when their preferred learning styles are congruent with the teaching style (Ren, Guanxin, 2013). The main reason for the failure of students in academia, according to NLP perspectives, is that both the students and teachers are unaware of the PRS.

Visual learners: Visual learners are the one who have imaginations and tries to learn by seeing images. So they find verbal instructions confusing and prefer the visual sense. Learning becomes best for them by reading and watching (Kanar, 1995). A well-organized place will improve the visual learner's ability to comprehend a topic. So, teachers in the regard are requested to make effective presentation for visual learners by using power point presentation, using video equipments, providing assignment to work in the computer, using colorful charts and picture in power point presentations.

Auditory Learners: Auditory learners or aural learners, learn best through a lecture method. Aural learners are good at listening and interested in talking (Davis 2007). Marilee Spregner (2008) suggested that aural learners need to talk as much as they need to listen. As a language instructor, Explanations on the concepts like Grammar, rules, poets, etc… could be given...
effectively with help of the technology. Videos could be played and group discussion among the students with the help of the teachers could be encouraging for aural learner.

**Kinesthetic learners:** Kinesthetic learners must touch and feel to understand. They learn best by engaging in hands-on activities (Kanar, 1995). The teachers are requested to provide opportunity to students to participate in the activities according to the view of Al-Failkawei (2005). For kinesthetic learners, teachers can programme certain activities in computer to expose the ‘hand on experience’ so that they can feel and learn. Some home assignments in computer are advisable for students.

**SCIENTIFIC ASPECT OF NLP IN CLASSROOM TEACHING**

In a learning context, at secondary level, it appears that about 40% of the pupil prefers to learn visually, 40% of the pupil prefers to learn auditively and 20% of the pupil prefers to teach kinesthetically (Guy Flouch, 2010). Normally students process information based on their PRS. At times, when the teacher presents in conflicting Representational System of the students, students with well-developed backup system are able to process information relatively in another representational system. Students with poor backup system will suffer a lot to make this process. So, students will temporarily switch over to another representational system to translate. A gap in their understanding of the students exists at the time of translation. Students take their own time for this process. But, students are wrongly accused “inattention” by teachers due to their lack of knowledge on PRS (Guy Flouch, 2010).

Classroom application of NLP is that when the teacher presenting in front of a class, stand to the left of the students when presenting intellectually oriented information to speak to the right ear and left brain; and stand to the right if your presentation involves right brain information and also to enhance auditory learning. Generally for visual modality students, information should be written up and to their left; auditory students should have information presented to the their middle left, kinesthetic students should have information presented to them down and to their right( Bandler & Grinder, 1979). Modification to the general pattern can be made for individual variations (Sumrall, 2010). Hence it is obligatory that teachers should match their teaching style with the learning style of the students in order to facilitate teaching-learning process. Theoretical support given below will further explain the effectiveness of NLP in English Language teaching.

**EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES OF NLP**

- **Visualization:** Visualization refers the imagination of achieving their well framed outcome asthough already achieved (Bavister & Vickers, 2004). Teachers has to make their students to visualize their aim of the class to make their effective. **Reframing:** this technique helps the teachers to reframe the negative attitude of the students and make it a positive attitude. **Anchoring:** Anchoring is of useful to elicit the desired state immediately we want. **Affirmation:** to make positive instruction immediately, affirmation technique is followed. **Double bind Technique:** This technique handles the students by offering only dual choice upon which they are
forced to choose one between the two choices. **Mirroring and Matching:** it is a technique of maximizing the similarity and minimizing the dissimilarities.

**CONCLUSION**

Haggart (2003) states that our traditional education system mostly favours the visual learners because most of educators have visual preferences. But Dunn and Griggs (2000) studied the learning styles of the elementary school children. The result of the most of the NLP studies reveals that 40% were visual learners, 12% auditory and 48% kinesthetic. A research by Ren (2004) exposed the following findings. It was found that 44% were visual learners, 23% bi-sensory, 27% auditory and only 6% kinesthetic. Smith (2007) claimed that 60% of the populations in America were visual learners, 30% auditory and 10% kinesthetic. Recommendations of all the studies are that learning style depends on the type of learners and their geographical background cited by Ren (2013). In a country like India where we have multi-type of learners with combination of learning styles in a classroom, it is a tough task for teacher to teach accordingly. Thus, according to Shannon (2010), to satisfy all types of learners (VAK) teachers have to meticulously select the design (multi-sensory approach) or divide the classes into preferred learning modality sections (Helm, 1989, 1991).

