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Editor's Note

When the digital era walked in with its plethora of means of duplication, originality has been driven further backwards. When the technological means are not merely plenty, but also easily and cheaply accessible, the wonder why one shouldn't seek to reappropriate the available perceptions, without struggling to think out of the cut and paste box has come to stay. One can't keep away from realising that there are even those who seek umbrage under theories which underline the superficiality of all expressions, emphasising the ethereality and instability of selves and statements. When these technologically mundane realities and theory (literary, not literally) inspired positions overlap, the fear of the steady decline in the quality of original writing and research has come true. The effect has easily filtered down to the student levels threatening to make (mis) appropriations the mainstay of research writing. The cut and paste research writing has taken roots and if anything threatens to challenge it, it is the manner in which the texts are remixed in the music fashion. The workshop organised on 'How to write and publish a research article' was intended to train the research scholars and teachers in the art and technique of research writing. It is heartening that we could groom bunch of young scholars and academics through the act. The issue carries part of the positives results it yielded.

P. K. Babu., Ph. D
Chief Editor

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Elephants in the Room: 'Five Minds' and the State of Higher Education in Kerala

The paper is an attempt to highlight some of the blatant lacunae in the Higher Education process of Kerala. The current system of education in Kerala seems to consistently bypass the vital directions in the educational process that Howard Gardner, the renowned exponent of the 'multiple intelligences', has identified as the “five minds” in his book *Five Minds for the Future* (2006). According to Gardener, with the help of these 'five minds, 'a person will be able to deal with not only “what is expected in today's life” but also “what cannot be anticipated” because in the absence of these minds, “a person will be at the mercy of forces that he or she can't understand, or control” (14). The five minds that Gardner describes in detail are: the *disciplined* mind, the *synthesizing* mind, the *creating* mind, the *respectful* mind and the *ethical* mind.

The disciplined mind is a vital component of true excellence and quality in education. The classical notion of discipline has a negative tint because it is a form of punishment to student infractions; it is a passive virtue that refers to the ability on the part of students to unquestioningly follow the rules of the school and the instructions of a teacher in the classroom. It is an inability to stand up for oneself; it is the fear to speak up for a common cause; it is the fear to resist a teacher's injustice. But, according to Gardner, this concept of discipline is fundamentally flawed. The word 'discipline' opens out primarily in three semantic directions: (a) a willing commitment and dedication to a process of systematic efforts directed at the mastery of a field, (b) a systematic and organized field of study, and (c) the ability or skill to translate disciplinary knowledge into real-life practice. Although Gardner speaks only about the first two meanings of the word 'discipline,' following Peter Senge's reconceptualization of the word in the third sense mentioned above, it may be safely assumed that the word 'disciplined' in the phrase 'disciplined mind' includes all these three meanings within its semantic reach. As Gardiner puts it, “the disciplined mind knows how to work steadily over time to improve skill and understanding—in the vernacular, it is highly disciplined. Without at least one discipline under his belt, the individual is destined to march to someone else's tune.” A disciplined mind has been able to develop, through sustained hard work, 'a distinctive mode of thinking that characterizes a specific scholarly discipline or profession' (15).

In the current system of Higher Education in Kerala, discipline in all these senses—a culture of disciplined hard work, the systematic mastery of a discipline and the ability to transform theory into practical skills—has disappeared. Very few postgraduates acquire disciplinary sophistication in their chosen majors and instead of accepting a culture of single-minded dedication to a field of study, a specific 'discipline,' students resort to short-cuts that will help them complete their 'courses' of study, which has resulted in an academic situation where the so-called 'qualified' professionals are incapacitated to do their jobs properly and thrive by producing sub-cultures of incredible mediocrity even in higher centers of learning.

In the Kerala context, the *synthesizing* mind and the *ethical* mind must be examined together as some of the most unethical practices in higher studies are intimately bound up with our students' inability to develop these two vital life skills. A synthesizing mind has

learned to garner knowledge from a diversity of sources and present it in uniquely innovative forms. According to Gardiner, while earlier centuries put a high premium on memory and storage, the current scenario requires the ability to survey vast expanses of information and to understand and evaluate that information objectively, and present it in meaningful ways. “Valuable in the past, the capacity to synthesize becomes ever more crucial as information continues to mount at dizzying rates.” Synthesizing becomes an important skill in the present time, especially in writing papers and assignments and preparing for tests that would be evaluated by others.

Developing the ability to create proper synthesis of existing knowledge through a regime of disciplined study and careful internalization is one of the chief objectives of written assignments at all levels of education. But unfortunately, what happens in most higher education centres of Kerala and, with rare exceptions, in all parts of the country today is a mindless copying of information from books and other internet resources. With the widespread emergence of “cut-and-paste plagiarism” coupled with a new notion of 'teacher support', the ethical dimension of educational research is practically non-existent in most post-graduate centres and universities in Kerala.

What is even more upsetting is the fact that most heads of higher education institutions are sympathetic towards such unethical practices. In a university I am familiar with, an M. Phil scholar recently submitted her dissertation and insisted that the Guide hand it back to her in two days' time after correction so that she could join a B.Ed Course. Seeing that there was a substantial amount of plagiarized material in her dissertation (the entire dissertation was bodily lifted from a handful of internet articles), the Guide asked her not to rush the final stage of the dissertation. Then she approached the Head of the Department, and probably with political clout, she got him to withdraw the Guideship of the teacher (unceremoniously, after being her guide for 7 months!) on the basis of a letter she was asked to write, alleging that he was not being a proper 'guide'. When the HOD was informed about the poor quality of the work, he insisted that it is his duty to 'help' students. Despite the Guide's efforts to convince the HOD of the deeply unethical nature of his 'help', he went ahead with it and accepted the dissertation as a 'bona fide' work of 'authentic research.' This tendency to 'help' students has become a unique feature of current assessment practices in higher education. The entire battery of terms—'guide', 'help', 'bona fide', 'authentic research' internal assessment,' etc.,—that we can use to characterize the quality dimension of research has become, to quote Zizek from a different context, “false terms, mystifying our perception of the situation instead of allowing us to think it” (2). This inability to 'think' what must be thought in the absence of a proper vocabulary to designate the current crisis has given rise to a situation where the ethics of research and education is blatantly violated. The teachers with an ethical mindset not only fail to 'guide' students by giving them the 'help' they require, but also are crucified until they are willing to toe the 'helpline' carefully designed and shamelessly practiced by a steadily growing coterie of mediocre professors who unfortunately are currently heading a sizable number of higher education institutions in Kerala. “[T]he bulk of Indian universities and colleges are reeling in an ocean of mediocrity and at best produce graduates of indifferent quality” (Jayaprakash 16). It is against such a backdrop that the conscious cultivation of an ethical attitude to life and work becomes vital. As Gardiner sagely puts it:

The *ethical* mind ponders the nature of one's work and the needs and desires of the society in which one lives. This mind conceptualizes how workers can serve purposes beyond self-interest and how citizens can work unselfishly to improve the lot of all (16).

When carried out in a way that protects and promotes the ethical integrity of research, synthesizing has a creative dimension, which is underlined by the fact that articles and textbook publications of most academic authors are of a synthetic nature. The ability to collect information from different sources and collate it in amazingly innovative ways through proper synthesis can ultimately lead to the development of creativity. Gardiner observes:

Gradually we begin to develop new visions, we communicate them to our friends and associates, and contemplate how to realize these innovations. Synthesizing the current state of knowledge, incorporating new findings, and delineating new dilemmas is crucial to the work of any professional who wishes to remain current in the field. And only those who keep abreast of current developments can write really creative articles (23).

So a *creating* mind can be developed only through the dedicated cultivation of disciplined and synthesizing minds. A recent British Council Report entitled "Understanding India: The Future of Higher Education and Opportunities for International Cooperation" highlights what they term 'undergraduate boom, research gloom' and complains about 'a weak ecosystem for innovation' in the current system of higher education in India (6). This deplorable inability to produce creating minds has made it almost impossible for Indian higher centres of learning to shape public discourse in a meaningful way. The importance of developing a creating mind which helps to 'break new ground' becomes obvious when we take a close look at the contributions made by Indian scholars to the development of different disciplines in the past decade. Gardiner observes: "Building on discipline and synthesis, *the creating mind* breaks new ground. It puts forth new ideas, poses unfamiliar questions, comes up with fresh ways of thinking, arrives at unexpected answers" (15). Living as we do in a rapidly changing world of creativity on-demand, higher education has to lay vital emphasis on developing an educational ecosystem that produces creating minds.

The *respectful* mind underscores the value of adopting an attitude of openness to the divergent possibilities of life. The respectful people have the ability to interact with fellow-human beings, not on the basis of familial prestige or political clout, but purely on the basis of their merit and quality. Although Kerala, with its easy mixing of different religious cultures on a regular basis, should provide the ideal foundation for developing the respectful mind, the record in departments of higher learning is rather disconcerting. From the selection of teaching faculty to providing 'help' to the students, networks of influential connections play a significant role. Differences in perspectives are not easily tolerated, let alone respected. During national seminars and conferences, a student or a junior member of the Faculty voicing a divergent view about an experienced professor's thesis must do it at the risk of incurring the concerned teacher's permanent displeasure and even inviting possible vindictive action in the future. Gardiner remarks:

Recognizing that nowadays one can no longer remain within one's shell or on one's home territory, *the respectful mind* notes and welcomes differences between human individuals and between human groups, tries to understand these

“others,” and seeks to work effectively with them. In a world where we are all interlinked, intolerance or disrespect is no longer a viable option (16).

Even inside the postgraduate classrooms of Kerala, respect for the 'others' is not unconditional as students move into self-generating coteries divided into those who are proficient in their discipline and/or in the language of instruction and those who are not. For instance, competent speakers of English tolerate Malayalam while competent users of Malayalam respect English and live with a deep sense of guilt at their incompetence in English.

In the current system of higher education, the cultivation of each of these five minds is a proverbial elephant in the room, a large impasse that everyone is acutely aware of but would not dare to do anything about. These minds have become crucial life skills without which today's student community would not know how to navigate the tortuous terrains of life and work because they “are particularly vital in the world of today and will be even more so tomorrow. They span both the cognitive spectrum and the human enterprise—in that sense they are comprehensive, global” (Gardiner 17).

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The Multiplicity of Screens And Its Impact on Filmic Narration: A Study on The Feature Films Of Makoto Shinkai

The changes in viewing practices are a factor that filmmakers cannot afford to overlook especially if these revolutions in daily life can alter people's attitude towards media content. The increase in the popularity of online streaming and peer-to-peer file sharing during the past decade has led to the emergence of internet as a prime medium for experiencing movies. This implies that today, apart from theatres and TV screens, people rely on a range of small screen devices such as internet enabled laptops, tablet PCs, smartphones and iPods to watch films. To put it differently, we live in a multi-screen world. What are the implications of this multiplicity of screens? Does the meteoric rise in small screen viewership have any impact on filmic narration? David Bordwell in his web article titled *New Media and Old Storytelling* claims, "We can't easily draw conclusions about how films are constructed on the basis of how they are presented and consumed. Changes in viewing practices don't automatically entail changes in storytelling." But I intend to argue that there is reciprocity between the medium or the screen and the films that are produced. Earlier, it was a one way traffic wherein films were made homogeneously for all kinds of screens overlooking the differences in the viewing habits associated with each medium or screen. But now, screens are dictating terms to film makers on what kind of narratives they seek. The current study is an analysis of the narrative pace in the feature films of the contemporary anime director Makoto Shinkai to demonstrate how the changes in viewing practices can effect changes in storytelling (in films).

The popularity of online streaming and on-demand watching does not necessarily mean that movie theatres would become obsolete; it only means that the people now have the choice to select between a range of screens. The screen that a viewer chooses depends on various factors such as the genre of the film, the age group that the viewer belongs to, the format of the film that is available in the viewer's country, the scope of interactivity with the screen, the duration of watching, economic concerns etc. In an interview given to *The Next Web* author Paul Sawers, the American film executive and producer Adam Leipzig opines that people prefer to watch certain genres, like comedies, for example, in a communal setting which the movie theatres provide. Theatres might also be preferred for 3D, science fiction and fantasy movies. Even though such preferences can be arbitrary, we can observe that there is an intentional production of movies belonging to these genres in order to attract more people to the theatres. Streaming media services and peer-to-peer file sharing are hugely responsible for delivering and creating viewership for foreign productions (films, sitcoms and animations) across the globe, particularly in places where theatre, DVD or television releases of the above is absent.

The preferences concerning screen also varies according to the age group. Children and old people most often watch films in theatre or on TV rather than on small screen devices. At the same time older teens, youngsters, working men and women most often stream videos online or download films via peer-to-peer file sharing regardless of whether they view films in theatres or as home video. TV and theatres are the oft used mediums by housewives for watching movies. Whether they stream films varies from person to person depending on

factors such as their technological competence, access to such devices and how comfortable they are in watching full length films on small screens. The unbridled and easy access to films for an affordable or no subscription price, and the personalized and interactive viewing experience that the small screens facilitate are the major reasons why people prefer them over the monopolistic silver screen.

What could be the consequences of the exponential growth in small screen viewership? One is visual literacy. People's conversance with countless narratives in the new media age has made them visually literate. Peter Verstraten in his work *Film Narratology* discusses how the way of telling stories have changed in recent times: "We can easily jump from A to C while omitting B because the visually literate viewer has already trodden that particular path many times" (4). So even if films adopt a 'box of bricks' structure – presenting a sequence of events that are not explicitly causally related – the viewer who is familiar with story patterns from other films can usually fill in the gaps (5).

Another consequence of the explosion in small screen viewership is that it impels filmmakers to adopt editing techniques which will make their works compatible for smaller screens providing the audience comfortable, immersive and engaging viewing experience. Andrew S. Allen, motionographer, filmmaker and one of the editors of *Short of the Week*, an online curatorial hub for the best short films on the web elucidates how pacing is one of the most critical aspects of storytelling. Slow paced festival films may work in the monopolistic environment of a theatre, but not in the highly competitive online world. He points out that "smaller screen = faster pacing" is a general film making rule. The findings of a research conducted by Cheryl Campanella Bracken and Gary Pettey on the interaction between small screens and 'presence' are significant in this context. They defined presence as "a perceptual process where the media user looks past or overlooks the technology to experience the medium" (1). Their experiment proves that higher level of immersion is experienced when fast paced videos with action, camera movement and frequent cuts are watched on small screens while slow paced videos with static shots, long takes and conversation based scenes are best enjoyed on large screens (5). A research study conducted by Richard V. Ducey and Patricia F. Phalen to study user experience on multiple video screens and formats has affirmed that people generally watch shorter content on smaller devices (10). The unprecedented growth in the production and viewership of short films following the advent of streaming media websites such as Youtube, vimeo etc. also proves this. Therefore, feature films which target online viewership must preferably have a faster pace and shorter running time.

The feature film format was born from the theatrical experience designed to mimic the length of other performances in a span of 90 to 120 minutes (Allen). However, for small screen viewership, 120 minutes is a bit lengthy. Anthology films or films with an episodic composition are generally ideal for small screen viewing because their narrative coherence is not lost by interrupted viewing. Film makers like Allen argue that the online world is not just a new distribution platform for film but a new medium entirely. A new medium demands a new kind of storytelling. And now, filmmakers are beginning to be discriminating in their choice of narrative strategy for various kinds of screens. One such filmmaker is Makoto Shinkai, a contemporary anime director from Japan.

Shinkai's remarkable career comprises several short films, original video animations and four major feature films *The Place Promised in our Early Days* (2004), 5

Centimeters per Second (2007), *Children Who Chase Lost Voices* (2011) and *The Garden of Words* (2013) all of which are celebrated by anime enthusiasts around the world. One of the most distinguishing features of Shinkai's films is the exceptionally detailed, photo realistic art style. Time, speed, distance and separation are some of the recurring themes in his films.

Three of Shinkai's feature films, *The Place Promised in our Early Days*, *5 Centimeters per Second* and *The Garden of Words* were primarily intended for teenagers and adult audience. These films are romantic drama, though *The Place Promised in our Early Days* is also part science fiction. Centred on soft-spoken, introvert characters, these films are contemplative, emotion-oriented and plot-driven rather than action oriented and character-driven. But in spite of being contemplative in nature, the narrative style employed in these films is markedly different from the characteristic narrative style of contemplative cinema, which comprises long takes, long static shots, slow narrative pace, longer length etc. Instead Shinkai uses an array of techniques in these films such as setting the scene through decoupage, bifurcated narration through visuals and audio which are non-complementary, string of ellipsis, condensed narration through montage sequences, first person voice-over, periodic alternation of static shots with fast action shots, profound use of diegetic sounds, and extradiegetic music to accelerate the narrative pace while preserving the contemplative quality of his films. It is worthwhile examining each of these narrative techniques and see how they help to accelerate the narrative pace.

Usually, in contemplative cinema long shots, slow pan shots etc. are used to establish a setting but in contrast to that, Shinkai employs the technique of decoupage to set the scene. Employing several quick shots to describe a place instead of long pan shots creates tempo. The various diegetic sounds that accompany these rapidly changing shots add to the tempo of the shots.

Bifurcated narration refers to the method of providing two different kinds of information simultaneously through visuals and audio which are non-complementary. This technique is most brilliantly used in *5 Centimeters per Second* in order to depict the life of the two protagonists – Takaki and Akari – simultaneously. In the auditive track, Akari's voice describes her life in a new city in the form of letters addressed to Takaki while on the visual track we see Takaki's life in Tokyo. This technique helps to condense the narrative, thus reducing the run time of the film.

Makoto Shinkai has stated that speed is the unifying theme of *5 Centimeters per Second*. That is why he chose a title which is itself an expression of speed. In the movie, Shinkai juxtaposes the speed of a variety of things – the speed of the falling cherry blossoms, the speed of the train as Takaki goes to meet Akari, the time it took for their letters to reach each other, the time it took Takaki and Akari to express their feelings for one another, the speed at which they parted from one another etc. While Shinkai makes the viewers aware of how time drags by, he is careful to mix dragging scenes with fast montage. Takaki's train journey is probably the best example. The incident takes up about 20 percent of the total running time of the film (from 6.34 minutes into the movie to 19.23 minutes into the movie). The scene faithfully translates Takaki's desperation and helplessness at the seemingly never-ending journey. But the scene does not have a monotonous rhythm because it alternates between fast, decoupage shots and static shots coupled with diegetic sounds and two different internal voice-overs – the railway announcements and Takaki's monologues. Shinkai's insertion of flash backs in the scene also helps to achieve a change of visuals.

The Place Promised in our Early Days, *5 Centimeters per Second* and *The Garden of Words* include a number of ellipsis. Ellipsis is a time leap. It occurs when a section of the fabula, is given absolutely no attention in the film. Whenever an ellipsis occurs, it is indicated either by intertitles, or by the dominant voice-over in the movie or by a sign which is part of the diegetic world such as a black board that reads 'Spring break starts tomorrow!' (*The Place Promised in our Early Days*) or a radio broadcast that announces the end of the rainy season (*The Garden of Words*). Frequent ellipsis naturally cause the narrative to unfold fast thus reducing the story time.

Even though Shinkai uses montage sequences in all these three films, it appears as the chief narrative mode in *The Garden of Words*. A major part of this film is cinematic summary. The shots in the montage sequence that is set to music show the plot action moving forward in diegetic time. Shinkai's artistry lies in the fact that although his storyboard paces through the events that happen over eight months (from June to February), the subtle way in which Takao and Yukino's (the protagonists of the film) relationship gradually builds up is accurately rendered by the careful selection of shots. While the montage sequences and decoupage create a visual rhythm, the various diegetic sounds in the movie – the whistling of train, the sound of rain, the rustling of leaves in the wind, the chirping of birds, the sound of footsteps – all these occurring one after the other creates a ceaseless rhythm on the auditive track. The diegetic sounds also act as seamless audio match between disparate shots. Despite being a shorter feature, in *The Garden of Words*, Shinkai has invested much attention to characterisation. He frames the shots in such a way as to foreground the idiosyncrasies of his characters. Shinkai uses a lot of motifs in the film – shoes, rain, food etc. to suggest the personality of the two protagonists, to show how their relationship gradually develops and to reflect the stages of Yukari's mental and spiritual healing.

Since Shinkai's films are emotion-oriented and contemplative, they exploit the possibilities of the voice-over as a technique of internal focalisation. Internal focalisation is when the audience is given access to what a character in the film thinks or feels. But, voice-over is also a way to condense the narrative by providing a summary of the events.

Shinkai sometimes inserts certain shots which cannot be related to the fabula or the temporal sequence of causes and consequences. The connection of those shots with the other shots is graphic and rhythmic. It is a technique that stands right at the border between narrative and non-narrative cinema. One of Japan's greatest directors, Yasujiro Ozu is acknowledged as the pioneer of such 'pillow shots.' "A pillow shot is a cutaway, for no obvious narrative reason, to a visual element, often a landscape or an empty room, that is held for a significant time (five or six seconds). It can be at the start of a scene or during a scene" (Schneider). Shinkai's shots are however not as long in duration. Moreover, Shinkai periodically alternates static shots with fast action sequences thereby creating a visual rhythm on screen.

When contemplative cinema is generally characterized by slow narrative pace why does Shinkai go out of the way to use techniques that accelerate narrative pace? These films are also shorter in length – *The Place Promised in our Early Days* (90 minutes), *5 Centimeters per Second* (63 minutes) and *The Garden of Words* (46 minutes). In addition, *5 Centimeters per Second* has a portmanteau structure. The film is subtitled *A Chain of Short Stories about their Distance* and is made up of three inter-related chapters titled 'Cherry Blossom,' 'Cosmonaut' and '5 Centimeters per Second.' This makes the movie flexible to

episodic viewing. I would like to argue that all these are narrative strategies adopted to make these films suitable for small screen viewing because small screens are the popular medium among teenagers and adults who are the target audience of these films. Furthermore, Makoto Shinkai is a director who is conscious about internet's role as a major international distribution platform for anime.

However, it should be added that Shinkai has not altogether ignored the theatregoers. He has included various stylistic elements such as ethereal and vibrant celestial vistas, ostentatious camera angles, aerial shots, panoramic shots, meticulously detailed interior shots etc. which look more impressive on large screens. These are conscious insertions to surprise those audiences who choose to watch films in the theatres.

Children Who Chase Lost Voices is different from other films of Makoto Shinkai in that, it was made primarily for children. Being an adventure fantasy, the film is action-oriented and character driven. When Shinkai's other three films (*The Place Promised in our Early Days*, *5 Centimeters per Second* and *The Garden of Words*) are characterized by minimal plot development and a few characters, *Children Who Chase Lost Voices* has numerous subplots and an array of characters which are devices of 'narrative retardation' (Shklovsky), factors that delay the progress of the central plot. Targeted at young audience, this film follows a narrative strategy that is more suitable for theatre and DVD formats which are the oft-used mediums by children. Setting the film in a strange, fantasy land and in an ambiguous timeframe, elusive characterisation, leaving clues, loading the film with numerous subplots etc. were conscious devices from the part of the director to reward repeated viewings of the film which the DVD format facilitates. Shinkai does not follow his idiosyncratic, montage-style story telling in this film. Instead, he presents events scene by scene in a conventional fashion. Shinkai's films usually feature cities and suburbs. By contrast, the first half of *Children Who Chase* is set in a place that makes people think of the Japanese countryside and the second half is set in a fantasy world named Agartha. Agartha being a strange and mysterious land, Shinkai abundantly uses long shots and pan shots in this film instead of his usual style of setting the scene in a fast, decoupage fashion. Long shots and pan shots are conventional establishing shots that take up much of screen time. Decoupage is more suitable for describing familiar spaces. It is ideal for establishing urban settings because the fast pace of the shots can match the fast pace of the urban life. By contrast, pan shots and long shots can capture the serenity of rural life. Using fast decoupage shots to describe a fantasy land would result in viewer disorientation.

Usually, in Shinkai's movies, for the most part of conversation scenes are not comprised solely of the shots of the speakers. The audience are provided establishing shots of the characters who are conversing, or 'cut-in' shots (close-up shots) of peculiar gestures of the characters, but for the most part the visual narrator is occupied with describing the actions in the surrounding. Often audience hear the conversation on the auditive track while the visual narrator describes the locale in decoupage fashion. This style of blending conversations with descriptions of the locale not only helps to avoid the monotony of watching conversation scenes but also helps to give descriptions without spending extra screen time solely for that purpose. But in *Children Who Chase*, conversation scenes are built up using long shots and medium shots in the conventional shot-reverse shot pattern. First person voice-over, a recurrent element in all Shinkai films, is totally absent in this movie. Thus the internal conflicts of the characters are not revealed through wistful narrations, instead, Shinkai lets the audience 'read' the characters based on how they behave in various

situations or respond to different experiences within the story world. With a runtime of 116 minutes, it is the longest of Shinkai's feature films.

Makoto Shinkai constantly adapts his film making to reach broader or niche audiences. He makes use of the possibilities of multiple formats to reach his target demographic. Apart from selecting characters, themes and genres to suit the taste of his target audience, Shinkai carefully adapts his storytelling style to match the viewing habits associated with the medium or format that his target demographic largely uses. Although his films are highly contemplative, Shinkai's films have a comparatively faster narrative pace. Thus, we can conclude that the emergence of the small screen as a medium for watching movies has had a reciprocal impact on the narrative strategies adopted by contemporary film makers.

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Traumatic Citizenship in *Black Watch*: Exploring the Victimizers' Plight

Introduction

Black Watch is a verbatim play written by Gregory Burke, directed by John Tiffany for National Theatre of Scotland. The play was first performed during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe on 1 August 2006. The performance was done in a temporary traverse stage at the former University of Edinburgh Officer Training Corps' Drill hall. The text of play was prepared using interviews with former soldiers. It portrays the life and struggles of soldiers in the Black Watch regiment of the British Army aiding on Operation TELIC in Iraq during 2004. It was before the Black Watch regiment's merging into the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Susan Conley, a theatre reviewer states thus about the play: "What *Black Watch* achieves is the demonstration of the fragility of the human body, heart and mind, and of the living breathing reality that can only be achieved through theatre" (24). David Archibald argues thus: "*Black Watch* now bears its own burden of representation: it is not simply a Scottish play about Iraq, it is *the* Scottish play about Iraq. But despite the seemingly universal praise... its politics are deeply problematic" (13).

Burke and his crew interviewed the real soldiers from the Black Watch regiment. The soldier's testimony, their experience, is being converted into dramatic dialogues later after considerable objective editing. From the perspective of theatre studies, *Black Watch* established that the technique of Verbatim Theatre can transcend mere reportage and bring its dialogue alive in a truly theatrical world of movement and physicality. The actor's physical appearance, their movements, gestures and the utterances are put under constant experimentation in *Black Watch* to make the content more engaging to the audience.

Burke's usage of the newer performance methodology called Verbatim Theatre is an attempt to make the play more authentic in its endeavor, of justifying the position of each individual character in the play. Mark Espiner in his article "Between the Lines" suggests that the prominence of Verbatim Theatre can be explained as an attempt to establish authentic or reliable frames of reference for thought, feeling and action in a highly mediatized society, 'in an era ruled by theatricality, the theatre is rediscovering its true role . . . : exposing the truth'(12). While the real life incidents become more theatrical, theatre have to more realistic in its nature of portraying the events. Chris Megson comments that Verbatim Theatre exposes the democratic deficit in the wider political culture (Hughes 152). It is this democratic deficit that resulted in the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003 when various political events generated antiwar feelings around the globe and left ordinary citizens powerless to intervene. *Black Watch* is an attempt to intervene into this democratic deficit. The playwright and the cast together edit the interviews into powerful monologues of individual trauma and transgressions to create a dissent through theatre. *Black Watch* not only provided the audience direct contact with 'authentic' testimonies relating to these events but also permitted the audience to critically interrogate these sources as well as the ethical probity of leading social actors. Verbatim Theatre occasionally makes use of recorded voice of the individuals whom the crew interviews. Some practitioners even go to the extreme of bringing real victims on the stage. This provides compelling material proof for the audience to perceive the truth and to discern the causes and possibilities of current global paranoia.

The reception of Verbatim Theatre is marked by a preoccupation with what is real. In fact, Black Watch is not about representing what is real. Rather it tries to expose what is not real. Perhaps the verbatim form can be described more accurately as a performance method that makes the audience conscious of the limitations of the representations of truth rather than as one that tries to convince them by means of the evidential.

Traumatic Citizenship

Traumatic citizenship refers to the shared status of individuals who have undergone certain painful events in the past and hence are presently suffering from post traumatic stress disorders. The victims of rape, terrorist attacks, natural disaster, accidents and continuous oppression on the basis of race, colour, caste and gender etc. These people share certain commonalities such as haunting memories, dejection of the present consciousness, and loss of self-esteem. In his lecture titled “Trauma, Surveillance and the New Public Sphere” Pramod K. Nayar opines that cultures of trauma together with cultures of surveillance will create a new public sphere. In this newly formed public sphere public safety will be more important than public welfare. Pramod adds that traumatic citizens and vulnerable citizens as two integral parts of the new public sphere.

Elaine Scarry in her work *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* speaks about physical pain inflicted by torture as “deconstructing” the language that is indeed the world of the victim. According to Scarry, pain would destruct the language of the sufferer. This creates a community of people who shares a destructed language due to both physical as well as mental pain. Pity and benevolence evolve as a prime identity of the new public sphere. This paper also likes to focus on the politics of benevolence created as part of this citizenship. The question is to whom this benevolence points to.

What are the criteria for being a traumatic citizen? Normally, only the victims are considered to be the eligible members of trauma community. There involves a kind of 'normalization' that structurally mutes the voice of the victimizer from the discourse. Is it a crime to talk about the victimizer? Ethically, one can criticize a rapist, a terrorist, a murderer etc. But avoiding them from the whole process of academic discourse is a different form of subjugation. As Foucault says no one can mark the boundary between good and evil (Connolly 368). So, in a humanities study preference should be given to alternative dimensions.

Here, as a case study, the plight of soldiers in the Black Watch regiment should be addressed more seriously. Until the advent of the Iraq war, Scotland's fabled Black Watch had existed as an elite fighting regiment with a history of distinguished military service reaching back as far as the early eighteenth century. When they were appointed for Iraq invasion simultaneously they became murderers of innocent people before the world. Here, their majestic history and the current status together put them in to chaos. In 2003, Black Watch regiment fought in the Iraq war at Basra attacks, and suffered serious fatality. In 2004, the regiment was again dispatched to Iraq, suffered more losses. The US Army asked them to move further north, outside the British Controlled area, to replace forces temporarily redeployed for the second battle of Fallujah. Despite objections in Parliament, the regiment deployed to Camp Dogwood, located between Fallujah and Karbala in an area later called the triangle of death (Blumberg 79). The regiment underwent physical as well as mental torture as a result of these unexpected failures.

To make it clear, it's necessary to address how to justify the position of victimizer's trauma. Let's have a look in to the earlier definitions of trauma. Freud and Cathy Caruth took a story from Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, an epic Italian poem to explain the traumatized psyche of an individual. Tancred, the hero of the poem, unknowingly kills his beloved Clorinda in a duel while she is disguised in the armour of an enemy knight. He buried her and eloped into a strange magic forest. Accidentally, he slashes with his sword at a tall tree in the forest; but blood streams from the cut and the voice of Clorinda, whose soul is imprisoned in the tree, is heard complaining that he has wounded his beloved once again (Novok 31). In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Sigmund Freud refers to this moment of guilt and grief in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* as an illustration of the unconscious repetition of trauma. Tancred's unknowing killing of his beloved not just once, but twice, illustrates for Freud a passive compulsion to repeat that makes up part of the dynamics of trauma (16). Thereby, the recurring experience of incident similar to that the victim has earlier undergone intensifies the experience of trauma.

While probing into the psyche of soldiers in Black Watch regiment, one could understand that they killed the poor Iraqi citizens unwillingly. For instance in conversation on the issue of invading Iraq, Cammy comments that:

Cammy: It's a buzz, you're in a war ay, but you're no really doing the job you're trained for but it's not like they're a massive threat tay (to) you or tay (to) your country, you're no defending your country. We're invading their country and fucking their day up (Burke 48-9).

Freud and Caruth never took Clorinda's position for explaining trauma even though she is the prime victim in the story. Rather they started exploring the nuances of trauma citizen from a victimizer, Tancred who is a murderer of his lover. This gives ample eligibility to talk and discuss about the subjectivity of victimizer in a trauma discourse. Like Tancred, the Black Watch soldiers killed Iraqis reluctantly. This act of murdering is not a deliberate attempt of impersonalized violence but rather a conditioned out product of hegemonic power expansion. When they returned from war, media reports and television discussions keep them remembering the event again and again. As Tancred heard the voice of her beloved from the cut of the tree, the soldiers heard the voice of the murdered people again and again from the media. The conversation between the Writer and soldiers shows their dilemma in speaking about the invasion. The writer asked to soldiers "What was it like in Iraq?" (Burke 7). Rossco ironically replied "I thought it was gonna tell me something about the meaning ay life ay" (Burke 7). The writer compelled them to answer: "So what did it tell you?" Cammy replies and they all agree: "That I did not want to be in the army anymore." Stewarty angrily says to the Writer that: "Go to fucking Baghdad if you want to know what it's like" (Burke 7).

Now, each victimizer existed in the history as a blameless individual in some other social situation. They had undergone a traumatic past which led them in to the condition of a victimizer. A thief would be a victim of wrong parenting and poor socio-economic order. A suicide bomber would be the victim of compulsive religious ideologies. So justifying their plight means is the act of maintaining an equivalency in understanding both victimizer's and victim's trauma. One of the serious problems a victim suffers in his life is his loss of self esteem. His/her current state of existence becomes a burden for them. The fact is that both the victim and victimizer endure this loss self esteem. Look at this conversation between Cammy and the army Officer.

Officer: Well, I'm...I'm...what's the word...[Pause] Cursed.

Cammy: Cursed, sir?

Officer: Yeah, Cursed. You see...my father, he was in Korea. Nineteen years old, Second lieutenant. Got wounded. And promoted. And his father, he was at Loos. And his father, well he was more of a gambler than anything else, but you get my drift (Burke 72).

The state of being in the army seems like 'curse' for him. This way of understanding one's self as 'cursed' is a callous traumatic condition which both a victim as well as the victimizer carries. And the unwilling surrender to inescapable curse is materially portrayed in the play through the life struggles of the soldiers.

In *Unclaimed Experience*, Cathy Caruth expands upon Freud's speculations regarding the dynamic nature of trauma. She invites our attention “to a voice that is paradoxically released through the wound” (2-3). The voice of Clorinda from the cut of the tree is a voice released through a wound. Caruth considers this scene as an illustration of the latency of trauma. She says:

The figure of Tancred addressed by the speaking wound constitutes, in other words, not only a parable of trauma and of its uncanny repetition but, more generally, a parable of psychoanalytic theory itself as it listens to a voice that it cannot fully know but to which it nonetheless bears witness (9).

That means, trauma is listening to a voice which may not be fully recognized but may bear active direct witness in the past. So trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past. But rather in the way it was precisely not known to the person in the first instance and returns to haunt the survivor later on. The Black Watch soldiers suffered this haunting instance of traumatic past. The officer sums up in the end that what has been lost for them:

It takes three hundred years to build an army that's admired and respected around the world. But it only takes three years pissing about in the desert in the biggest western foreign policy disaster ever to fuck it up completely (72).

This unintended thought of the past admiration rightly depicts how the past history's legacy and recent history's tragedy put them in the current mental chaos.

Another traumatic condition that Caruth put forwarded here is the thought of self denunciation. It's a kind of rejection towards one's fate, or to what already happened in their life. The soldiers used to lament or rethink about the thought joining in army. Cammy says: “Well I want you to fucking know. I wanted to be in the army. I could have done other stuff. I am not a fucking knuckle dragger” (4). Even though he wishes to be a part of the army he does not favour the idea of war. He says “We're just big bullies. (Pause) Well, we'll need to get fucking used tay (to) it. Bullying's the fucking job. That's what you have a fucking army for” (4). The soldiers in a way tamper with innumerable thoughts, though most of these thoughts are incomprehensible for them too. The anxiety about the coming days, which they understand simply as the continuation of the past events is another symptom of the trauma suffered by the Black Watch soldiers. There is a conversation between Cammy and the Officer about the future of Black Watch regiment.

Officer: We could be off to Afghanistan next. It's going to be exactly the same.

Kandahar. Helmand province. It's the only place on the planet that might be slightly more dangerous than here.

The noise of an explosion.

We're going to be hearing that noise for years to come (Burke 72).

The sudden noise that threatens him while imagining his own future implies the terror concealed in the mind of the army Officer. And the abrupt thought about the continuity of this terror element in their mind may simultaneously increase the pain drastically. Tancred also fears that the voice from the wound will follow him till death. Though they are free from the thought of war and terror in their physical state of existence, their subconscious mind carries the burden of upcoming terror.

Another traumatic condition that can be drawn from *Black Watch* is the idea of historical reference and traumatic aporia. Aporia stands for the paradoxes that exist within a system. Paul de Man in his work *Allegories of Reading: Figural Languages in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke and Proust* developed a particular deconstructive reading of language in which he explains the paradoxes which exist in language. He says, in the gulf between the reference and representation, two paradoxes in language, is certainly misinterpreted factor. This will definitely affect the interpretation of the represented incident or feeling. De Man says "the allegory of reading narrates the impossibility of reading" (77). It is from this paradox between reference and representation of de Man that Caruth developed the theory of traumatic aporia. In simple terms it is an irresolvable paradox in human mind. Trauma is inherently a paradoxical experience. Caruth says "traumatic experience suggests a certain paradox: that the most direct seeing of a violent event may occur as an absolute inability to know it" (91). In *Black Watch*, history serves as the reference. In Burke's play both history and memory are fused together as the soldiers' stories are gathered, synchronized and placed within a broader historical narrative. The plot develops as the soldiers share their familial relations to the regiment with a fictional writer who interviews them. Here is an extract from the play:

Writer: So the history's important?

Granty: They drum it intay you fay the first day.

Rosco: Fucking non-fucking stop.

Cammy: That's what a regiment is ay? It's history. The Golden Thread. That's what the old timers go on about. It's what connects the past, the present, the future ... (25).

As Cammy mentions there is a golden thread unfolding in the soldier's narrations that connects their past, present and future. This idea is one that is associated with the official Golden Thread mythology in relation to *Black Watch* regiment. In one of the scenes Cammy, with vigorous theatrical actions, stands in the middle of the stage in a strip of red carpet placed beneath his feet. This follows a parade walk called 'catwalk fashion parade' in which he is being dressed in the various changing uniforms of the regiment in various centuries, from past to present. Along with this theatrical action of catwalk and uniform changing, Cammy narrates a history of the *Black Watch* regiment that starts in 1715 in Scotland. He speaks about the Culloden, The American War of Independence, France, Egypt, Portugal, Spain, Flanders, The Crimean War, The Boer War, The First World War, The Second World War, Burma, Korea, Africa, Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia. At the end of these actions he

concludes “Here we are. Again.”(33).Cammy briefly portrays the problematic formative years of the regiment.

To conclude, Burke's play makes us rethink the concept of traumatic citizenship and who qualifies for that. In the case of Black Watch soldiers, the constant exposure to the mass scale disastrous events and repeated use of weapons obviously play a role in their traumatic condition. But as they are victimizers their plight remains unaddressed. It is into this cultural dilemma that Burke's play opens its windows. The play problematizes the politics of benevolence that disentitles victimizers to the status of traumatic citizenship. Trauma studies as a discipline would be so incomplete unless it accommodates the victimizer's trauma. Burke's play unravels and unveils the so far obliterated area in the realm of trauma studies.

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Text Language and Standard English Language: A Comparison

Language is subjected to change in due course of time, both synchronically and diachronically. In the current world, where technology has an unprecedented impact on language as much as anything else, language like other times, has undergone various metamorphoses and is continuously evolving. This essay shall mainly focus on the globalized world, where the Short Message Script (SMS) and the chat lingo have had a bearing on the development of English language. The seminal argument of this essay is a rebuttal of the proposition made by John Sutherland that the SMS lingo is detrimental to the functioning of English. The primary assertion is that language is a protoplasm, where there is an osmosis of changes, with respect to changing cultures. Secondly, a person who “textspeak”, a term introduced by David Crystal, has the ability to switch from standard language to “textspeak” and vice versa in accordance with circumstances, thereby resulting in higher filtering and efficiency. Furthermore, the transition of text language from being a technological language to a literary genre is elucidated. Moreover, the essay will also discuss the homogeneity of a lot many common “textspeak” words, in a pan continent sense, thus projecting a possibility of a lasting new language of texting, English being its mother.