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A SEARCH FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN MEENA KANDASAMY’S TOUCH

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Abstract:

Gender refers to social roles, behaviours, actions and qualities that people find appropriate for men and women. It is determined by cultural, social, political and economic forces that influence the social behaviour of two major genders. Gender differences are a cause of structural inequality between men and women. Sexual discrimination is governed by socio-cultural and psychological mechanisms in society; social exclusion and gender equality are closely related.

Meena Kandasamy, the first Indian Dalit women poet in English, raises her voice against the gender inequality and systematic subjugation of Indian woman. Her poetry arises not out of her reading and knowledge, but out of her own experience and active engagement with the causes of championing caste and gender equality. Touch (2006), her first published collection of poetry, is a clear-sighted, unafraid and a scathing attack on the perpetuation of the social patriarchal oppression of women in general and the Dalit women in particular. This paper intends to map the traces of gender – inequalities and patriarchal subjugation in her poetry.

Keywords: Gender, Inequality, Dalit Women, Patriarchy, Subjugation, Caste, Untouchability.

INTRODUCTION

‘Sex’ is a biological term whereas gender is a psychological and cultural term. It is widely held that while one’s sex as a man or women is determined by anatomy, the prevailing concepts of gender, of the traits that are conceived to constitute what is masculine and what is feminine in temperament and behaviour are largely, if not entirely, social constructs that were generated by the pervasive patriarchal biases of our civilization” (Abrams and Harpham, 2009.101.). Women are always considered inferior and cannot think seriously or act in any tradition and culture of the world. Legislators, priests, philosophers, writers, and scientists, opines Simon de Beauvoir tried to show that the position of subordinate women is in heaven and beneficial to the planet.

In Indian society, there are various mechanisms, conventions, habits and institutions that serve as a hidden way to build and maintain the subjugation of women (maintain women’s obedience). India, dominated by a patriarchal society, women, are deprived of human rights as a
person. “Women was denied along with many other rights, the right to education and the decisive power about her own life and was not even considered worthy of treating as a human being equal with man, rather she was, and still is, viewed as the ‘other’ of man. The issues like the patriarchal family structure, the custom of polygamy, endogamy, child marriage, unequal share in the family property, the ‘purdah’ system, state of permanent widowhood etc. have contributed a great deal, as the obstacle for the public discourse and confined to the domestic sphere of home and family and to women’s work because women were only rarely taught to write, there is a relatively little direct documentary material about most of our fore mother’s lives” (Rao, 2004.02).

Despite the constitutional safeguards today, the situation of the woman in modern India has, if not wholly, remained unchanged to great extent; if equality persists, so does discrimination, domestic violence, ill – treatment, subjugation and so on; man is still the head of the family, dowry, albeit covertly, is still taken from the bride’s family, the cases of sexual assault on women are quite often heard, women is yet to be given the complete decisive power about the issues like her career, marriage and many other issues pertaining her life.

The Indian caste system also affects the discriminatory status of women. Characteristics of the caste system, such as ‘endogamy’ serve as a mechanism for maintaining control over labour and sexuality of women, the concepts like ‘purity’ and ‘pollution’, that separate people and regulate women’s mobility deny the problem of gender equality. The most effective weapon which helped in the perpetuation of the ‘untouchability’ and women’s unequal status was the institutionalized denial, to the weaker sections of society and women, of access to educational resources.

Gender inequality has often been taken up as a subject by the Indian writers in their literary works. However, the issue of the marginalization and oppression of Dalit woman was not discussed by and large. The issues related to Dalit women have hardly been taken up seriously either by political leaders or scholars until very recently. The reasons might have to do with the socio – political and economic conditions of Dalit women who continue to remain voiceless even today. (Raj Kumar, 2010.211). Some contemporary Indian writers, like Meena Kandasamy, express their concern about the ‘sexual politics’ and the gender discrimination in their writings. Meena Kandasamy stands apart from those contemporary Indian woman poets who are caught in the midst of dualities, because of the dilemma between what they want to and what they are expected to write; she delineates the subjects like gender ‘inequality’ and ‘caste discrimination’ with a candid precision. She ingeniously, decomposes Indian women’s in to complex mechanisms of eternal obedience.