John Sutherland, a professor of University College London, wrote in the year 2002 on text language being a “bleak, bald, sad shorthand, drab shrink talk ... Linguistically it's all pig's ear ... it masks dyslexia, poor spelling and mental laziness. Texting is penmanship for illiterates.” (Sutherland 7) What Sutherland refuses to believe by enveloping the existence of short hand and abbreviation to the realm of texting alone is their usage since English language was at its mature stage. Abbreviations have been there for a very long time, the most conspicuous being the usage of symbols, numerals and initials to signify a cluster of letters in a word or the word itself, and in fact, the conservative Victorians used to play with language by writing sentences like *MEET ME 2MORO B4 U LEAVE*. As a matter of fact initializing the most common phrases dates to before the Victorian age also. *IOU* is known to be in existence since 1618. *Bf* for 'boyfriend' or *y* for 'yes' is time immemorial. Words such as *vet* ('veterinary'), *fridge* ('refrigerator') and *exam* ('examination') are accustomed and have practically become new words. It is however interesting to know that these words invited criticism at their advent, Addison and Swift remarking the shortening of words as being “miserably curtailed” and is a “barbarous custom” respectively. Moreover *cos* is there in the literary genre from 1829 and is used by Charles Dickens, Walter Scott and Mark Twain. Mark Twain's “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn” and “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” are known for the usage of colloquial language and abbreviations. Huck Finn and his friend Jim sometimes resort to dialect while speaking. This is written as it is by Mark Twain to depict the life of the lower classes who are subjected to discrimination by the bourgeoisie and the upper class. The dialect that they speak can be called eye dialect which is when the pronunciation adheres to standard norms but with unconventional spellings, like *cuz* for because. This book was a revolution because it transgressed from the rules of genteel English and showed people how they spoke and still speak. SMS language is also the language of the non ivory tower residents, those people of the everyday life.

Now going into the theoretical part, the use of these symbols thereby reducing parts of words or for that matter the word itself are called rebuses. In modern day chat messages, forms like *gng* ('going'), *amzng* ('amazing') and *gr8* ('great') are used which date back to Eric Partridge's "Dictionary of Abbreviations" (1942), which was published fifty years before the advent of texting, which encompasses many examples in vogue today, like those illustrated above. Thus we can say that "there is no difference, apart from the medium of communication, between a modern kid's *lol* ('laughing out loud') and an earlier generation's *swalk* ('sealed with a loving kiss')" (Crystal "2b or not 2b" 12).

Most of the time, the argument of people against texting is that, it negatively hampers the capability of students because most of them resort to text language in their academic work. David Crystal calls it a myth and exemplifies that children are well aware about the situations where Standard English and text lingo should be used. On the contrary he adds that this will enhance their ability to have a better understanding about word construction, whereby, they delete vowels and form consonant clusters (*prfmnc* for "performance"). Thus if there is an imbibition of the texting behavior, there should have been already an intuition about the standard. Alternative spellings and the sense of sounds of language relating to letters are thus developed in texting children. Moreover, it is imperative for the sender of the text, who pays for the service, to make sure that the receiver understands it lucidly.

Text language is considered a taboo word by Sutherland and others, due to certain "observational illusions". These illusions catalogued by Arnold Zwicky are as follows: firstly the "frequency illusion, "once you notice a phenomenon, you believe that it happens a whole lot", secondly, "the recency illusion, if you've noticed something only recently, you believe that it in fact originated recently", thirdly, "the adolescent illusion, the consequence of selective attention paid to the language of adolescents ('those kids') by adults." (Zimmer par 4) Crystal uses these illusions and exemplifies them in "Txtng". "Text messages aren't full of abbreviations – typically less than ten percent of the words use them[Frequency Illusion]. These abbreviations aren't a new language – they've been around for decades [Recency Illusion]. They aren't just used by kids – adults of all ages and institutions are the leading texters these days [Adolescent Illusion]" (Zimmer 5).

Crystal's article "2 B or not to B" criticizes the article of John Humphrys "I h8 text msgs: How texting is wrecking our language." Humphrys says that texters are "vandals who are doing to our language what Genghis Khan did to his neighbors 800 years ago. They are destroying it: pillaging our punctuation; savaging our sentences; raping our vocabulary. And they must be stopped"(John Humphry). David Crystal "2b or not to b"335) Crystal dismisses it saying that it has been the trend of the world to be suspicious about anything new including medicine and astronomy and even at the introduction of "telegraph, telephone, and broadcasting" and anticipates that the furore will subside soon. He continues to say that he is quite excited about the decline of book reading and welcomes the digitization of books. He supports his argument by stating that the old generation sees books as the primary resource but for netizens it is the other way around.

Text language now occupies not only the world of messages and chat, but also in the literary arena. T mobile, on the wake of world poetry day tried to find UK's first text laureate for the best romantic SMS poem. There were 200 entrants and the entries were a mixture of abbreviated and unabbreviated texts. The first prize went to an unabbreviated entry whereas

the second prize went to an abbreviated love poem written by a woman of 60 years. Several SMS poets utilize the various applications found in the computers to vary the size, font and colour, reminiscent of the 1960 concrete poetry creations.

Apart from the SMS poem, there is the SMS novel that operates on a screen by screen mode, where each screen is a chapter that portrays an event. This is an example from an Indian website called "Cloakroom." "Chptr 6: While Srching 4 Her Father, Rita Bumps In2 A Chaiwalla& Tea Spills On Her Blouse. She Goes Inside Da Washroom, & Da Train Halts @A Station." (Crystal "2b or not 2b" 26) There is a recent page on facebook which has millions of followers called "Terribly Tiny Tales" which sometimes uses SMS language to bring into picture stories with mettle. Japanese novelist Yoshi's "Deep Love" was a text novel of huge success, where he incorporated the feedback from the reader. Finally he went on to make a movie out of "Deep Love". Another novel called "Distance" by Chinese SMS novelist Xuan Huang comprises 15 chapters and is 1008 Chinese characters long. This later developed in to a mobile literature channel, calling itself "m-novel". Crystal remarks that since each chapter is only 160 characters long, the sentences constructed ought to be complex and thus allays the criticism of text language lacking "verbal hygiene"(chronicled by Deborah Cameron not in the context of texting). Thus texting is not only for saving time and energy. They are linguistically complex in nature. Professional writers do the same by creating catchy quotes and puns.

Interestingly, the mobile literary genre is in the pathway of independence from mobile phone origins. The French novelist Phil Marso published a novel in 2004, "Pas Sage a Tabavo SMS" written in the SMS short hand, which is intended to make young people quit smoking. Next year he published "L", which is an SMS retelling of French classics. An extraordinary number of criticism has come up against the lack of "hygiene" in texts, nevertheless only very few research studies have displayed its creative potential.

Having established the age old usage of short hand and the transformation of "textspeak" from a mere chat lingo to a literary genre, let us look at its role in the future. Crystal says that "textspeak" is like decoding a message and it differs from traditional English in its use of emoticons and smileys also. " :)" one has to read it sideways to decode it. Though language change is a continuous process, a new medium for it does not appear very often, hence technology as the medium and chat language as the facilitator have got high attention. The use of capital letters to assert and command, use of certain punctuations and conspicuous lack of other punctuation marks – these can dramatically influence the future of English language. One question asked to Crystal in an interview is interesting; "Is it like a country with different dialects, where I speak Twitter and you speak Facebook? Or are there things that we can say about all online communication?" (Spark, Canadian Radio show) Crystal, before answering it, makes another interesting observation. He talks about the "playfulness" of words that sites like Facebook and Twitter encourage. He cites an example: earlier Facebook's prompt was *the user is ...* It can be the user is sad, the user is happy or the user is going to sleep. Recently it changed its prompt to *what's on your mind?*, which envelops everything from your personal life to the globalized world; *I got an i phone to the new i phone is launched*, thus switching from personal to global and vice versa. Then he continues to answer the question that the language of these different sites is different dialects. But he admonishes that there is no necessity it will stay like this 5 years later. Certain variations have taken a place in everybody's usage like 2 for 'to' or b for 'be'; longer acronyms

are not used as frequently and have still not gained a non-esoteric position. However, the trends in “textspeak” have a possibility to become a new language, where the language of texting is enabling students to translate it to the Standard English as done with foreign languages. This code switching has “shown no compelling evidence that texting damages Standard English in preteens, and considerable evidence that facility with text language is associated with higher achievement in school literacy measures” (Plester Wood Bell 143). Once the changes are more lucid, further research studies can show how much it has evolved and the impact it has made on literacy and translation skills.

"Language Intrtxtlty" by Jonathon Green talks about how the dictionaries including the urban dictionary contain numerous new words, thus asserting that “textspeak” in itself is a new language. Green elaborates, "Driven by the need to render smaller, our acronyms and abbreviations exist usefully only in the screen's pixellated [sic] characters. One reads them as the words they were when committed to the technology. One may type I8r but we 'see' and read 'later'"(Green 127). Moreover he says that certain mobile companies encourage the use of “textspeak” by programming common words like *wassup* and *watchadoing*

"Mobile Language Choices—The Use of English and IsiXhosa in Text Messages (SMS): Evidence from a Bilingual South African Sample" by Deumert and Masinyana gives proof of an emergence of an English SMS standard globally, where the bilingual African employs one's second language in the technological medium in the same way as an American. “What this means for the future of our language is that when words are translated to English, because of the ease of translating to “textspeak”, more and more sources from around the world will begin to develop this new variation, therefore making the breadth of the effects of textspeak vaster than just texting alone” (Gorney 41). Nevertheless, everyone will not approach texting with the same preference. In order to become a standard text language, “textspeak” should have certain sets of rules, and the acronyms should have a globally recognised standard. For example words like *rofl* ('rolling on the floor laughing') are globally understood. Other words and acronyms should surpass their cultural boundaries. Moreover, more and more words should be encompassed into it to make it more comprehensive. Since punctuations and grammar have already adapted the “textspeak” panorama, more nouns straying away from its traditional form finally shall complete the scene.

Thus the major criticism that stems about the lack of discretion in omission of grammatical semantics, vocabulary and syntax is irrelevant. There is a specific pattern which is adopted by the SMS language users worldwide with only negligible variations. This however leads to an interesting observation which is only briefly discussed here since it transgresses the scope of the topic. In *Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences*, Jacques Derrida says that it is possible to deconstruct philosophy and language and still survive in the world of play. This can be shown in the present context by saying that a centre is required to hold a structure and anything without a structure is inconceivable. However, this centre will delimit the possible play that is the upcoming SMS language from the Standard English. Here the centre is not stable, where the old centre is substituted by a new centre which is probably outside the structure and not in the centre of the structure. In these infinite sign substitutions, language makes everything a discourse, where signs can take any meaning, in the all-pervasive play. This theory can be further extrapolated and is in fact the further scope of this paper.

Accordingly, texting manifests the human ability to be creative linguistically and to adhere and adapt to diverse cultural and linguistic panorama. Culture along with technology is morphing everything including language. It cannot be said if these changes in texting will last a decade more or will be totally replaced by something else. There will not be a future setting, where people can only write in “textspeak”. It is possible to have a new language of “textspeak”, but changes are not vast enough, presently for the other scenario to hold. It is more likely that it may evolve to have a strong foothold as a parallel language dialect having a bearing on the Standard English itself.

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Re-visiting History: Revisionary Writings and Resistance

The re-writing of the master narratives of English Literature is a common practice among post-colonial writers. Although re-writing the colonial canon becomes a subversive act for the formerly colonized, the telling of a story from another perspective neither displaces nor destroys the original text. Instead it leads to the genesis of an alternative discourse that exists in a 'dialogic' relation with the colonial canon. The new writing prefers to remain at the border and be simultaneously a part of and apart from the master narrative. It challenges the canonical texts both at the structural and thematic levels and leads to a revisioning of the dominant discursive practices. With poststructuralism and deconstruction radically revising the notion of original, and questioning the authority of authorship, revisionary writing has destabilized the network of power relations aimed at convincing the colonized subject that the western culture is the only civilized norm.

The act of 'revision' provides a key to locating and defining the experiences of the colonial subject within the hegemonic value system. Used both at creative and critical levels, revision appraises mainstream myth making practices of misrepresentation and interrogates inequalities and oppression. In her essay, "When Dead We Awaken: Writing as Resistance", Andrienne Rich sums up the significance of revisionary writing as:

Revision: the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction, is for us more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival (35).

In the essay, Rich underlines the basic aims of countering domination and coined the term 'Re-visionary writing' for the first time. Peter Widdowson's "Literature" also provides an essential basic reading in the understanding of revisionary writing. *The Ballistic Bard: Postcolonial Fiction* by Judie Newman looks at several different post-colonial rewritings of 'classic' text. *Three Women's Text and a Critique of Imperialism* by Gayatri Spivak provides a required reading about re-reading and re-writing 'classic' texts.

By 'looking back' re-writings deconstruct the locus of power and reconstruct the past in that it challenges the traditional myths and begins a quest for alternatives. Alternatives perform the difficult task of demonstrating the power of mythic images. Revisioning thus remains crucial to the formation of new myths from the past and project into the future. Revision is not simply retelling a previously told tale. In *Writing Resistance: A Comparative Study of the Selected Novels by Women Writers* Usha Bande writes:

It signifies the process of scrutinizing, reconstructing and re-writing by molding the language and the concept whereby the old story is invested with new meaning. Revision is an "act of survival", "a drive to self knowledge" achieved through "re-writing" (173).

One of the chief tasks of post-colonial writers has been to re-write history of the indigenous people and to restore their dignity. Re-reading, re-writing or revisioning the canonical texts of European literature is the most important feature of post-colonialism. This has generated a specialized field within the broader examination of colonial structures of power. Revisioning allows the post-colonial writer not only to re-narrate the original work, but to incorporate in the newer text those concerns and themes that frame the post-colonial writer and his/her subjects. The act of revisioning a western text from the perspective of the (ex) colonized calls into question the colonizer's patterns of dominance, revealing the acts of subversion and resistance to that system. While the centrality of the western text is underlined by the appropriation of authorial voice on part of the colonized the writers are essentially dependent on the canonical texts that they subvert. Self-conscious revisioning of the western text - a work that once served as a primary tool for the colonialist enterprise - provides a mode of empowerment that reclaims the identity of the colonized. Thus, by appropriating the texts which were former symbols of oppression, the post-colonial writer is able to engage in a dialogue with the West on his/her own ideological terms. The text loses its mythic status of embodying the 'civilized' virtues and is exposed as a negotiation of power structures propagating a one sided, rather hypocritical definition of the colonized.

The revisioning of the texts that were once a symbol of the British colonial power questions the system of control that sought to position these texts as a part of the imperial enterprise. The points of 'rupture' that now become visible once again allow access to the White man's world but the method of entry is intentionally disruptive and probing. The authorial recreation enables the writer to effectively impose his/her perspective on the West and its symbols, rendering ineffectual any attempts at a monologic version of colonial narratives. Works iconic to European cultures like *The Tempest* and *Robinson Crusoe* have been re-written to explore their gaps and silences. William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610-11) has been re-written for its colonial implications by many writers like Aime Cessarie, Jonathan Miller, Leslie Fielder, George Lamming and J.M. Coetzee. It is considered as a major allegory of the colonial experience. These writers attempt to uncover the deeply problematic juxtaposition of dominance and resistance. The play revolves around Prospero, the former duke of Milan as he bides his time on an enchanted island with his daughter Miranda, his airy spirit Ariel and Caliban - the 'deformed' native. At one level, Prospero's desire to bring his usurping brother, Antonio, to justice drives the play's plot.

Miranda's marriage to Ferdinand, the son of the King of Naples, forms a sub-plot. To achieve his ends Prospero magically creates a tempest that leaves Antonio, the King of Naples and his men stranded on the island. Prospero's interaction with Caliban and Ariel creates another interesting sub-plot as it comments explicitly on the complex historical reality of colonization. Prospero, as the colonizer, establishes his rule over the island and subjugates the previous inhabitants; in this case Ariel and Caliban. Post-colonial authors and critics have exploited this angle of *The Tempest* and have adapted the play to suit their particular socio-political realities. It is important to place the master-slave relationship that emerges between Prospero (Master) on the one hand and Ariel and Caliban (slaves) on the other within the socio-historical reality of the colonies to uncover the power struggles that lie beneath. *The Tempest* thus becomes symbolic of colonization and resistance to subjugation. The dual pressures, operating within the play enhance the instability of the colonial situation and make it possible for the post-colonial writers to appropriate *The Tempest* to suit their

particular ideological agendas. The patterns of subjugation and subversion that form much of the play's fabric are interrogated in the later works.

Each re-writing of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* becomes a marker not only of mutually related historical events but also of individual reactions to them. As such, it becomes a means of forging a nationalist identity from the perspective of African, Caribbean, Asian and other post-colonial authors. These writers challenge the Western canon in order to give voice to many 'Calibans' and 'Ariels'. The works of George Lamming, Aime Cessarie, Roberto Retamar and others assume the form of an internal dialogue, no longer content with explaining the colonial situation but rather actively proposing a viable alternative.

Lamming re-writes Shakespeare's *The Tempest* as *The Pleasures of Exile* and dismantles the hierarchy of Prospero, Ariel and Caliban. He presents Caliban as a West Indian whose human status is neglected by the European who denied him his inheritance. He also questions Caliban's position as an outsider of the civilization. He asserts that Caliban is a human being from West Indies but his status is being denied by the European power. Lamming shows the fundamental features of colonization in the figures of Prospero, Caliban and Ariel where in Prospero is the colonizer and Caliban and Ariel are the colonized.

In *The Pleasures of Exile* (1984) the Barbadian author, Lamming weaves into his study of the condition of the exiled author in mid-century London, his vision of Shakespeare's Caliban, and of all the voices that have been suppressed in order to construct the colonially sanctioned image of Prospero's solitary subject. His work brings into question Octavio Mannoni's representation of Prospero and Caliban (*Prospero and Caliban: Psychology of Colonization*) as representative of the position of the colonizer and the colonized respectively. He demonstrates how each individually informs the construction of the other. Lamming identifies Caliban's need for a voice that is his unique creation and possession. The reader needs to uncover the codes of the linguistic system which Prospero introduces to Caliban to understand how the latter appropriates it to formulate his pattern of resistance.

Like Lamming, Aime Cessarie, the poet and author from Martinique, is also interested in recovering Caliban's voice to narrate the version of colonial history. Suppressed by the ruling class he brings to bear his involvement in the Negritude Movement by adapting *The Tempest* for a specifically black audience. His *Une Tempest* was first performed in Paris in 1969. He employs language to critically re-evaluate western humanist ideals and to reveal the violence accompanying colonialism. Cessarie's Caliban returns to his African past to counter the violence of the 'civilizing mission'. In "Mastering the Masters: Aime Cessarie's Creolization of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*", Hudith Holland Sarnelki identifies Cessarie's incorporation of African mythic and linguistic traditions into the imposed European language as an attempt:

To beat Shakespeare at his own game. The Caliban Cessarie creates, speaks a language that, like Creole, is pieced together from fragments that reveal the violence done to Africans forced into slave ships and carried far from their homeland. Caliban's "Creolization" of the French language, furthermore, reveals a mastery that unsettles Prospero to the point of madness (277).

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Kapalkundala* (1866) and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999) also highlight the problematics of power in *The Tempest*. These authors challenge the established norms of social interaction as propagated by the colonial masters, while adopting very different approaches and ideologies situated in radically different epochs of the colonial process, Bankim (Bengal) and Coetzee (South Africa) revision Shakespeare's play as a reflection of their own literary and cultural spaces.

Roberto Fernander Retamar, a prominent figure in the restructuring of post-revolutionary Cuba sets his version of the play in Cuba. He reworks the play in "Caliban: Notes Towards a Discussion of Culture in Our America" (1969) in a voice that reflects the history of Cuba and creates a collective autobiography of the Cuban people. The essay identifies the divide between Ariel and Caliban as one based on class. Just as Césaire portrays Ariel as a 'mulatto' who unlike Caliban feels that negotiation and partnership is the way to freedom from colonizers, Retamar portrays Ariel as a wealthy Cuban. Caliban in contrast is presented as a lower-class resident who must choose between rebellion and negotiation. For Retamar, the colonized(s) loyalty lies with Caliban the representative of the revolutionary proletariat. Although Frances Dolan in "The Subordinate(s) Plot: Petty Treason and the Forms of Domestic Rebellion" suggest that Ariel's dialogue with Caliban in the second act of *The Tempest* hints of a future alliance between the two when Prospero leaves, Ariel is generally viewed as a good servant in comparison with the conniving Caliban. Ariel is often used by post-colonial writers as a symbol to overcome the effects of colonization. For example, Michelle Cliff (Jamaican author) believes that she tries to combine Caliban and Ariel with herself to create a way of writing that represents her culture better.

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is another text that is read as a colonial discourse. Defoe's text promotes imperialism where in Crusoe is the white master who has colonized the deserted island and Friday is voiceless as his entire story is told from the point of view of his white master. Sameul Selvon re-writes Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* as *Moses Ascending* to rework the associations that the literary character, Robinson Crusoe conjures with the aim of abrogating it for specifically voicing post-colonial concerns. As such, the writers of the colonized countries spoke out of silence, about the myths that describe them. In his 1975 essay "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*" Achebe drew attention to the racial stereotyping of Africa and its inhabitants by the Europeans. His aim was to uncover the European politics implicit in their texts about the non-Europeans. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* was interpreted by him as a narrative of colonization in the essay mentioned above. He rejected Conrad's assumptions about Africa in *Things Fall Apart* by telling the story of the colonized to retrieve their history and to accord an identity to them. Although *Things Fall Apart* is only a response to *Heart of Darkness*, Tayib Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* is a re-writing.

When *Heart of Darkness* was published in 1899, the novel was indeed progressive in its criticism of imperialist activity in Africa. Conrad wrote at a time when most people in Britain must have regarded imperialism as an admirable enterprise. He was helping the cause of Africans in the Congo by drawing attention to their ill treatment. In practice the tale contributed to the international protest campaign that strove to restrain Belgian excesses there (*Oxford Reader's Companion to Conrad*). Through Marlow, Conrad gives prominence to Africans when he describes the plight of the chain-gang and of the exploited workers dying in the grove. Marlow observes with sardonic indignation, what most other Europeans of the time ignored.

The changing historical and cultural circumstances have affected the way texts are judged. Just as Shakespeare's *The Tempest* has been reinterpreted by post-colonial writers so is true of *Heart of Darkness*. Post-colonial writers like Chinua Achebe, Wilson Harris and others consider *Heart of Darkness* as a text misrepresenting the Africans. Achebe says:

Reading *Heart of Darkness*... which was a very, very highly praised book, and which is still highly praised, I realized that I was one of those savages jumping up and down the beach. Once that enlightenment comes to you, you realize that someone has to write a different story, and since I was any case inclined that way, why not me... (qtd. in Yousuf 32).

Achebe believes that Africa is portrayed as a dark continent, undeveloped and uncivilized by Conrad in *Heart of Darkness* and by Joyce Carey in *Mister Johnson*. Achebe thinks that these writers consider Africa as a symbol of the weird, the irrational rather than rational and Africans as a people only too ready to welcome and be the 'Whiteman's burden'. Consequently, Achebe had a desire to 'set the record(s) straight'. He challenged not only the vision depicted but also the way in which it was depicted. He challenged not only the story but also the mode of storytelling and the relationship between the reader and the writer (Carroll 27). He took the stance of a cultural historian and his culture embodied storytelling, oral folklores and proverbs which were incorporated in his novels. He presents pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Nigerian society in novel after novel from *Things Fall Apart* to *Anthills of Savannah*. Altering the European arrangement of Africa was an important task for Achebe as he believed that colonialism had marred the psyche and self-evaluation of the African. *Things Fall Apart* marks the beginning of this project. Achebe believed that the novel is "an act of atonement with my past, the ritual return and homage of a prodigal son" (*Morning Yet on Creation Day* 70). In an interview with Lewis Nkosi in 1962, Achebe said:

I was quite certain that I was going to try my hand at writing, and one of the things that set me thinking was Joyce Carey's novel set in Nigeria, *Mister Johnson*, which was praised so much, and it was clear to me that this was a most superficial picture of not only of the country, but even of the Nigerian character and so I thought if this was famous then perhaps someone ought to try and look at this from inside (Deurden and Pieterse 4).

It is clear from the excerpt above that Achebe seeks to redress such representations that he believes pertain to his own self-image as an African and to his intension as a writer to write a 'counter-discourse' to the colonial center. He seeks to redress the imbalance he perceives in pejorative representations. In *Things Fall Apart* he presents Africans not as stereotypes of Eurocentric delineation who participate in cannibalism and are unable to articulate their own desires (as portrayed by Conrad in *Heart of Darkness*), but as human beings, capable of perceiving and feeling things.

Alongside his fiction, Achebe's influential criticism exposes colonialist biases in English fiction and criticism, arguing for an indigenous African literature. Achebe's "Image of Africa: Racism in *Heart of Darkness*" (1977) is a touchstone of anti-colonial or

revisionary criticism. In the essay Achebe criticizes *Conrad's Heart of Darkness* of being a reflection of the European racist assumptions of 'darkness' and inferiority of Africans. The essay strikes a blow at the very heart of the canon of English literature in its efforts to dislodge Conrad, a writer whom F.R. Leavis placed at the very pinnacle of English literary achievement. Therefore, in Achebe as in many other post-colonial writers we see an attempt to resist and reinterpret the ideological underpinnings of imperialist writings - an effort not just to reverse the historical subject of colonial discourse but the discourse as well.

Sudanese novelist, Tayib Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* (1969) is significant not only for appropriation of theme - the journey into the unknown and the quest for self identity of *Heart of Darkness* but for its efforts to resist, reinterpret and revise it from the perspective of the colonized 'other'. He reclaims the fictive territory of Conrad's Africa and substitutes a post-colonial retelling for a colonizing tale.

Season of Migration to the North focuses on the Marlow like narrator's account of the story of the brilliant and promising Mustafa Sa'eed. His journey north to the European 'heart of light' - England from his village is a reversal of Kurtz's journey into the 'heart of darkness' - the Congo. Sa'eed's experience in England, similar to Kurtz's in Africa is marked by despair and a desire for annihilation. After spending seven years in jail for the murder of his English wife, Jean Morris and also being responsible for the suicide of three other women, Sa'eed returns to his village in Sudan. Before committing suicide, he befriends the unnamed Marlow like narrator and makes him the guardian of his sons and wife. The narrator spends the rest of the novel trying to fill the many gaps in Sa'eed's narrative. Although *Season of Migration to the North* evokes the ambience and ambivalence of Conrad's novel, it also refers to the discrepancies evident in his attempt to criticise the culture of imperialism. The rhetoric of his criticism, as Edward Said notes is the result of a "self-conscious foreigner writing of obscure experiences..." (4). He becomes a participant in the very ideology that he attempts to expose. The adventurous accounts by explorers such as Mungo Park and David Living Stone had powerfully created 'Africa' for Conrad. In other words Conrad was a victim of the Victorian myth of the 'dark continent'. This ideology about Africa being a savage and primitive place frames the opposition between savagery (Africa) and civilization (West) in the *Heart of Darkness*. Although Conrad's fictional accounts reveal a hostile view of imperialistic Europe's civilizing mission, post-colonial writers like Achebe, Saleh and others believe that in his fiction Conrad refuses to bestow 'human expression' on Africans. For Achebe the sins of Conrad are deeply connected to a desire in Western psychology "to set Africa up as a foil to Europe, a place of negations at once remote and vaguely familiar, in comparison with which Europe's own state of spiritual grace will be manifest" (Gilbert, Stanton and Melley 114-15).

Conrad's representations of African landscape suggest his work's imaginative affinities with the western imperial ethos even as the novel criticizes that ethos. For example, early on in *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow gets explicitly conventional about the profit that drives the European desire to conquer the non-white world. Marlow's comment about the colonial agents who 'dehumanize' the natives is quite revealing. He points out:

They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force... they grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a grand scale, and men going at it

blind - as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only (Conrad 4-5)

Salih's approach in *Season of Migration to the North* is to reverse the setting and plot of *Heart of Darkness*. For example, the threatening river in *Heart of Darkness* becomes the nourishing and life-affirming Nile in Salih's novel. Kurtz's regression and his gradual understanding of the "impenetrable darkness" and the "horror" of his life parallels Mustafa Sa'eed's violence and his recognition of the "impending tragedy" of his exiled life. Marlow's lie to preserve the romantic view of Kurtz is re-established to indicate the narrator's recognition of his own affinity to that of Sa'eed. However, the narrator refuses to embrace Sa'eed's darker vision in the end. Kurtz's black mistress is Sa'eed's English wife, Jean Morris whose enigmatic portrait hangs in the secret library in his house in the village. The skull-topped fence of Kurtz's courtyard becomes Sa'eed's collection of books containing volumes of European works and his own, but without "a single Arabic book. A graveyard. A mausoleum. An insane idea" (Salih 137).

In addition to these reversals Salih focuses on reinterpreting and recovering the 'territorial mapping' in Conrad's novel. The various directional movements in *Heart of Darkness*- from West to East and North to South are transformed into Sa'eed's migration to Europe and his eventual return to his land and people in South. Many critics like Federic Jameson have noted that Salih has cleverly reversed the symbolic pilgrimage of Conrad's novel. Rather than following a Whiteman travelling upriver into the heart of Africa, where he indulges in a fantasy of primitivism, Salih sends Mustafa Sa'eed down the Nile and into the heart of Europe. The novel is a classic example of a revisionary writing. Salih's inversion of Conrad is an act of resistance and a critique of the imperialist perspective that *Heart of Darkness* is assumed to represent. Marlow uses 'there' to distinguish the dark, unfamiliar other - 'Africa' from the civilized 'Europe'. This not only suggests the geographical boundary but the rhetoric of colonial discourse as well. For Marlow and for most of the Europeans, Africa symbolizes the 'there' - a hostile, dark and dangerous place remarkably different from 'here' (Europe) - the land of civilization, culture and enlightenment. In *Season of Migration to the North* Sa'eed comes face-to-face with the "horror" of his spiritual and physical exile in England. This according to Jameson is:

The re-writing or restructuration of a prior historical or ideological *subtext*, it being always understood that the 'subtext', is immediately present as such, not some common-sense external reality, nor even the conventional narratives of history manuals, but rather must itself always be (re)constructed after the fact (81).

The 'paradox' of the "subtext", as Jameson puts it "may be summed in this, that the literary work or cultural object, as though for the first time, brings into being the very situation to which it also at one and the same time is a reaction" (ibid 81).

In England, Sa'eed realizes that no schooling would make him one of them. He realizes that he is fundamentally and culturally one of the 'other', colonized and a dark

shadow in the land of 'light'. He says:

The language, though, which I now heard for the first time is not like the language I had learnt at school. These are living voices and have another ring. My mind was like a keen knife. But the language is not my language; I had learnt to be eloquent in it through preservice (Salih 28-29).

In spite of his education Sa'eed could not hope to be accepted by the dominant culture. He is only impressive for his coming out from Africa to the West and consequently outgrows the 'primitivism' of his own culture. The road to assimilation distances him from his culture and community, yet it never leads to his acceptance by the English as an equal. His seduction and abandonment of the English women and the murder of his wife are acts of atonement for his West. For the women he is a "curiosity" and the fatal attraction of the mysterious East. It is the same attraction that provokes Marlow to explore the 'dark continent' and the same desire that finally devours Kurtz. When Isabella Seymore asks Sa'eed whether he is an African or Asian, he responds; "I'm like Othello - Arab - African" (ibid 38). To this Isabella replies: "Yes... your nose is like the nose of Arabs in pictures, but your hair isn't soft and jet black like that of Arabs" (ibid 38). The stereotypical image of himself that Sa'eed perceives in Isabella's response insistently recalls Kurtz's lie. Kurtz had been writing and believing in his own lies about the civilizing mission of Europe in Africa until, in a revealing moment of critical honesty and self-abhorrence, he scribbles his manifesto, "Exterminate the brutes!". Kurtz has himself been engaged as the 'great ivory agent' filling the coffers of Europe. Kurtz is at once the exploiter and a torch bearer for truth whose moral and mental denigration is a result of his isolation amidst the 'savagery' of Africa. Sa'eed's violence in turn; is a reflection of his alienation. Jean Morris represents to him, as Kurtz's mistress does to Kurtz, the symbol of desire and destruction. She is the one who recognizes his moral vacuity. At the trial Sa'eed finally belies his Othello image when he specifies:

Yes, my dear Sirs, I came as an invader into your very homes: a drop of the poison which you have injected into the veins of history. I am no Othello. Othello was a lie (Salih 95).

Sa'eed is defended by his former mentor and professor, Maxwell Foster Keen. In his defence Maxwell is more concerned with rationalizing the colonial ideology than Sa'eed's crime. He says:

Mustafa Sa'eed, gentlemen of the jury, is a noble person whose mind was able to absorb Western civilization but it broke his heart. These girls were not killed by Mustafa Sa'eed but by the germ of the deadly disease that assailed them a thousand years ago (ibid 33).

Sa'eed recognises that he is not only an exile from his own culture but also an intruder in the West, for "Professor Forster Keen turned the trial into a conflict between two worlds, a struggle of which I was one of the victims" (ibid 33). Like Kurtz, whose life and death Marlow casts in moral terms, Sa'eed's exile, return and death are cast in moral and ideological terms. Although Sa'eed tells the narrator, "Whatever my life has been it contains no warning and lesson for anyone (ibid 65), the narrator recognises his affinity to Sa'eed.

Like Sa'eed he has been to the West and studied in England. He feels an outsider in his own village even though his reality is still rooted in his culture, his place and his remembrance of his grandfather. He believes his people are lacking behind by the standards of the European world but he experiences “a sense of richness” (Salih 73) when he embraces his grandfather.

In *Heart of Darkness* Marlow redeems Kurtz with a lie. However, in *Season of Migration to the North* Sa'eed's narrator refuses to embrace Sa'eed's vision of himself. Like Marlow, the narrator seeks to answer his own doubts, “Was it likely what happened to Mustafa Sa'eed could have happened to me? He said that he was a lie, so was I also a lie? I am from here... I used to treasure within me the image of this little village... (ibid 49). The narrator's epiphany is revealing in his recognition of his difference from that of Sa'eed. Salih makes the narrator to reject Sa'eed's vision of himself by not letting him “complete his story”. The narrator thinks:

He wants to be discovered, like some historical object of value... There was no doubt... it was me he had chosen for that role. It was no curiosity that he had left me a letter... to further sharpen my curiosity... he wanted history to immortalize him. But I do not have time to proceed further with this force. I must end it... At the break of dawn tongues of fire will devour these lies (ibid 154).

The narrator's rejection of Sa'eed's lies is also his commitment to his sense of belonging to his place and culture. The narrator's reiteration of a national and cultural identity reflects Salih's rejection of the colonial ideology and the need for former colonies to shape their future. As Said puts it in *Culture and Imperialism*

that:

The postcolonial writers... bear their past within them - as scars of humiliating wounds, as instigation for different practices, as potentially revised visions of the past tending toward a new future, as urgently reinterpretable and redeployable experiences, in which the formerly silent native speaks and acts on a territory taken back from the empire (31).

These writers not only challenge the European view of history and culture of the colonized people but also provide an alternative to many assumptions upon which European fiction is based. Although these writers employ many of the conventional resources of the English novel, they constantly transform these in accordance with their own world view.

One of the best known revisionary texts is *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys, a re-writing of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* Jean Rhys forces us to understand the reasons why Bertha Mason turned mad. By giving voice to a character that remains silent in *Jane Eyre*, Rhys redirects our attention to the latent racism in the master narratives.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea* Rhys provides an added perspective to the theme of self-appraisal by exploring it with her own childhood in the West Indies. A hankering of lost childhood which pervades the earlier novels culminates in the first part of *Wide Sargasso*

Sea. Jean Rhys recreates her autobiographical experiences to provide a background for shaping Antoinette's personality. The theme of self-appraisal, quest for happiness, man-woman relationship and disappointment in love receive the most extensive exploration through a parallel elaboration of the colonial divide. The Antoinette-Rochester relationship, which is at the center of the novel, provides an understanding of the gulf separating the two worlds. The warm and sensuous Caribbean of Rhys's childhood is presented in sharp contrast with the cold and rational world of England.

The idea for the novel arose from the dehumanized depiction of Bertha Mason, the mad wife of Rochester who is kept locked in the attic at the Thornfield Hall by Bronte in *Jane Eyre*. This becomes clear from an interview of Rhys with Elizabeth Vreeland in *Paris Review* where Rhys reflects:

When I read *Jane Eyre* as a child, I thought, why she [Bronte] think(s) Creole women are lunatics and all that. What a shame to make Rochester's first wife Bertha, the awful mad woman, and I immediately thought I'd write the story as it might really have been. She seemed such a poor ghost, I thought I'd try to write her a life (235).

As such, Bertha's total effacement as a person prompted Rhys to give a 'voice' to her unsaid story. In "Unquiet Ghosts: The Struggle for Representation in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*", Mona Fayad writes that *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a novel meant for "fighting the silences" and a story of the "struggle to come into being" of Antoinette Cosway and "her stubborn insistence on speaking herself" no matter at what cost (34).

In recreating Bertha's mute story Rhys delved into her own West Indian background and the felt experiences of her childhood and adulthood as a Creole. Rhys offers an implicit critique of the values which govern Bertha as insane and Rochester as sane. The choice of the subject gave Rhys an advantage to work out her predetermined universe telling the tale of a woman whose fate is sealed and death already narrated in another novel. Being a West Indian herself, Rhys is able to enter the psyche of Bertha. She transformed the marginalised, beastly figure (Bertha) of *Jane Eyre* into a beautiful and strong Creole Antoinette Cosway in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. She drags Bertha from the periphery to the center and gives her voice to tell her tale. *Wide Sargasso Sea* revisits the silence of *Jane Eyre* regarding much of Bertha's history. In *Jane Eyre* Bertha herself remains silent, spoken for but never speaking. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* Rhys uses a three part structure with multiple narrative techniques. Part I and III are narrated by Antoinette and the part II is told from the point of view of unnamed Rochester. Antoinette's narration in the first part unfolds her identity crisis as a member of Creole planter class. She is resented by black people for her belonging to the class of white oppressors. On the other hand whites despise her for being uncultured, non-European and alien. In the second part Rochester becomes the narrator. Marriage gives him the right to control Antoinette's property and Antoinette as well. The effective tool that Rochester finds to hate her and show his imperialistic authority is to rename her as 'Bertha'. This is important in a colonial sense in conveying a sense of ownership and in describing that which is named. Antoinette herself reflects, "Names matter like when he would not call me Antoinette" (Rhys 116). The identity of Bertha as the mad woman in *Jane Eyre* is revealed in *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a myth created by Rochester. In spite of Antoinette's protests, "Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name" (ibid 95); it is ultimately Rochester's naming that prevails. As the name Bertha is invented for her, so is the

character of madness, as Christophine says, “It is in your mind to pretend she is mad” (ibid 104). However, as with the myths of colonial literature, where through repetition, the representations of the centre become the accepted reality of the margins; his imagining of Bertha as mad also comes to be true. In the third part of the novel, the setting shifts from green, lushful West Indies to 'dream like' England. Bertha is locked up in the attic of Thornfield Hall where she takes the ghostly image of Bronte's *Jane Eyre*. Rhys allows Antoinette to find her relationship with the Caribbeans which was denied earlier. In her final dream Antoinette releases herself from the bondage and establishes her own identity. She realises the true purpose of coming to England. She shows her hatred towards her colonizer, Rochester by putting Thornfield Hall on fire and jumping into it ignoring the calls of her white master. The suicide in *Jane Eyre* is the death of Bertha in *Wide Sargasso Sea*; it resurrects her as an individual and an independent identity. Since the burning of Thornfield Hall is a dream in *Wide Sargasso Sea* it doesn't signify Antoinette's death. The flame represents the red fire of the Caribbean and enables her to achieve what she wants. She gets to know what she has to do and murmurs to herself, “Now at last I know why I was brought here and what I have to do” (Rhys 123). Elizabeth Baer in her article, “The Sisterhood of Jane Eyre and Antoinette Cosway” writes, “Antoinette's final torching of Thornfield Hall is an act of assertion, of defiance of symbolic identification with her West Indian Heritage” (Abel, Hirsch and Langland 134). Thus, the re-visioning of *Jane Eyre* is done at various levels. *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a reworking of the colonial past of West Indies. It is a prequel to *Jane Eyre* as Rhys recreates the life of mad Bertha. She makes the 'other' of *Jane Eyre* all powerful by attributing a voice to the voiceless. Jean Rhys also reworks the difference in the depiction of landscape of West Indies and England. Coral Ann Howells argues that “by allowing Antoinette to tell her own story”, Rhys has “exposed the limits of Bronte's imperialist assumptions” (120).