An emerging poet, fiction writer, translator, journalist and a social activist, Meena Kandasamy maintains her focus, in throughout her writing, on caste annihilation and the issue of women’s equality on par with a man. She is hailed as the first Indian women poet writing Dalit poetry in English. Kamala Das, one of India’s foremost poets, in her foreword to touch (2006) praises the poet as:

Dying and then resurrecting herself again and again in a country that refuses to forget the unkind myths of caste and perhaps of religion, Meena carries as her twin self, her shadow the dark cynicism of youth that must help her to survive. (07)
Her first collection of poetry, touch (2006) is a scathing, militant attack on the perpetuation of the social oppression of the Indian women. It discusses the issue of the sexual harassment of the women. Meena Kandasamy, unlike other poets and writers dealing with this subject, portrays women, particularly the Dalit women not just as the victims of the lust of the higher caste men but as rebels fighting against the injustice perpetuated against them and champions the cause of the equality of women.

Women are considered members of a society dominated by men. Men of all castes and titles agree to formulate certain rules of behaviour in order to explain the growth trajectory of women to explain and limit them to the four walls at home. In one of her poems in Touch, entitled ‘Songs of Summer’, Meena Kandasamy condemned the patriarchal community as treating women as slaves and a desired object of their choice:

To make her yours and yours alone,
You pushed her deeper into harems
Where she could see the sunlight
Only from the lattice windows.
Domesticated into drudgery she was just
Another territory, worn out by wars, a slave
Who maintained yours numbers.(112)

The poet also criticizes the public for not considering a woman as women. The male–dominated society recognizes a woman as a sister, a wife, a mother and also a goddess, but never as women herself. A women’s goodness is graded upon her degree of submission and servitude to her father, husband, brothers, sons and almost every other man in her family and society. She targets the society thus:

Your society always makes
The spoon – feeding – the – man
The pot – and – pan banging.
The masochist slave
And other submissive women
As goddesses.(130)

She vehemently condemns the stereotype male biased custom of girl seeing plasticised in the Indian society, intended for judging her in order to assess her potential of being a possible bride to a man. A would be bride is judged on accounts of her femininity, education, beauty, physical fitness, her character, her politeness and submissiveness etc. on the other hand, the boy who wishes to get married to her is not judged on all these counts. A girl who wishes to get certified as a bride by the boy who comes to see her and his family, is required to behave in a certain way I order to protect herself as expected by the would be groom’s family which underpins the ideology of the patriarchal society. The poet enunciates her views about this unjust treatment imparted to woman in the following words:

But, when they come to see you
For a possible bride, look at the floor
The fading carpet and the unshapely toes
Of the visitors who who will inspect the weight
Of your gold, the paleness of your complexion
The length of your hair and ask questions about
The degree you hold and the transparency of your past. (127)

Women in our society face many atrocities, and sexual crimes against women are becoming more serious. Given that the fear and the shame that women (victims of sexual assault) undergo and the apathy of the concerned authorities to record such crimes, many a times the sexual assaults on a women by man don’t get reported and recorded. Domestic violence and the dowry deaths also contribute a lot to the victimization of the women in our male – biased society. In a poem, *My Lover Speaks of Rape*, she discusses the victimization the women at the hands of the men:

Green turns to unsightly teal of hospital beds
And he is softer than features, but I fly away
To shield myself from the retch of the burns
Ward, the shrill sounds of dying declarations,
The floral pink – white sad skins of dowry deaths.(138)

The inhuman treatment given to women in the Indian society is related to the caste as an institution. Endogamy acts as a social barrier which circumscribes the upliftment of the lower caste people. On the other hand, exogamy, if practiced across all castes, classes, and cultures, can help transcend the barriers of caste, creed and race. Since a woman is capable of giving birth to a child, if she marries outside her caste and delivers children, she acts as a gateway to the other castes, those Dalit women who dare to love the upper caste men are brutally assaulted and murdered as part of the retribution for their acts. This plight of dalit women is appositely described by Meena Kandasamy.

Our passionate love,
Once transcended caste.
Let it now
Transcended mortality…
Fear not bellowed,
In love-
Life is not compulsory. (51)

Though the upper caste women as well as the lower caste women are the victims of the gender discrimination, the plight of the Dalit women is far worse than that of all castes. In her seminal book, *Dalit women: fear and discrimination*, Meena Anand articulates the situation of a Dalit woman:

One even with a little human sensitivity gets stunned with the realistic and authentic accounts of the life conditions of the Dalits women, her suppression, humiliation, sufferings, dilemmas and exploitation. Her sufferings are twofold; she has her own share of universal sufferings as women and additionally, she is victim of a variety of exploitations, social, religious economic and cultural as dalit women. (Meena Anand, 2005, 40)
The Dalit women are not only discriminated by men and women of other castes but by the men of the very caste to which they themselves belong. They are quite often subjected to the domestic violence and are deprived of their basic rights. Theirs is such a plight that they become the lame and meek victims who can’t protest against the injustice done to them. This predicament of a Dalit woman is pointed out by the poet in the following words:

How can I say
Anything, anything
Against my own man? (56)

To recapulate, gender discrimination is an omnipresent social evil which is very much prevalent in the society even today. Meena Kandasamy espouses the cause of the gender equality in her poetic discourse in Touch (2006) by dissecting the matrix of female suppression and expressing her concerns about it. Hers is an acerbic attack on the social malaise of the systematic domination of the female sex. Through her witty arguments and polemical style of writing she attempts to champion the cause of the gender equality.