Wide Sargasso Sea has also challenged the England of *Jane Eyre*. The fine and just England of *Jane Eyre* provides Jane the opportunities to attain social, economic and gender equalities. She is admired by Rochester for her wit and intelligence. However, Bertha is never given a chance to project herself. England, that has provided ample independence to prove her worth, chains Bertha. As England has refreshed and saved Rochester, so West Indies alone can bring stability in Antoinette's life. Like all revisionary works, *Wide Sargasso Sea* keeps *Jane Eyre* in clear view so that text ceases to be the 'source' of the 're-written' text and emerge as constantly invoked intertext. In this view the source text (exposed of the underlying power discourse) attains a new dimension and meaning and is read in a new light with a new vision. In “The Sisterhood of Jane Eyre and Antoinette Cosway”, Elizabeth Baer writes: Rhys has commandeered *Jane Eyre* as a sequel and in doing so, forever 'revises' our reading of that text by the creation of her's (Abel, Hirsch and Langland 134).

In postmodernism the text is not a closed system but an open one into which we can have access through many different entrances none of which can be claimed as the main one. Each single text, moreover, is a network that recalls many other texts and opens up the horizon of intertextuality. Hence, the revisionary writers are using canonical European works as intertexts to subvert canonical discourse and cultural stereotyping and foregrounding the dynamic nature of intertextuality. Revisionary works help us understand how paradigms like genre, gender, etc. play an important role in the implication of colonialism. They also make us understand how colonial counter discourse influences and changes reading patterns worldwide. Revisionary writers deconstruct and decentralize the colonial and canonical

representations. Therefore, they rework European classics. Helen Tiffin terms such a project as 'canonical counter discourse', a process whereby postcolonial writers unveil and dismantle the basic assumptions of a specific canonical text by developing a counter discourse. The revisionary texts preserve many of the identifying signifiers of the original while altering, often allegorically, its structure of power. As such, revisionary writings can be seen as strategies of resistance on part of post-colonial writers.

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Problematizing 'Home' and 'Nation': Fluid Identity in *Burnt Shadows*

Any discussion of identity is a complex one and identity of an individual is often determined based on one's affiliation or belongingness to a particular nation, religion, community, culture, mode of thought etc. The term acquires significance not simply from how people see themselves but how others do look at them and treat them. Sameness and difference are crucial to the formation of identity. The fixed notions of identity based on gender, religion, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nation etc. provides comfort to individuals and it is often used to mobilize people for diverse aims and goals. Identity based on specific religion and nationalist ideology expects strong loyalty from the people and people willingly lay down their lives for the cause of nation or religion. The conventional notions of identity lead to the formation of 'us' and 'they' binary so as to create the category of 'other' ensuring antagonism and conflicts.

In a world of increasing interconnectedness and mobility, people and societies are no longer restricted to specific geographical/physical location and the flow of people, goods and cultures across the borders reconfigure the conventional notions of identity marked by a particular culture or nation. Globalization and its accompanying features deterritorialize and dislocate people and words like transnationalism, multiculturalism, transmigration, diaspora etc. become a part of people's daily vocabulary. As the borders of countries and distinctions of cultures become blurred, open-ended, unstable, and contested, the identity of an individual is not a fixed block that can be inserted into certain insular craters, but essentially fluid and forever evolving as the time demands. Since the writers of diasporic, transnational, migrant and postmigrant background themselves constantly experience deterritorialization, dislocation, the in-betweenness and unhomeliness of different sorts, they painstakingly deal with this aspect of the present day world in all its nuances and develop a critique of the conventional and predominant notions pertaining to the concepts of subjectivity, home, nation and foreignness through their literary works. One of the major preoccupations of these writers is to look at how life across two or more cultures shapes one's identity and in doing so they imagine a world of transnational and cosmopolitan outlook with all its contradictions and consensus.

The possibility of living across two or more countries, diverse cultures and languages changes the way people see themselves with respect to their home and the way they grapple the concepts of home, language, family and identity. 'Home' and 'nation' become fluid and dynamic with migration and transmigration of people transcending territorial and cultural boundaries. Postcolonial, poststructuralist, and postmodernist scholars often explore this aspects of identity and emphasize the role hybridity and performativity play in identity formation. They account the "multiple subject positions" that form the building blocks of identity in the postmodern world and these different forms of identity appear to be upheld simultaneously, successively or separately with varying degree of force, conviction and enthusiasm (Cohen, *Frontiers of identity* 205).

Unfolding in four sections, Pakistani born English writer Kamila Shamsie's novel

Burnt Shadows(2009), traces the shared histories of two families-the Burtons and the Tanakas-in three generations. Sweeping historical events such as the second World War, Independence struggle in Indian subcontinent and partition, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, 9/11 attack and subsequent attack of Iraq and Afghanistan by the USA, the novel centres around Hiroko Tanaka who moves across the globe starting from Tokyo in the aftermath of the Second World War and ends up in New York after the 9/11 attack spending her life span in cities like Delhi, Istanbul and Karachi. Shadows of history-personal as well as political-loom large over the life of Shamsie's characters and they blend into new surroundings, cultures and languages forming an "imagined community" of transnational outlook as the characters are drawn from countries such as Japan, India, Pakistan, England, America, Germany, Afghanistan etc. Many of the characters lead global lives and their ethnicity, language and nationality are mere accidents of birth and historical events.

The characters of the novel can be seen as a collective of war victims who share the common fate of 'homelessness' and in constant move defying the insular boundaries of nation, cultures and languages. While turning the novel into a transnational and political allegory, Shamsie not only problematizes the nationalist ideology but also the history-fiction divide. History and fiction interchangeably become the background and foreground throughout the novel and the characters are set in motion due to historical events of far reaching consequences. Hiroko Tanaka dwells in travel throughout the novel physically, mentally and culturally and adapts foreignness with an incredible ease. National, cultural or language barriers do not come in her way of establishing relationship with people from diverse backgrounds. Hiroko Tanaka, the heroine of the novel, leaves Nagasaki carrying the brunt of the Second World War and she loses her German lover Konrad Weiss to the war. The bomb that fell on the fateful day of August 9 consumes her lover even before they consume their relationship and the bomb makes indelible marks on her back of the body:

Fire and smoke and, through the smoke, nothing. Through the smoke, land that looks the way her back feels where it has no feeling. She touches the something else on her back. Her fingers can feel her back but her back cannot feel her fingers. Charred silk, seared flesh. How is this possible? Urakami Valley has become her flesh. Her flesh has become Urakami Valley. She runs her thumb over what was once skin. It is bumped and raw, lifeless (Shamsie 19).

Hiroko's physical body becomes literally and metaphorically significant as it is forced to carry the marks of political and national upheavals and she leaves Japan for India when her identity confines simply into the category of explosion affected one. She remembers: "Already she had started to feel that word 'hibakusha' start to consume her life. To the Japanese she was nothing beyond an explosion- affected person; that was her defining feature" (33). Hiroko reaches Delhi just when the British was about to leave India and lives with her dead fiancé's sister Elizabeth Ilse and her English husband James Burton. Being a translator at professional level, soon she is drawn towards Sajjad Ali Ashraf, the Burton's Muslim employee, who agrees to teach her Urdu and they decide to live together though the Burtons and Sajjad's family opposed their union. While the relation becomes closer the partition of the subcontinent takes Sajjad from his beloved Dilli and they settle in Istanbul and later in Karachi. Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and American interference in it unsettles the peaceful life of Hiroko and Sajjad in Karachi. Later Sajjad is shot dead mistakenly taken

as CIA agent when he was looking for his missing son Raza and Hiroko again becomes a victim of violent nationalism-Konrad to atomic bomb and Sajjad to CIA operation.

Kamila Shamsie shifts the focus of the novel to the third generation of the families- to Raza Sajjad Ashraf and Kim Burton, the daughter of Henry Burton. Henry, Burton's son, remained so close to Sajjad while they were in Dilli together and they continued it so though they parted ways after the partition. By the end of the novel Hiroko unites again with Elizabeth Ilse in New York where mistrust grows day by day as a result of the 9/11 attack. Though America is full of Asian immigrants by that time, there suspicion and mistrust cast shadow over people relationship. The novelist portrays the tales of bonhomie and friendship among people of diverse religious, national, cultural and linguistic backgrounds along with the looming suspicion and mistrust about Muslims in America subsequent to the 9/11 attack.

The novelist provides a picturesque representation of the present day world of constant migration and movement and asserts the significance of human relationship which transcend all sorts of barriers and boundaries, be it ethnic, national, religious, cultural, linguistic. Nationalist ideology and its inherent violence are manifested by many scholars of diverse background. Benedict Anderson has defined nation as an “imagined community”(15) with “deep horizontal comradeship” (16) and like many other scholars of nationalism, shown its potential to unleash violence and bloodshed. By bringing the sweeping historical events such as world war, the partition, invasion of Afghanistan by the USSR and the USA, and 9/11 attack-results of violent nationalism- the novelist presents an optimistic picture of a world with transnational brotherhood and sisterhood. The major characters are on constant move through out the novel making the familiar unfamiliar and the unfamiliar, familiar.

In the present world of migration and transmigration, transnationalism is an experience that is a part of the daily existence of a large group of people that live outside their home country. Even when the move is voluntary, it tends to complicate the relationships these migrants have with their country of origin and settlement; the experience changes profoundly the way migrants think about themselves, their family and their country. Though people find it difficult to grasp the situation of “unhomely” in foreign places, Shamsie's characters adapt the foreignness with ease thereby making her fictional world transnational in outlook and temperament. Shamsie's characters are multi-lingual and find their country of settlement as their own. Almost all the major characters in the novel learn different languages and transnational is equated with translator. Language exchange is the first step of people moving toward each other and all the relationship in the novel flowers through language exchange. It is the language exchange that brings together Hiroko and Konrad, Sajjad and the Burtons family, Sajjad and Hiroko, Raza and Abdulla and all these characters are good at mastering foreign languages with ease. Raza, the representative of the last generation,

sought out as many nationalities as possible, acquiring language with the zeal of a collector – Bengali and Tamil from the hotel staff; Arabic from the receptionists; Swahili from the in-house jazz band; French from Claudia – the most consistent of his many lovers; Farsi from the couple who ran the restaurant at the corner of his street; Russian from the two hookers who lived in the apartment next door to his studio...The more languages you learned, he discovered, the more you found overlap (193).

The characters are not simply from different nations and cultures but of mixed origins too. To correct Abdulla, the Afghan and Raza's boyhood friend, who has taken him as an Afghan, Hiroko reveals, "Raza's not Hazara. I'm Japanese. And his father was Pakistani. Originally from Delhi. He and I moved to Karachi in '47' (235). In the global world, cities are cosmopolitan and transnational in every respect. Hiroko understands this soon after she reaches New York where the Afghan cab driver Omar greets : "Welcome to my country, aunty" and it is "A city in which she could hear Urdu, English, Japanese, German all in the space of a few minutes" (218).

Though transnationality and transmigrancy is fraught with contradictions, nostalgia, homelessness and double consciousness, migrations and transmigrations create new transnational social spaces where people from diverse background can forge relationships and live together. The novel portrays the possibility of such a world where people can forget the narrow feelings of nationality, religion and language to forge a community of mutual understanding and reciprocal relationship. The different generations of the two families grew up with the story of spider episode in prophet Muhammed's life:

He and Harry placed side by side the stories each knew of their families. Stories of opportunities received (Sajjad found, through Konrad, a way out of the constraining world of his family business), loyalty offered (Hiroko refused to back away from Konrad when her world turned him into an enemy), shelter provided (three times Ilse gave Hiroko a home: in Delhi, Karachi, New York), strength transferred (Ilse would never have left the life she hated if not for Hiroko), disaster elided (James and Ilse ensured Sajjad and Hiroko were well away from Partition's bloodletting). And – this part Raza and Harry didn't have to say aloud – second chances (at being a better father, a better son). Now Kim, too, was part of the stories. Whatever happened to him, Raza knew she would watch over his ageing mother as the spider dance proceeded (265).

The novel's movement across multiple geographical locations, including Tokyo, Delhi, Istanbul, Karachi, and New York, renders the borders of nations highly fluid and permeable, and, by extension, makes the concepts of home, national belonging and citizenship malleable and open ended. The characters in the novel through their constant movement across boundaries construct and reconstitute their simultaneous embeddedness in more than one society. Kamila Shamsie contests and transgresses the essential notions of identity based on 'home' and 'nation' through the lived experiences of disjuncture and uprooting. For those who live in a multiple locations, home can be "the place of origin, or the place of settlement, or a local, national or transnational place, or an imagined virtual community" (Brah 192). Through the (hi)story of different generations situated in multiple locations, the novelist delineates what Robin Cohen termed as a "deterritorialization of social identity" which *challenges "the hegemonizing nationstates' claim to make an exclusive citizenship a defining focus of allegiance and fidelity in favour of overlapping, permeable and multiple forms of identification"* (Global Diasporas 187). For the characters in *Burnt Shadows*, identity is not an accomplished fact as they locate and relocate their 'homes' and 'nations' constantly across borders.

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Subverting Repressive Structures: A Study on *Munnariyippu*

One of the most important analysts of culture's supervisory impact on the human body is Michael Foucault. Foucault discusses Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, a circular building around a central axis that allowed the guards to observe prisoners while themselves remaining unobserved. The point of this device was to induce in inmates the belief that they were under constant surveillance. Venu's *Munnariyippu* presents a Panoptic view of the multiple forms of disciplinary control imposed on Raghavan, who is convicted for double homicide.

Munnariyippu (2014) is directed by cinematographer Venu featuring Mammootty and Aparna Gopinath in the lead roles. It tells the story of the life of C.K. Raghavan portrayed by Mammootty as a middle-aged man who is in jail for 20 years for a double homicide. The story develops after a meeting between Raghavan and an aspirational freelance journalist Anjali Arakkal played by Aparna Gopinath. The film hovers over jail, wrongful conviction and punishment with pivot as jail.

It is often assumed that jail is a place, a building where inmates are forcibly confined and denied freedom. My own view is that in this film the idea of jail is subverted and public space develops into a jail. Panopticon comes to stand as a metaphor for many leading features of modern society. Raghavan chooses to remain in the jail even after doing a full term of life imprisonment. In contrast to the usual notions of a jail, it becomes his place of refuge. According to the jail records he has killed his wife and a Gujarati woman. The plot opens from a prison, moves to public space and finally returns to the prison.

Panopticon or the Inspection House is any sort of establishment in which persons of any description are to be kept under inspection. The modern metaphors for such surveillance structures are work houses, hospitals and houses of industries. The Panopticon model surveillance is used in different forms in this film.

Prison Surveillance

The standard way of thinking about the jail and the objective of punishment is to ensure that body of the wrongdoer remaining central; the focus of the reform is that "the soul of the prisoner's body is made docile" by the prison regime. The body is caught up in a system of constraints and privations, obligations and prohibitions. The modern prison and the juridical system uses disciplinary power exercised through prison governors, officers etc., and the works of these officials involve examining and accessing people. At the back of such exercises of disciplinary power is the process of 'normalisation'. The aim of examination and assessment is to determine the nature and extent of the offender's deviation from the norms and to devise the most efficacious means of remedying their criminal behaviour and restoring them to normal, conforming conduct. The jail superintendent Ramamoorthy is like a guardian of Raghavan. In the central jail, even though he is under constant surveillance, he is contented. No one stimulates his Id. He is supposed to eat, sleep and rise at a particular time but nothing bothers him. Jail becomes his feeder and haven.

Surveillance of Raghavan by Anjali

Anjali comes to the jail as a ghost writer for writing a service story of the jail superintendent Ramamoorthy from where she meets Raghavan. What attracts Anjali is Raghavan's startling replies. Raghavan's answer to every question is another question worth answering. He is portrayed as calm and patient, which prompted Anjali to write an article about him titled - "Brain Behind Bars" which becomes a huge success. When Anjali asks him whether he is not happy when released from jail, he answers- "But I am not unhappy here". All his docility and passiveness remain intact until his freedom is untouched. Anjali takes the initiative to release Raghavan for her selfish ends. She signs a contract with a multinational company to write a book on him. Anjali denies Raghavan even his fundamental right to individual freedom. He is supposed to have food at a specified time and then write. From jail Raghavan moves to a public space, a city space where he is locked inside a small room and Anjali forces him to write his story by giving a deadline. Anjali berates Raghavan whenever he goes out. Anjali is the supreme power governing him. She gives him a deadline to write and is constantly interfering in his private space. In jail Raghavan didn't face any constraints. Anjali often repeats that Raghavan is under her custody. Even though she provides him bare life, she is continuously keeping an eye on him for her selfish ends.

Corporate Surveillance

Raghavan is controlled by Anjali who in turn is controlled by a multinational literary agency, Green Orange. She works for them under a deadline. The moment she signs the contract, she is under the surveillance of the company. Green Orange becomes a sort of disciplinary power and business surveillance over the life of Anjali. It goes beyond the precincts of the prison. The company's only concern is that their book should hit the market before anyone else's if it has to make business sense. One non-negotiable clause in the contract is the time line for which she is under surveillance of Rajiv Thomas who works for the company. The final matter has to reach within thirty days of signing the contract and at least two chapters within two weeks. When she fails to work according to their contract, her punishment is to face legal proceedings.

Public Surveillance

Public space is the place where real surveillance begins. In jail he could roam freely, write according to his choice. But in public everything is watched and controlled. According to Foucault, power is dispersed in a society and works in capillary forms through discourses (206). He further talks about 'Sovereign power' that rulers exercised over their subjects in medieval times and its gradual replacement in the modern period by disciplinary power. In a study of the development of the modern prison system, Foucault shows how those who contravened the monarch's law and wishes were often publicly punished by methods that directly assaulted the body of the wrong doer (by whipping, branding, torture, and execution). Mental torture is the punishment exercised upon Raghavan when he is in the public space. Foucault's 'bio-power' refers to disciplinary power over life as it affects both individual bodies and social bodies. Everyone is moving under a deadline and restrained by a supreme power. Raghavan is a person obsessed with freedom. Foucault says that "body serves as an intermediary, as an instrument; if one intervenes upon it to prison, or to make it work, it is in order to deprive the individuals of a liberty that is regarded both as a right and as a property" (207). The body is thus caught up in a system of obligations and prohibitions.

Raghavan puts up with all these constraints in the public space. Idea of freedom is also subverted. In a powerful scene, Raghavan goes out is recognized, sighted by people and invited for a drink. In the bar there is a statement where Raghavan gives vent to his aggressive notion of freedom. He says,

How we define freedom is subjective. The perception of the word's meaning will vary from person to person....Sometimes we uproot those causes that groom us in one way of freedom and the definition is bestowed upon that provisions of free space. When your thoughts are hindered in the microspace of home we call it family feud; in society it is termed revolution. No matter where it is happening (be it Cuba or home), when the resistance happens, bloodshed inevitably ensues.

His conscience affirms that he didn't kill anyone and made others believe it but once when he steps into the public space there are many incidents and instances that trigger and stimulate his primordial instincts and remind him, that he is a convict. At that point Raghavan is disturbed, and his inner guilt brews up, as for instance, when Raghavan goes out with the room boy and confronts a Gujarathi couple. But for Raghavan all these happen not in the real prison but in the much larger prison-house of the public space. That might be one reason why Raghavan insists on remaining in the prison. The public space becomes the all powerful, the all seeing guard and as a result Raghavan becomes a topophobic. Towards the end Anjali translocates Raghavan to a remote place where he is denied his every possibility of freedom and probably at this point Raghavan realizes that the transgressive moment of inevitable resistance has arrived and decides to bump off Anjali, thereby earning his right to enter a better prison for a third case of homicide.

Another recurring motif in the film is the Foucauldian notion of the 'regime of truth'. The idea that truth exists in the plural and finally eludes all human grasp is profoundly expressed by Raghvan on a number of occasions. Raghavan reflects profoundly on the elusive nature of truth. Truth, like light, is indestructible. We might be able to cover it up or block its appearance for a while but truth does exist. This notion of truth is explained by using Ashoka Chakra. As he puts it, "in Ashoka Chakra we see three lions standing back to back. Yet there is another lion on their back in camouflage. Truth is that fourth lion. Nobody pursues or finds it. Truth alone triumphs." But whatever truth is, once accepted as truth, it has incredible power and no one can escape the regime of truth.

Truth isn't outside power ... Truth is a thing of the world; it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint and induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth. Its 'general politics' of truth; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned (Foucault 131).

Munnariyippu gives us a timely 'warning' that regimes of truth pervade society which is in a state of constant flux and negotiation. Raghavan asserts that his real freedom is inside the jail where he returns in the end. *Munnariyippu* is a movie that will haunt us for a long time and the implications of its subversion of multiple forms of surveillance embedded into various locations of culture are profound and far-reaching.

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Not Adding a Last Line: Musings on Trauma in Select Post-9/11 Poems

The political and social functions of poetry have eclipsed its aesthetic dimensions in the post 9/11 scenario. Recent scholarship on poetry pays attention to its social and cultural contexts to foreground its political significance in times of conflict. Maria Damon and Ira Livingston argue that “the time has come to revisit poetry's relevance to considerations of public culture (5) Harrington views poetry as a “conversation” taking place in multiple textual and institutional sites (20). As Luger argued in her thesis, poetry is to be treated as a “a social form in order to contextualize the historical production of reading strategies and consider the production and circulation of poetry in a specific moment” (27). Gubar, who has studied holocaust poetry in depth argue that poetry plays an important role in times of crisis. According to her, poetry conveys both a “mysterious reluctance to illuminate” and “flickering, fitful bursts of meaning” (xvi). She notes that in its tendencies to abrogate narrative coherence, poetry does psychological, political, aesthetic, and ethical work without laying claim to experience or comprehension in its totality. Gubar suggests that the poets can provide “spurts of vision, moments of truth, and baffling but nevertheless powerful pictures of scenes unassimilated into an explanatory plot” (qtd in Luger 27). In *Poetry after Auschwitz*, Susan Gubar writes that, in studying poetry written about the Holocaust after 1945, she is mapping out new scholarly terrain and “has no safety net of others' criticisms” (xvii). The observation is valid in the study of post 9/11 poetry. This paper is an attempt to map out the politics and poetics selected post 9/11 poems which captured the quintessence of trauma experienced by the victims of September 11.

Poetry is the language of the heart. It can capture and conceptualize the emotional and spiritual trauma better than prose. This fact might account for the proliferation of poems after moments of inner turmoil, be it personal, political or cultural. The rather controversial comment by Adorno that writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric (19) was indeed a puzzled reaction to the huge volumes of verse published in various formats by writers from various parts of the globe in response to the persecution of Jews. There was a similar trend in the aftermath of 9/11.

We are living in an age in which the divide between private sphere and public sphere is rather blurred. The most personal thing is posted in the social media, making the private a public event. On the other hand, the public event intrudes into our personal realm through media like television and internet. In the age of live telecasting and streaming, a foreign capital might be closer to us in proximity than the town in the neighborhood. This problematizes the very question of distance and proximity. The attack on twin towers generated heated discussion all over the globe because it was an event which was reenacted umpteen times on TV in our drawing rooms. According to Habermas, the whole world population was a “benumbed” witness of this event (28). Boradori holds that the destruction of World Trade Centre took place in front of what Habermas called 'global public' (28). Perhaps, September 11 could be called the first world event in the strict sense (Boradori 28). We were all participants and witnesses of an event which happened in a country in a different continent thousands of kilometers away. Unlike in the past, when even a public event

impacted a few hundreds or thousands, this event directly became a major part of everyday discourses of people in almost all continents. The definitions of witness became all the more problematic since some who witnessed the event on TV saw it more clearly and some of them were more traumatized than those who were actually there. The Bush doctrine that you are 'either with us or with them' sounded schizizophrenic to a world which was too puzzled and traumatized that taking a position was not only problematic but also impossible.

The basic edifice of trauma theory was built on narratives of trauma related to the holocaust in Germany. The contours of trauma theory need to be redrawn so as to accommodate discussion on trauma in the post 9/11 period since millions were traumatized in different degrees in different parts of the world. This group included not only the survivors, the injured, the spectators who were actually there, the bystanders, the police and paramedics but also those who saw the live telecast or the recorded clippings on internet or other digital media devices. The number of victims in an extended sense is phenomenal and the emotional trauma varied. New modalities are to be developed to explore and theorize the modalities of the quintessence of trauma in such new contexts.

Trauma might lead to physical, emotional and at times even intellectual reflections. For Berry, "at least, trauma has led to intellectual clarity" (4). It might generate anxiety, pain, frustrations, anger and even in some cases neurosis and psychosis. In such moments even language may fail us. As Derrida has pointed out "Something" took place ... But this very thing, the place and meaning of this "event," remains ineffable, like an intuition without concept ... out of range for a language that admits its powerlessness and so is reduced to pronouncing mechanically a date, repeating it endlessly..." (qtd in Borradori 86). Moments of intense trauma might also generate a feeling of shared solidarity among victims, both immediate and distant. Richard Gray in his book *After the Fall* opines that moments of crisis may provide an intercultural connection (25). Shared pain like shared laughter functions as a cementing force. Trauma also might lead to asking deeper questions about pain and it might lead to the realization that the essence of the pain and trauma is the same and only the setting is different. The impact of trauma might also generate intellectual responses. It might enable the victim to ask difficult and disturbing questions about the roots of violence and the causes for its all-pervasive nature.

In moments of emotional anxiety, our language might often fail us and we communicate in tears and sighs. We come to know more about the trauma of victims through photographs which encapsulate the pain more powerfully than hundreds of newspaper articles. Grappling the irrationality of violence in rational prose may be impossible for those mere voyeurs who are neither physically nor emotionally involved, but for others it is difficult. As Gray pointed out "If there was one thing writers agreed about in response to 9/11, it was the failure of language; the terrorist attacks made the tools of their trade seem absurd (9)". That explains the proliferation of verse narratives in the immediate aftermath of september11.

The poems that I analyse in this paper are written by victims who experienced trauma in an extended sense and their audience also comprised of victims of trauma. The symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder may not be visible in them. But, at an emotional plain they were all hurt in varying degrees. Victims ventilated their trauma in verse and thus poetry writing and reading had a cathartic effect.

Because of the popularity of new media like Internet and social media, even personal mediation in verse got much traction. On certain online platforms, more than fifty thousand poems were published. Some of them reflected the shock, trauma, anger, frustration, pain and hopelessness in verse which defied conventional norms of poesy. Celebrated writers used their pen to probe some philosophical and political questions through their poems. The poems that I have chosen for detailed analysis are “The dead of September 11” by Toni Morrison, "Alabanza: In Praise of Local 100" by Martín Espada, and “Photograph of September 11” by Awa Szymborska. The similarities and differences in themes, styles, and structure of these poems are also looked at closely in this paper. The modalities used by the poets to capture the quintessence of trauma are put to critical scrutiny. The political, aesthetic, social, cultural, and cathartic dimensions of these poems are also looked at closely. An attempt is also made to explore using poetry as a site of resistance.

Human memory is predominantly visual, and we seem to think in images. Certain images associated with violence encapsulate the quintessence of the event more powerfully than other narratives. One shocking image closely associated with the collapse of the twin towers was that of falling men and women from the top floors. The poem “Photograph from September 11” presents that vivid image in detail. The relevance of a poem to describe a photograph when the actual photograph which speaks for itself is available might be a little problematic for the casual observers. But poetry is more than images; it is an attempt to think through images by transforming, translating and attributing meaning to them. A photograph is a finished product, but a poem remains a fluid entity always amenable to diverse and at times even conflicting interpretations.

The poet begins by capturing the jump. “They jumped from burning floors-One, two, a few more” (1-2). Jumping is different from falling since it is a conscious choice. The decision to jump down from top floors indeed is a testimony of these peoples' will to struggle against all odds. At the same time, it also reflects their helplessness since at the time of jumping the entire floor was engulfed in flames.

The photograph halted them in life
And now keeps them
Above the earth and towards the earth (4-6).

The permanence of art achieved by arresting the passage of time is indeed a topic of the most beautiful romantic poem “Ode on a Grecian Urn” by Keats. In contrast to those sensuous images of a man about to kiss his beloved, we have in this poem the most shocking image of a falling man. The photograph speaks more about the absence than about presence. There are no drops of blood in the photograph, but as the poet says the blood is well hidden.

There is enough time
For hair to come loose
For keys and coins
To fall from pockets (10-13).

That the pockets contained keys and coins are remarkable. Keys stand for physical security and money stands for financial security. But, in a moment of shock, the helplessness of man is revealed.

The trauma felt by the poet is encapsulated in the concluding lines.

I can only do two things for them

Describe this flight

And not add a last line (17-19).

The poet's refusal to add a last line might be interpreted as the inability of the public to come to terms with gravity of the situation. Not adding a last line is only a privilege in the realm of verse. Putting the cloak backward is impossible in real life, but arresting the flight in verse might help the reader to escape to a make believe world.

Another poem that I have chosen for analysis is “Alabanza: In Praise of Local 100” by Martin Espada. As the title suggests, this poem is praise for local people, the subaltern, the faceless working class who perished in the twin tower attacks but whose name may not be even mentioned in newspaper articles. Their identity is reduced to the digits and statistics, and very few attempts were actually made to acknowledge their sacrifices. This poem is dedicated to the 43 members of hotel employees *Local Hundred*, working at the Windows on the World Restaurant, who lost their lives in the attack on the World Trade Centre. The poem is indeed remarkable since it is an attempt to represent the under-represented and to give voice to the voiceless. That the faces or names of these hapless workers did not adorn the front pages brings to light the fact that the deep rooted class consciousness remains intact even in moments of great crisis. This poem is an attempt to expiate that sin committed by the society. That so many innocent civilians from many parts of the globe who had nothing to do with the imperial policies of the American Government were the actual victims sheds light on the meaninglessness and absurdity of the reckless brutality of the perpetrators of violence. In the poem, the physical violence of the murderer is juxtaposed with the epistemic violence of the mainstream society, so as to reflect on the trauma of faceless working class people even in a so called democratic state like America.

The recurrence of Spanish word *Alabanza* which means praise in English is an attempt of the poet to draw our attention to the Spanish speaking Latin American people working in the twin towers.

Alabanza praise the cook with a shaven head

And a tattoo on his shoulder that said oye (1-2)

The poet includes even the minute details so as to defy the attempts to reduce these people to nameless objects. Even a cursory look at their nationality underlies the fact that September 11 was indeed a global tragedy which victimized people from almost all ethnicities, religious sects, and nationalities. The poet highlights this fact by making many references to the characteristics of the kitchen workers. Reference is made to their shaven heads, their tattooed shoulder, their blue eyes, their pirate cap, and the like. The poet observes that inside the twin towers we could hear the chanting of people from all over the globe. “Ecuador, Mexico, Haiti, Yemen, Ghana, Bangladesh” (18-19). The poet presents a striking image of the kitchen thriving with life suggested by images like “where the gas burned blue on every stove” and “hands cracked eggs with quick thumbs” and the “busboy's music and the chime chime” (25-28). He goes on to juxtapose it with images of smoke which engulfed the world on September 11. The poet is equally traumatized by the suffering of victims of the twin tower explosion, and the victims of the war on terror which also claimed the lives of thousands of civilians. The poet indeed makes an earnest attempt to find a parallel

between the traumas of people who are the victims of violence on both sides of the boarder. The pain of sorrow and the trauma of violence have been experienced by people on all sides. The poet seems to suggest that the possibility of finding such a common ground of shared suffering to enhance a deeper analysis of the commonalities of human beings needs to be explored.

Alabnza. When the war began, from Manhattan and Kabul
two constellations of smoke rose and drifted to each other
Mingling in icy air (44-46).

The mingling of smoke from two continents symbolically alludes to the darkness and confusion that has engulfed the world.

The poet does not focus on the political or social causes of violence. The poet's task is to talk about emotions and the human essence which comes to the fore when we strip all embellishments. The movement of the poem from images of violence to images suggestive of peace and happiness deserves special mention. "I will teach you. Music is all we have" (49) indeed bodes well for the chaotic world.

Toni Morrison's poem "The dead of September 11" begins with a rather impossible proposition of talking to the dead "If I can pluck courage here, I would like to speak directly to the dead—the September dead" (2-3). Images which suggest the plurality of the American society abound in the poem. Those "children of ancestors born in every continent on the planet: Asia, Europe, Africa, the Americas" (5) and they wore almost all types of clothes: kilts, obis, saris, geles" (6-7). All of them perished together in the explosions. The poet confesses that to talk about human pain without essentialising and commodifying it, she needs to purge "my language of hyperbole"(15). She is not interested in the claims and counter claims which lead to violence and counter violence. She decides to set aside what she knew about "nations, wars, leaders, the governed and the ungovernable"(8-9) so as to empathise with the dead and the wounded. She is also critical of the eagerness of some people from some quarters to come up with certain problematic equations. She has no eagerness to analyse "the levels of wickedness; ranking them, calculating their \ higher or lower status among others of its kind"(17-18). She knows that such political engagement might deflect her attention from the root causes of the issue at stake. "With a mouth full of blood" (20) no one can speak to the dead because the dead are "free, absolute; they cannot be seduced by blitz" (22). The use of the word 'blitz' with 'seduce' indeed is critical since it suggests that bombing and warfare might deflect the attention of the people from the immediate issues but whether it could solve the issues at stake is indeed very problematic. The show of grief by some politicians was staged and their tears were even false, I "must not claim false intimacy" (25) in front of a camera to occupy the front page of newspapers. She attempts to find a common ground in humanity: "This thread thrown between your humanity and mine" (31). The final gesture of holding the victims in arms closer to her chest seems to suggest the final solution to end all human conflict- empathy and understanding.

To conclude, all the three poems are attempts to reflect on the trauma of violence. The first poem is about hope though the most striking image in the poem encapsulates violence. The second and third poems highlight the international nature of tragedy. They make remarkable attempts to bring victims from marginalized sections that were ignored by the mainstream to focus. A clear distinction is made between genuine empathy and feigned empathy.

Walter Kalaidjian's argument that resources like figurative language, engagement of mixed and contradictory metaphors (catachresis), inclusion of absence and silence (apoiopesis, often signaled through blank space or ellipses), the use of non sequiturs or shifting syntax (anacoluthon), and a special dispensation for grammatical irregularity and spatial arrangement on the page (11) make poetry a "salutary medium for staging traumatic histories" (11) is indeed true in the case all these poems. The blank space and ellipsis abound in these poems and they convey the inability of the victims of intense trauma to properly verbalise their experience. Grammatical irregularity and the play on words are two techniques employed by these poets to capture the quintessence of disorder in the post 9/11 America.

In short, poetry is a powerful medium to mediate on trauma. Poetry on trauma can be a site for both emotional and intellectual deliberations. These poets make earnest attempt to ask deeper questions about oppression and violence. They take the discussion on violence and trauma to the next level. The event is seen not as an aberration but as a continuation of systemic violence by other means.

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Elementary English in State Schools- the Need for Pedagogic Restructuring

Recently my neighbour found herself in great predicament when she found her seven year old, a very versatile grade two kid fascinated by anything under the sun, turning out to be very adamant and resistant with learning English spellings. Softening him up with generous gifts of stickers and chocolates, I made him sit with the text book to have a look at the words he had to study for the upcoming spelling test. The list included words like 'holiday', 'adventure', 'brooks', 'squirrel' and lots more, three and four syllable words. Out of curiosity, I asked for the child's note book which seemed to be full of written work which the child was unable to read though. The attempt obviously must have been reproduction of what was seen on the board, a miniature version of what happens mostly at the higher levels-cut, copy, paste-the technological version.

Within no time I realised that I was asking a kid who couldn't identify letters and sounds to read and spell and write three or four syllable words. Keeping the text aside we started cutting strips of paper, knowing that he was a kinaesthetic learner. I tried to make rhyming words, replacing the initial letters one after the other. After two hours of fun, cutting, drawing, matching and reading, he left home a happy child leaving me worried about the thousands out there in state schools, who don't have a neighbour or a mother to make things light, progressive and sustainable. The incident invoked me to look deeper into the elementary English curriculum design at the introductory levels in the state schools of Kerala.

Flipping through the pages of a grade two English book of the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) curriculum, one can see very creative, interesting tasks at the end of each little conversation or poetic text. The tasks mostly include framing dialogues, adding a few lines to a given song, foretelling, crossword puzzles, and a few colouring tasks. Needless to say, the tasks serve the purpose of creative, analytical thinking and expression. Experts opine that self expression, independent thinking, social communication, etc. find a great space under 'democratic literacy'. Cappello and Moss advocate that even literacy assessment must be grounded in current understandings of literacy and society (58). The necessity of literary assessments fostering a literate disposition towards 'reciprocity, that is, a willingness to engage in joint learning enterprises and to take others' purposes and perspectives into account' has been supported by Carr and Claxton (16). They look at capacity and confidence building as the fundamental purpose of education in the 21st century, which would facilitate in them lifelong learning. The methodology recommended by the SCERT has placed high emphasis on group work and individual responses in the introductory stages. The role classroom environment and practices can play in developing and nurturing inborn, social and intellectual dispositions in young learners has been reiterated by many studies and researches. Lilian Katz, an early childhood education expert defines disposition as "a pattern of behaviour exhibited frequently... in the absence of coercion... constituting a habit of mind under some conscious and voluntary control... intentional and oriented to broad goals" (1993b, 16). When the ability to bond is an inborn disposition, 'the tendency to be accepting, friendly, empathetic and cooperate' (Katz & McClellan 1997, 7) are valued as social dispositions. Solving problems, making predictions, inferences, asking questions, etc are intellectual dispositions. The potential of the recommended methodology

by SCERT hence cannot be discarded.

Though the design of the text allows a certain degree of problem solving and utilisation of information given in the text, in the ordering of topics, the easier, comparatively familiar matter related to dogs and the like were placed at the end of the book and the chapters at the beginning had bigger vocabulary which negates the basic principle of simple to complex approach in teaching.

The curriculum and syllabus for the state schools are framed by SCERT whose curriculum framework of 2007 had already identified the need for English language teaching along with the pitfalls in its implementation. When the framework states that efforts have been made to design textbooks into comprehensive activities with integrated activities, it acknowledges the reality that the infrastructure and learning atmosphere in most schools continue to be unattractive. Though the 2007 report states that the new curriculum has been based on principles of social constructivism, linguistics and neuropsychology, due to insufficient training, monitoring and inadequate teacher empowerment, the desired quality improvement has not been attained, neither in teaching, nor in learning. Studies, as stated in the curriculum framework itself, had also brought to light certain crucial observations on the text book. The ones stated were:

- a. lack of effort for meaningful use of integrated approach
- b. loaded content
- c. less scope for self-learning in the textbooks
- d. over looking child's perspective in the selection of certain texts

The framework also has recommendations stated in it which includes provision of reading material developed at the district level considering regional elements and using interactive CDs and materials other than text books.