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THE ENGLISH EDUCATION IN PRINCELY MYSORE

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Abstract

The Kingdom of Mysore was a kingdom in southern India, traditionally believed to have been founded in 1399 in the vicinity of the modern city of Mysore. Even as a princely state, Mysore came to be counted among the more developed and urbanized regions of India. This period (1799–1947) also saw Mysore emerge as one of the important centers of art and culture in India. The Mysore kings were not only accomplished exponents of the fine arts and men of letters, they were enthusiastic patrons as well, and their legacies continue to influence music and art even today. The princely Mysore state introduced western education in English medium before the enactment of 1835 education minute. Krishnaraja wodeyar III started Raja’s School in 1833 later it was managed by Christian missionaries. The introduction of English education in Mysore led to intellectual development as well as social change in Mysore society. The paper made an effort to find out impact of western education through English medium.

Keywords

Princely Mysore, Krishnaraja wodeyar III, Raja’s School.

INTRODUCTION:

The growth of English in India is closely connected with the beginnings of colonization by the British. As the British were deepening their roots in the colonies, the English language also was taking root.

In the second decade of nineteenth century, the English Company became aware of the need for introducing Western education in India. This need was catered by Governor-General Lord William Bentinck (1828-35). He initiated English as the official language of administration or language of court in India.
The Charter Act of 1813 initiated the education system in India but had not specified an appropriate language of instruction; the General Committee of Public Instruction in Bengal emphasized English as the medium of instruction. This led to various debates and they were finally resolved in 1835 when Governor General Bentinck, following Macaulay’s infamous minute, established English as the official language of instruction.

Until the advent of the British, Princely Mysore followed the traditional patron of Gurukula in the system of education. In 19th century many changes had taken place in the Mysore society due to the impact of western culture and administration, looking at the history of princely Mysore, the development of modern education can be seen after the fall of Tippu Sultan. The restoration of the Wodeyar on the throne Mysore did not bring immediate changes in the existing educational system. The 50 years of commissioner’s rule saw the major changes in the education scenario of princely Mysore. Mysore wodeyar ruler Krishnaraja Wodeyar III opened a free English school in 1833 on the recommendations of British resident Co. Frazer Rev. T. Hudson, a Wesleyan missionary, supervised running of the school which later came to be known as the “Raj’s Free school”. The establishment of Raj’s school marked the beginning of modern western education in princely Mysore much earlier to the implementation of 1835 education policy of British Government. The Raja’s school is one of the oldest English schools in the Mysore state. For want of taste for English education among the public, the school did not flourish earlier.

The school was placed under control of the Wesleyan missionaries in 1840, because the missionaries were running an English School which had impressed the Maharaja. Mr. Hudson took charge of the Raja’s School in 1840.

The School developed as high school in 1862. The school was recorded all round progress under the headmastership of James Dunning; student came from Madras, Madurai and Masulipattanam to learn English here. In 1868, the school came under the control of the government. In later days this college became first grade college final these led to the establishment of Universality of Mysore.

The Christian missionaries, who did extensive work in the sphere of the spread of modern education in Princely Mysore, were inspired mainly by a proselytizing spirit, to spread Christianity among the Indian people. At this juncture, it would be appropriate to mention the contributions made by Christian missionaries who pioneered western education in princely Mysore. There were 26 schools were in the state of which 21 were established by this Christian Missionaries. The native Educational Institution in Bangalore was established for instruction in English. In 1854, The Devereux scheme gave an opportunity to develop the English education in princely Mysore. Introduction English Schools led to the development of vernacular school ultimately it led to the social change in Mysore state.

Due to introduction of the English education made profound influence on Mysore society. The Mysore court also positively responded the changes took place due to introduction of western education in Princely Mysore. It led to the Intellectual development in the state. Many scholars took translation of vernacular works to English language. It led the people of Mysore state know about history and culture of their own. Secular ideas were influenced upon the people of Mysore.
Kannada literature got lot influence new form of literature was commenced. Due to English education ritual and blind beliefs were got set back.

Finally in the English education not only changed the Cultural arena of Mysore state but also day to day life of the people.

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