The current scenario as witnessed through my neighbour's child leads one to conclude that despite studies reflecting shortcomings, nothing much is being done towards the most significant, formative years of generations of young learners for whom the world doesn't have much to offer without adequate language skills. Educationists and parents lament the plight of schooling in India where 'public schools are not performing and private schools teach students to compete rather than learn' leaving India's primary sites of education at risk (The Hindu/ October 28, 2014)

The NCERT in its National Curriculum Framework 2005 states that curriculum is a conceptual structure that demands workable principles and criteria in areas such as selection, organisation of content, ways of interacting with children and classroom organisation, type of teaching-learning material etc. School as an organised space demands professional knowledge, deep sensitivity towards emotional and intellectual needs of the children, and pedagogical judgement on the part of teachers. Hence a text book need not be considered as the final resource that decides the progress of lessons in an academic year. On the other hand, a text book should be used as a starting point for planning a literacy framework understanding the needs of the learners. In this light the SCERT's suggestion of preparing district wise reading material with regional elements holds ground. Though the nonformal education scheme of the 1960's to 90s had sent a signal throughout the country that anyone can teach, the later policy of the government that only trained English teachers should teach English had brought in significant improvement in quality. However, at the elementary levels, this policy

has had no serious impact. Lack of exposure, inadequate training and the inefficient functioning of Clusters and Block Resource Centres which were meant to decentralise pedagogic reform efforts, are all significantly contributing to the flawed approaches to language teaching at the primary levels in the state schools of Kerala, as in many other parts of India (*Curriculum Framework* 39-40).

Ronal E Hansen from University of Western Ontario in his paper entitled 'Five Principles for Guiding Curriculum Development and Practice' related to technology teachers has commented that 'successful practice in the classroom is inextricably linked to curriculum development- the everyday decisions about both what to teach and how to teach' (*JITE* v32n2). The National Curriculum framework 2005 proposed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training strongly advocates that the quality of the learning task influences its learnability and its value for the learner: "Tasks that are too easy or difficult, that are repetitive and mechanical, that are based on recalling the text, that do not permit self expression and questioning by the child assume the passive role of obedience. Learners learn not to value their own ability to think and reason, that knowledge is created by others and that they must only receive it" (39). Jane Medwell, David Ray et.al in their work *Primary English: Teaching theory and practice* highlights a key feature of teaching English at primary levels. They look at English teaching as a way of empowering children with a range of skills, knowledge and attitudes for schooling and life. Texts cannot do anything in developing this attitude. "It is the way the texts are treated by teachers by teachers and children that develops attitudes" (4).

The texts under question, to be effective in terms of its objective, demands command and confidence over English language on the part of a teacher. As per the existing norms, a teacher who has passed higher secondary and the teacher's training course (TTC) is qualified to teach at the elementary level. Unless given vigorous training and support, along with regular feedback to the teachers, the impact will be minimal on the students. The language proficiency of the teacher is a determining factor since a considerable amount of listening, speaking and reading should precede the writing tasks they are currently performing.

In the National Curriculum of UK, teaching English is organised on the basis of five key stages. Before a child reaches Key stage 1 (5-7 yrs) and Key stage 2 (7-11 yrs), Early Learning Goals are already set and worked upon in the Foundation key stage (3-5 yrs). Key stages one and two are organised over four age phases, Key stage 1, year 1 and 2, Lower Key Stage 2, years 3 and 4 and Upper Key Stage 2, years 5 and 6. Within each stage the material to be taught is split into:

Reading – word reading

Reading- comprehension

Writing- transcription

Writing- composition

Writing- vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

Besides, there is also the spoken language teaching that spans years 1-6, which gives an overview of the features that should be included in the programme of study. The National Curriculum considers the curriculum only as a 'minimum statutory entitlement for children' allowing schools the flexibility to modify, adapt or widen as per the student/context requirement (Medwell et al 4, 5).

The Curriculum Framework of 2007 proposes that essential conditions are to be provided for the acquisition of language in a natural manner. One of the basic premises related to this is that language ability is the development of an inner competence to make use of all language skills and that language learning is a spiral process. The document states the importance of continuous exposure to carefully selected, relevant material when it says, 'by class IV, if rich and interesting exposure is made available, the child will herself acquire the standard variety and rules of correct orthography'(57). Among the four skills, keeping it as a spiralling, progressive journey, the most advanced is writing. Innumerable researches and texts reiterate the pattern as listening, speaking, reading and writing. In the introduction to '*HOLA- A Holistic Approach to language learning for kids' Manual*' Megias Rosa stated that reading and writing are two skills that must be subordinated to understanding and saying things i.e, listening and speaking. The holistic approach proposed in the text is closely following the way in which a child acquires first language. Writing tasks of the kind mentioned in our state schools, should hence be looked upon as a meaningless exercise whereas bringing in audio resources, integrating pronunciation, vocabulary and word/sentence pattern identification through oral drills and language games will all prepare a child to progress naturally into the first steps of writing with gradual progression from words to sentences. Prior to writing words, in many international systems, there is ample familiarity given to the eyes, ears and hand muscles on various phonemes, rhyming words, question words etc. from which they are led to the short structures of basic sentences and punctuation marks. In the class work reflected in the notebooks of the seven year old, we see dialogues which use punctuation marks of advanced kind, which as per the guidelines of the NCERT lead to passivity in young learners which is detrimental to their language learning and its development. By making a child mechanically copy down dialogues written by the teacher or lines of the poem composed and printed on the board, considerable damage is being done to the learning and attitudes of a second language learner. The NCERT Curriculum Framework vehemently discourages 'mechanical copying from the blackboards, textbooks and guides' insisting the need to develop writing abilities 'holistically in conjunction with the sensibilities associated with talking, listening and reading'(61). Above all, as stated in David Crystal's *Encyclopaedia of the English language*, writing is the task and skill that allows repeated reading and analysis, it is an exercise that promotes the use of careful organisation. How can a young learner be made to write without acquiring the essential reading skill?

Simple Steps To Foster The Learning Journey

Jane Medwell et al points out that a vast majority of children are surrounded by literacy from their earliest years and these meaningful prints around them start communicating messages at a very early age. More interestingly, most children have 'few grounds not to believe that they would be successful in their encounters with literacy'(20). The simplest task of demonstrating the use of the target language would be sufficient to turn some of them into effective users of the language. Hence it becomes essential for the teachers to take the responsibility of promoting high standards of literacy and correct use of standard English, whatever his/her subject may be. Modelling the right behaviour has always been one of the easiest ways to teach considering children's innate tendency to mimic.

Though children may vary in their experiences and interactions, children get plenty of opportunities in this print embedded world to take part in rudimentary forms of reading and writing, whether with pen and paper, or mouse and key board or tabs and mobile phones. These opportunities may be made use of on a more planned, creative mode to engage and

involve them into varied levels of literacy. IT embedded classrooms have enabled primary teachers with the great opportunities by maximising exposure to visual and audio resources, sharing them, modifying them to meet various needs and even promoting creative expression of young minds. Affordable gadgets like phones, speakers, audio systems etc should be used on a regular basis to make key stage learners get used to correct, standard usages which would help certain errors getting fossilised at a later stage.

Access to Read aloud- large print books, reading corners, library hours, movie time, rhyming fun, story sessions, and language games have been proved very effective for learning through fun in all parts of the world. Singing together, sharing books, retelling stories and language games promote social and intellectual disposition, creating positive feelings towards learning even in large classrooms.

'Rich teacher talk' involves engaging children in large group, small group, and one to one conversations using words that they do not encounter everyday and also extending children's comments into 'descriptive, grammatically mature statements' (Kathleen A et.al, 2-3). This restates the need for teacher's proficiency in the language, and the accountability they have to willingly shoulder for the future generation.

David Brooks in his article entitled *In Praise of Small Miracles* brings in an insight into Behavioural Economics policies. He looks at them as small but concrete and powerful. In his view, which he reinforces with interesting examples, when policies are rooted in actual human behaviour and specific day-to-day circumstances, even governments can produce small miracles. One of the examples he states is to explain the phenomenon of loss aversion. People hate losing things more than they like getting things. In some schools, he observes, teachers were offered a bonus at the end of their year if they could improve the performance of their students, which didn't improve test scores. In some other schools, teachers were given bonus at the beginning of the year, to be taken away, if their students didn't improve. He says that the loss-framed bonus had a big effect. When the existing system fails to bring in the proposed results, such strategies should be thought of.

Gone are the days when learning a foreign language was considered a luxury. We live in times when English language is taught with the objective of expanding the horizons in terms of higher education, or to compete in a global economy. The importance of developing the right attitude in classrooms hence remain a responsibility of teachers which should push them beyond every self imposed and system or policy imposed limitation to keep abreast of the innovative and technology integrated pedagogical strategies employed by their creative counterparts in and out of their region, state or nation. All the money, efforts and resources pumped into the higher education sector will have the best impacts and results only when the foundation years of the upcoming generation is taken care of. As the Modi government propagates of late, one cannot always wait for the government for all initiatives, the DIY, Do it Yourself, (in this case, along with others) vigour has to set in whereby our elementary language classrooms will become fun filled, vibrant learning spaces, where every stakeholder becomes accountable in the learning journey.

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Broken Mirrors: Representation of India in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*

Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) is one of the most reviewed novels written in English. The novelist's status as a migrated person has often inspired critics to raise doubts about his authenticity as an Indian writer. Besides that, the novel came out at a time not very far from the publication of *Orientalism* (1978), the ground-breaking post colonial text by the Palestinian critic Edward Said. The text analyses the ways by which the west branded the East as the Other by distorting their representation of the Orient. The resultant discussions on how India is represented in English literature gradually turned towards the Indian novelists writing in English, and the peculiarities of their representation were criticised. Thus came the concept of re-Orientalism which was expounded by Lisa Lau in her article 'Re-Orientalism: The preparation and Development of Orientalism by Orientals' in 2009. Then the concept is enlarged by Lisa Lau and Ana Christina Mendes in their jointly edited book *Re-Orientalism and South Asian Identity Politics: The Oriental Other Within* in 2011.

According to Lisa Lau, "Re-Orientalism is based on how cultural producers with Eastern affiliations come to terms with an Orientalized East, whether by complying with perceived expectations of Western readers by playing with them or by discarding them altogether (Lau 571). Either way, the text keeps alive the Western image of the Orient. This paper analyses whether and how far Rushdie deviates to re-Orientalism in his representation of India in the novel *Midnight's Children*.

The critical opinions about this novel are as varied and elusive as the novelist's representation of India in this work. Some critics considered this work as the very lock to Indian reality. According to Clark Blaise, "*Midnight's Children* sounds like a continent finding its voice" ('A novel of India coming of Age' 1981). But the novelist is blamed for catering to Western longing for an exoticised East. Aparna Mahanta, in her review 'Allegories of the Indian Experience' denounces Rushdie's representation of India as "the Western educated liberal Indian's inability to comprehend Indian reality (244). So it is worthwhile to concentrate on the particularities of Rushdie's representation of India in this novel.

While Edward said revealed a system in which there is a perpetual dichotomy between self and other, insider and outsider, the former one always being possessed by the West, the case of diasporic writers is that they are neither inside nor outside. Their ancestry ties them to their home-countries, while their present life is chained to another country. As a result, their representation becomes problematic. They represent both as insiders and outsiders, both selves resisting each other. According to Lisa Lau, "In Re-Orientalism, we have the curious case in which the positionality of the powerful is simultaneously that of the insider and outsider, where the representing power can be simultaneously self and other" (572). Rushdie as a diasporic Indian English writer is also subjected to this contradiction.

Rushdie justifies and validates his position as a migrated writer in his critical work *Imaginary Homelands* (1983). In this work he also tries to prove that as a diasporic writer he is more accurate in his representation of India. He admits the fact that when an Indian writer

from outside India reflects India in his novel he will have to deal in "broken mirrors, some whose fragments have been irretrievably lost" (*Imaginary Homelands* 11). But he considers this problem a blessing in disguise, because the broken mirrors are more valuable than the unflawed ones, because by being fragments they become so evocative and acquire symbolic significance. So what Rushdie did in this novel is that what remained in his mind are reflected in a magnified form while neglecting others. Thus the vision becomes a distorted one exoticising the reality. As the result of an attempt to comply with the Western hope for a 'true' representation of India, the novel is littered with figures like peepshow-vallahs, fortune-tellers, monkey-dancers, snake-charmers, magicians, sadhus and beggars who play the role of the stereotypical representatives of an exotic India. These faceless characters are valuable as far as they support the Western imagination of India. A realistic portrayal of these characters' separate identities is peculiarly absent. As far as the author is concerned, they are the lost fragments of his mirror.

An example for the novelist's selected representation is his portrayal of Indian women in this novel. The women are often exoticised and caricatured. About the widows in the Widows' Hostel in Benares the narrator says:

The Palace is a home for bereaved women now. They understanding that their true lives ended with the death of their husbands, but no longer permitted to seek the release of sati, come to the holy city to pass their worthless days in heartfelt ululations. In the Palace of the widows live a tribe of women whose chests are irremediably bruised by the power of their continual pummellings. Whose hair is torn beyond repair, and whose voices are shredded by the constant keening expressions of their grief (428).

The vision is a horrible one catering to the Western imagination of traditional Indian widows. The narrator hints the abolishment of sati rite by the British Government. The progressive act of the British is contrasted with the widows' primitivism who are sorry for the abolishment and spend their lives wailing and tormenting themselves.

The narrator gives a description of the female attendant in the Goodnite Confidential Club in Bombay, which verges on the orientalist painting of an Eastern erotic beauty: "a female attendant of ravishing sexual charms, who wore her sari erotically low on her hips, with a jasmine in her navel; but as we descended into the darkness she turned towards us with a reassuring smile, and I saw that her eyes were closed, unearthly luminous eyes had been painted on her lids" (449). The sensuousness and exoticism of Eastern women portrayed and described by Western painters and writers become perpetuated through the image of this sexually promiscuous female attendant.

The instances of the novelist' bias towards the exoticising images of Indian women are abundant in the novel: Tai Bibi, "the oldest whore in the world" (315) who is five hundred and twelve years old and can change her bodily odours according to the choices of her customers; Parvati, the witch, who anointed her body with oils with erotic charm and combed her hair with comb made of aphrodisiac deer-bones in order to charm Saleem; Durga, the washer woman whose "preternatural breasts [which] unleashed a torrent of milk capable of nourishing regiments" (440), who has two wombs and is full of "gossips and tittle-tattle" (440). Trying to present 'true' Indian women in his novel, the novelist's women characters become incarnations of eccentricity, and a realistic portrayal of a woman character becomes conspicuously absent.

The novelist also attempts to represent the nation as the abode of mysterious and illusory landscapes, where the Western concept of time, space and the sense of reality are not observed or get upside down. One of the main examples for this is the forest of Sundarbans which is presented as a sunless jungle with transparent snakes and leech and darkened by the giant trees of mango, nipa and sundari. It is a place of all the fantasies and confusions. By entering there Saleem and the three soldiers lost the sense of time, space and purpose: "They had all long ago forgotten the purpose of their journey, the chase, which had begun far away in the real world, acquired in the altered light of the Sundarbans a quality of absurd fantasy which enabled them to dismiss at once and for all" (358) and "None of them knew how long this period lasted, because in the Sundarbans time followed unknown laws" (363).

Portrayal of places as half real and half fantasy where no realistic sense of time and space remains recur in the novel when the narrator mentions the Midnite Confidential Club in Bombay, which is described as a place "without faces or names, memories, families or past" (449), and the border between India and Pakistan which is revealed as an "amphibious zone, of demonic sea-beasts with glowing eyes" (332), with "shrieks of witches and the nameless slithering shuffling of the dark" (332). The European representation of India as a mysterious and irrational landscape reiterates through the portrayal of these lands as supernatural abodes. The selection of real places for this exotic description also provides credibility to what the narrator says.

Representation of India as an underdeveloped and unclean land littered with all kinds of illegal activities reiterate in this novel also. The Indian cities described by the narrator – Amritsar, Bombay, Delhi, Agra, etc., - are noted for their filthy and insanitary conditions strolled by all kinds of illegal people. The narrator's description of Amritsar is a good example for this.

...On April 6th, 1919, the holy city of Amritsar smelled (gloriously Padma, celestially!) of excrement. And perhaps the (beauteous!) reek did not offered the nose on my grandfather's face-after all, Kashmiri peasants used it, as described above, for a kind of plaster. Even dung-cakes were not an uncommon sight...It issued from the rumps of horses, between the shafts of city's many tongas and men and dogs attended nature's calls, mingling in a brotherhood of shit (32).

The presentation of Indian places as filthy and shabby recurs in the descriptions of all the cities in this novel. It is not to say that Indian cities are not unclean, but the author is only focusing on the darker side and exaggerate the negative elements, discarding the brighter ones. He sees Chowpatty in Bombay as "a dirty strip of sand as warm with pickpockets and strollers and vendors of hot channa (447). It seems that the selected fragments of the mirror are only those which are palatable to the Western taste. He perpetuates the vogue started by the imperial writers.

In *Imaginary Homelands* Rushdie compares his fragmentary memory with 'archaeological broken pots' (12) which are valuable though they are broken. The relics from the past, the exotic images of India established by Anglo Indian writers like Kipling are preserved and perpetuated by the author in this novel. Though the pots are broken and useless, they are valued for their antiquity. Thus, in the novel again India remains a land of fantasy, superstitious and eccentricities. The novelist seems to be trying to prove what Adam Aziz says in the novel, "...the hegemony of superstition, mumbo-jumbo and all things

magical would never be broken in India" (59).

The novelist justifies his fragmented and selected representation through the description of the fate of a number of characters in the novel. For example, the narrator mentions the suicide of a painter whose painting had grown larger and larger during his attempt to bring the whole of life into his art. The narrator quotes what the artist said before his death, "I wanted to be a miniaturist and I've got elephantiasis instead" (41). The painter in this novel is the symbol of a failed artist, the failed representative of reality. He lacked the knack to choose fragments from the whole and to eschew others. The author of course possesses that talent and utilizes this technique in his novel. He successfully selects and conveniently chooses fragments from the whole of Indian reality, thus becoming a successful artist.

There is another person in the novel who also wanted to show the whole of reality. It is Lifafa Das, the peep-show vallah who collected pictures from all the religions, classes and places in India in his peepshow and called out, "see the whole world, come see everything" (68). Lifafa Das also paid for his attempt soon. In a quarrel related to seeing the picture in his peepshow first, he was attacked in a religious frenzy. This artist also failed when he attempted to show the whole of reality.

The painter and Lifafa Das are the representatives of artists who fail because they do not select. Rushdie brings them in the novel to validate the essentiality of his selection and perhaps the secret of his success. The narrator in the novel asks, "Is this an Indian disease, this urge to encapsulate the whole of reality? Worse: am I infected too?" (68). In order to escape from this disease for the whole, the narrator relies on fragmentation. The innumerable number of cracks in the body of Saleem themselves are symbolic of the ruptures in his narrative. Saleem himself represents India in this novel. So the fissures in his body imply the gaps in the representation of India in the novel. These in turn point towards the lost fragments of the mirror on which the novelist reflects the reality.

Rushdie justifies his distance from the object of his representation in *Imaginary Homelands*. He opines that a distanced representation is more objective than a close representation (13). Distance helps one to represent an object in its entirety and clarity. In order to prove this, he brings the metaphor of a cinema screen. When we move forward from the back room gradually towards the cinema screen, we can feel the vision getting more and more blurred. When we look at the screen with our noses on it we only see blurred practices. This cinema screen image recurs in the novel: "Gradually the stars, faces dissolve in to dancing grain; tiny details assume grotesque proportions; the illusion dissolves or rather it becomes clear that the illusion itself is reality (163). For Rushdie, reality will be more clear to those who represent it from a distance, both in time and space, and the vision will be blurred to those writers who are the part of the 'teeming multitudes" (MC 101) of India. The creator should not remain inside the system, but outside it.

Lisa Lau, in her article gives a number of possible reasons for the distorted representation of diasporic writers. The fragmented nature of the definition of self, the nostalgia, the learnt chameleon abilities, the sense of looking back or referencing a distant place, of being strangers in a strange land, whether they are in the East or West" (581) are some of them. However, Rushdie in *Midnight's Children* tries to prove that diasporic writers with their distance and fragmentary memory are more accurate in their representation than their native counterparts. But deliberately or not, Indian English writers like Rushdie

perpetuate an image of India created by our late Anglo Indian writers. They try to re-orientalise a nation that is already orientalised.

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Apocalyptic Narrative and the Ecological Discourse: An Insight into the Eco-crisis in Dan Brown's *Inferno*

Literature has at no time failed to reflect the culture on which it is sculpted, though various forms of it do so in shades apparently different. All forms of writing, hence are embodiments of one or the other worldly truth. If literature of the recent times, especially the postmillennial, is opening up a world so weird and enigmatic, without debate it could be understood that human culture and his ways of living is contributing to it. As the focus here is on the ecological issues reflected upon literature, the attention turns to the environmental culture practised by man on earth. Though the issue is universal and can be seen reflected in all literary forms, it is never seen so explicitly detailed as in the genre, Science fiction. Too many literary rays getting converged on the single focal point of science fiction today, hence, is no coincidence. It openly proclaims the critical situation to which man has carried his natural environment into. The situation demands a serious discussion and decision.

Sci-fi, as the genre is nicknamed, is a literary offspring of a fast pacing, turbulent and ambitious world set out in a race for development. With a prophetic strain it enables to locate ourselves at a futuristic time and space. Unfortunately, this projected zone of living is never a comfortable space. It is made for a superhuman race, which indirectly indicates the decline of the present species. Though this futuristic world can be a probable impossibility, whether humanity can shut its eyes against its prophetic bent remains a question. Serious thoughts are to be muddled upon this prophetic bias of Science fiction as a warning against an inevitable disastrous situation the world is about to face.

Though no touchstone has ever been invented to guarantee the future possibility of these scientific prophesy, a parallel reading of the speculations put forward by the texts of the genre and the way the world has moved afterwards can provide an authenticity to these conjectures. The earlier beginnings of this genre could be spotted in the 16th century in many writings from Europe. The European supremacy in scientific advance during the time may account for this. Ancient Greece could rightly be called the cradle of Science Fiction too. The works of the Syrian writer Lucian who wrote in Greek during the 2nd century has anticipated with a tinge of satire, journey to moon and Venus, inter planet wars and extraterrestrial life. A very common craving of the human kind which is seen reflected in many works of English, French and Italian authors was this entry to the moon. Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* that came out in 1532, Johannes Kepler's 1634 work *Somnium*, Francis Godwin's *Man in the Moon* published in 1638, Cyrano de Bergerac's *Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon*, 1659, all in a way or the other talks about human entry to moon and other planets. Before long, this dream of humanity was materialized when man first set his foot on the moon in 1969, bringing to life the speculations made centuries before. Sir Francis Bacon's assumptions about a futuristic world filled in with scientific wonders like microscopes, telescopes, telephones, artificial metals, aerial flights and submarines made through *New Atlantis* in 1627, too did not take much long to be fruitful. Though through a parody, the pace of experimental science was shown through the scientists in the 'Flying Islands' of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. The creation of a living species by humans as anticipated by Mary Shelley

in the nineteenth century through *Frankenstein* too has collided with reality when the first cloning experiment was made successful with the birth of the cloned sheep at Scotland in the late twentieth century. These developments stand testimonial to prove the method in the madness of Science Fiction.

If sci-fi forms a mode of human thought manifestation, its sub genre apocalyptic literature, that includes all forms of writing pointing towards the end of human civilization, is bringing in a warning more crucial. The recent shrouding of Apocalyptic/Post Apocalyptic/Dystopian fiction, especially in the American scenario, hence, cannot be a coincidence, but a result of this methodical madness. It can surely be seen as a reciprocation of the eco disasters created by the human kind. With this intension of highlighting the significance of apocalyptic narratives in an era approaching the Apocalypse, an attempt is made here to analyse the Sci-fi by Dan Brown, *Inferno*, which encapsulates such a theme.

The genre takes its birth from the Biblical concept of 'Eschaton' or End of Time mentioned in 'Book of Revelation', which hints of an inevitable punishment for the evil of humanity. It warns, "*I will punish the world for its evil, / and the wicked for their iniquity . . . / I will halt the arrogance of the proud*". (The English Standard Version, Isaiah 13:11). The book prophesies great tribulations which will mark the end of the world:

*Thus says the LORD of Hosts:
Behold, disaster shall go forth
from nation to nation . . .
And at that Day the slain of the LORD
shall be from one end of the Earth
even to the other end of the Earth . . . (Jeremiah 25:27-38).*

Similar end-of-the-world prophesies are made by Apocalyptic literature too. Laurence Buell sees Apocalypse as the master metaphor for representing the contemporary environmental situation. Thompson explains the features of the genre thus:

Violent and grotesque images are juxtaposed with glimpses of a world transformed; the underlying theme is usually a titanic struggle between good and evil . . . Apocalypticism has been described as a genre born out of crisis, designed to stiffen the resolve of an embattled community by dangling in front of it the vision of a sudden and permanent release from its captivity. It is underground literature, the consolation of the persecuted (Thompson 13-14).

Though the concept of Apocalypse is proleptic, its mythical aura is slowly dissociating owing to the crucial environmental situations in the world. A thought indispensable in this scenario is the human contribution through science to the imminent disaster the world is set to face.

Development can either be sustainable or disastrous. The latter which bring results swifter are but short lived. This exactly is the kind of growth marking the modern era. Eco-consciousness though is tightening its grip among mankind, it has born too late. The world is almost face-to-face with the Apocalypse. The focus naturally falls on the American literary and cultural scenario owing to the bulk production of popular literature, movies and games

based on apocalyptic themes in the nation. Popular such themes are population explosion, pandemics, nuclear warfare, extraterrestrial attack, resource depletion, ecological collapse and the like. A scanned view may highlight such fictional works like *Earth Abides* by George Stewart, *The Divergent Trilogy* by Veronica Roth, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, *City of Ember* by Jeanne Du Frau, *Y: The Last Man* by Brian. K. Vaughan; and the visual arena is getting filled up with films like *Armageddon*(1998), *I am a Legend* (2007), *A Boy and his Dog* (1975), *Water World* (1995), *4:44 Last Day on Earth* (2011), and *The Book of Eli* (2010). The warning of a waning planet put forward by such narratives can never be neglected.

Dan Brown, the king of American thriller fiction has in a way sublimated his work *Inferno* from a popular thriller fiction to a crucial piece of Eschatology by incorporating the themes of population explosion and bioterrorism. Keeping apart the thriller element, the novel's major focus is to reveal to humanity the intensity of the crisis of population. Bertrand Zobrist is the key figure in the story who acts out the Prophet by bringing to the concern of humanity the need for settling the burning world population crisis. He is the representative of the transhumanist movement, which includes a group of biotechnologists who believe that “the next step in human evolution should be . . . biologically engineering *ourselves*” (Brown 293). Zobrist's long discourses on the matter to the Director of World Health Organization, Dr. Elizabeth Sinskey forms an eye-opener for the entire humanity. His theory is built upon the Malthusian population equation that human population advances in geometric progression and resource production in arithmetic progression:

It took the earth's population thousands of years . . . to reach *one* billion people. . . it took only about a hundred years to double the population to *two* billion in the 1920s . . . a mere fifty years for the population again to double again to *four* billion in the 1970s . . . Just today, the human race added another quarter- million people to the planet Earth . . . Currently, every year, we are adding the equivalent of the equivalent of the entire county of Germany (101).

The major twist in the concept of population comes when Zobrist condemns the WHO's mission to control epidemics. To him “The disease is overpopulation” (139) and hence the pandemics, cures to these disease. This thought would have led him say “the best thing that ever happened to Europe was the Black Death” (177). The slow pace of WHO too is condemned by the transhumanists who are direly working for a changed face of humanity. The population as far as they are concerned is a simple equation to solve, but surely the solution will be undemocratic. Apparently the seeds of war between humanity and science have been sown. Science states “Anything is possible if people believe in a cause” (218). The genetic panacea that Zobrist invents to calm down the population crisis takes humanity to yet another crisis, a bit more complicated than the population Apocalypse. The way they see the crisis is roughly this,

. . . it's quite normal for a species to go extinct simply as a result of overpopulating its environment. Picture a colony of surface algae living in a tiny pond in the forest, enjoying the pond's perfect balance of nutrients. Unchecked they reproduce so wildly that they quickly cover the pond's entire surface, blotting out the sun and thereby preventing the growth of nutrients in the pond. Having sapped everything possible from their environment, the algae quickly die and disappear without a trace . . . A

similar fate could easily await mankind. Far sooner and faster than any of us could imagine (214).

Since the supplication of nutrients to the pond in a world so brutally getting devastated is out of question, the possible solution is to deflate the growth of the algae. The solution is rather impossible in case of humans.

The transhumanist method of solving out the population riddle turns out to be a bit weird. The group yearns for an ultra scientific solution to any crisis in the world. This sometimes can be par human understanding or acceptance. The way those scientific brains work can be mapped this way:

If you could throw a switch and randomly kill half the population on earth, would you do it?

“Of course not.”

Okay. But what if you were told that if you *didn't* throw that switch right now, the human race would be extinct in the next hundred years?”. . . Would you throw it then? (218)

Sienna Brooks, a doctor cum transhumanist's explanation of such a hypothetical situation rules out Langdon, the commoner's representative's, indigestibility of the situation, by the name “denial” (214), which she explains as the “human primitive ego defense mechanism that negates all realities that produce too much stress for a brain to handle” (214). Surely, the genetic panacea is indigestible to an ordinary being. The evil/good (yet to be/difficult to be interpreted) of genetic engineering is slowly tightening its grip, showing a newer face of Apocalypse in the form of 'bio-terrorism'.

The ultimate hunt by Robert Langdon in the novel turns out to be to destroy a plague virus that is supposed to contain the potential to kill half the world's population, created by Bertrand Zobrist, the mad scientist. The mission turns out to be a failure as the supposed date of release of the plague virus turns out to be the global saturation date of the virus in the world. The world population was already infected. The viral *vector*, an air-borne virus that zobrist created could spread sterility plague. Transhumanism describes the virus so:

Compared to the virulence of the Black Death . . . there is some compassion in this approach. There will be no hospitals overflowing with the sick and the dying, no bodies rotting in the streets, and no anguished survivors enduring the death of loved ones. Humans will simply stop having so many babies. Our planet will experience a steady reduction in our birth rate until the population curve actually inverts, and our total numbers begin to decrease. . . a long term solution, a permanent solution . . . a *Transhumanist* solution (439).

The result simply is this “. . . transforming the world into a less fruitful population” (439).

The text thus projects through a hypothetical situation, the dire need for action regarding the population crisis in the world. It also warns humanity of the disproportionate growth of science with regard to human sustenance. As anticipated earlier the texture of the projected living space for the future generations is not a smooth one. The evil of science spreading fast is dissolving the mythical aura of the Biblical Apocalypse. The futuristic events narrated by the prophetic chapters of science fiction guarantees an environmental

Apocalypse. Since the anticipated events are as we have seen, a reciprocation of human misdoings, the remedy too resides in the same castle. Hence it is up to the species to decide a revival or retrieval.

For there will be Great Tribulation
such has not been
since the beginning of the world until this time
no, nor ever shall be.
And UNLESS those days were shortened
No flesh would be saved (Matthew 24:21-22).

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Bond Goes Green: *Quantum of Solace* and its Environment Consciousness

Hollywood cinema, more than often scorned for its formulaic approaches, stoned for the foremost commercial concerns, and scrutinized for the stereotypes (rightly so!) nevertheless remain captivating and worthy of dissection. For the mainstream cinema, like any facet of our culture, is often a thinly packed, deceptively adorned mirror which provides us with a reflection of our times. Often the frame steals the limelight, and sometimes it may trick us into a distorted image like those in the funfair hall of mirrors, but it is indeed a mirror. The source of the reflection is not so much of a mystery. The so called escapist narratives and visual splendor these films produce are also linked to our present. Fredric Jameson says:

Both modernism and mass culture entertain relations of repression with the fundamental social anxieties and concerns, hopes and blind spots, ideological antinomies and fantasies of disaster, which are their raw material; only where modernism tends to handle this material by producing compensatory structures of various kinds, mass culture represses them by the narrative construction of imaginary resolutions and by the projection of an optical illusion of social harmony.

(Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture, 141)

Talking about escapist Hollywood flicks, one cannot really help but cast a glance on the James Bond franchise. It is been running on for more than fifty years, and seems still has fuel for more. Ian Fleming's fictional MI6 agent and his tantrums still spin money at the box office. It is one of the longest continuing running film series in history and apparently one of the most successful franchises of all time. The protagonist is not a super hero, but not less than one- Bond is part of a system, an organization, but nevertheless prefers to work alone. Among his many qualities, he is a misogynist, and a philanderer- some of the most offensive traits, no doubt, but was celebrated for the same all through the years since the first installment of the series, *Dr. No* which was released in 1962. But when, Bond's boss, M, played with a motherly spin by Dame Judi Dench, reprimands him, "How many is that now, James", over the dead body of Strawberry Fields, an agent who spent the night with Bond, in the new addition to the franchise, *Quantum of Solace* (2008), we are bound to think, has the franchise changed in its approaches?

Unlike *Narnia* or *Harry Potter* series, the Bond films are not complete fantasy, and to some degree at least, ask to be taken seriously. No doubt, the character Bond is deeply rooted in popular culture and its demands, but being a movie which deal with the "notions of 'policing' and the upholding of a law...therefore (removed from reality as they are) they are obvious ones to reflect a sea-change in security and defense policy, and consequent public uncertainty around this" and many others. So apart "from the exhaustion from overuse of the same characters and scenarios", we see the evolution of a franchise which is warped to fit into the moulds of the time when the film is made. So with the addition of *Quantum of Solace* (2008) we have everything- "both superhero and mob film, espionage and techno-thriller;

both escapist and politically relevant” (Whitby).

There is a scene in *Quantum of Solace*, where M meets a British Minister to provide an explanation for Bond's antics, and is admonished against any further action on the villain, because apparently his interests now align with the government. “It is no longer a question of right or wrong” says the minister, when the world is running out of oil. Here, there is definitely a landslide working in the case of the typical bond formula we have seen for years. The MI6 and the Queen's government are stripped of their moral fiber much against the set patterns. It is natural resources in question, and no more an imperial power affirmation, at least for Britain, and that is acknowledged in the movie. A criticism on the lengths to which even governing bodies are ready to go for securing treasures of environment finds place in the film. In short, for about 106 minutes we are to see an eco-conscious James Bond flick.

In the movie, business tycoon, and director of Greene Planet, an environmentalist-front organization, Dominic Greene makes a moving and very much familiar speech to potential sponsors in a fund raising gala in Bolivia;

We are in a spiral of environmental decline. Since 1945, 17% of the planet's vegetated surface has been irreversibly degraded. The Tierra Project is just one small part of a global network of Eco-Parks that Greene Planet has created to rejuvenate the world on the verge of collapse. I hope that tonight you make a decision to be part of that.

(Quantum of Solace 2008)

Greene's name is quite ironical of course, because the Greene Planet is revealed to be only a cover for his land acquisitions in Bolivian desert, for seemingly not so innocent causes. Greene controls Quantum of Solace, a shadow organization which has a plan to engineer a coup d'état in Bolivia so as to vest power in the hands of an exiled and corrupt military leader General Medrano. Quantum has tricked Medrano to believe that the organization is after the oil possessions of Bolivia, but later reveal that in return they want to monopolize majority of country's water supply. Quantum is not new to directing big dramas in political arena. Dominic Greene himself discloses how he “facilitated a change” in Haiti against a populist priest who was in support for the raise of minimum wages. Here in Bolivia, his eyes is not much on saving loses, but on making profit. Greene wants access to control the furthestmost important natural resource of the world, which we are initially led to believe as to be oil, but later comes to know as water.

Bond's mission against Dominic Greene is not much of a government approved act. Much of the film revolves around his authority issues, partly personal and partly political. The government itself chooses to ally with the antagonist. We are shown how CIA is lending its support, for their agents, are told that the Quantum has found hydrocarbon resources in Atacama and will be providing a 'just share' to the U.S. Bond here in the scene, again is very much alone in his battle, save for M, who in his own words, likes to believe to be his mother, a guilt ridden CIA agent, and a Bolivian girl with a vendetta. Bond's motivation too comes from the memory of the loss of some one dear to him, but the film for that never downplays its dialogue on environment. The taxi driver, who transports Bond and his friends, makes a commentary on how the glaciers are melting in alarming rate, how rainfalls have become erratic, and finds global warming to be the cause of water shortage. The Bolivians are dying of thirst- shots of long queues of rural folk and children to get a drop of water is a rather

alarming sight in *Quantum of Solace*. To make matter worse, they don't have access to a believable authority, and Quantum if not General Medrano, has several options to choose from- several other candidates greedy for power, who will gladly sign over Bolivia's utility rights to the organization. The story has roots in reality- the Bolivian Cochabamba protests of 2000 was against the privatization of water works by multinationals, which caused hike in water rates to local water consumers by as much as 200 percent. But Quantum's plan seems more strategic one- Greene by everybody's knowledge is an active and passionate environmentalist, who formed Tierra Project so as to “rejuvenate the world on the verge of collapse” (*Quantum of Solace*, 2008) by buying large amounts of lands and setting them aside as 'eco-parks.' But his estranged girlfriend tells a different story, and the truth, that a similar initiative launched elsewhere in Bolivia ended up in selling the land off to a multinational company that later cleared the forest out of the region. The Tierra Project “by itself is in theory not an entirely irrational concept”, and thus wins confidence of those who are into environment protection, but underneath it, the “materially wealthy investors and its pyramidal nature” (*Notes toward an International Libertarian Eco Socialism*) have something else in mind- money and power. We for one part, realizes that it is an age where even environment concern becomes a tool for manipulation.

Quantum of Solace is critical on the alarming dynamics of contemporary politics. Quantum is yet to come under the hawk eye of MI6, because apparently they don't even know about their existence. It is not much because of the organization's incompetence, but because Quantum is mighty enough to be invisible. As one of its operatives confesses- it took a toll on Bond to get one- that “the first thing” that one must know about Quantum that it “has people everywhere” (*Quantum of Solace*, 2008) It comprises a former Russian minister, who now owns mines in Siberia, a once member of Israeli Mossad-now the head of a telecom company, one of the closest advisers of British Prime Minister among many. The antagonist as we see is not a nation or a particular figure anymore as we are used to see in earlier installments. Bond's mission in the movie might be centered on one person- Greene, but the place where he thrives is not personal or even national. He plays within the organization which is kind of sovereignty- free, or beyond the power of sovereignty, for, ironically, the very people who are supposed to be the catalysts of a sovereign system let them be. Their interests are beyond political power, as they have realized that if nature can be manipulated, it can wield more catastrophe than a political coupé. The sheer power Quantum holds in international politics and their successful campaigns of 'green washing' make them us remind of those multinational giants shooting out ads trumpeting their 'genuine' concern and commitment to save the planet- think of the law suit against Coca Cola for green washing their 'PlantBottle' concept, a coke brand which has faced pesticide controversy in India but found a savior here in the 'socially conscious' image of Aamir Khan who chose to align with the company through their ads.

The best thing about Bond movies is that it always ends up in a resolution- its escapism no doubt, but it would be sheer hypocrisy if one won't admit that we are not immune to the “blandishments of reassurance” (Whitby). Bond prevails in this movie too. He abandons Greene in the desert with nothing but a can of engine oil. He is later found dead with oil in his stomach. It is a question posed on our priorities- international politics go mayhem over rising oil prices, wages wars even. But this movie tells us “that while we think oil is valuable, ultimately water is what we really need to survive. And on that point, Bond is right again” (Michael).

Quantum of a Solace doesn't lecture us on water scarcity, and the dangers of privatization- Bond has a license to kill, but he can hardly convince anyone with his tongue, not even M. It is true that he cannot do without his staple Martinis, luxury hotels and Aston Martin- though at times it could be a tiny Ford Ka. Bond may occasionally smirk at his employer, but he won't leave it- when M tells him that she needs him back, he replies that he “never left” (*Quantum of Solace*, 2008) But for the whole past of Bond chasing borderline ridiculous villains, and improbably fantastic missions, the movie poses as a fresh start. Even if “entertainment (and, a short ways down the road, DVD sales) is the producer's top priority”, they do have at least a marginal knowledge regarding water issue. The world of *Quantum of Solace* is scary, but real, and it packs many subtle references to the campaigns of many multinational companies to “convert drinking water from a basic human right into a grossly profitable commodity” (Fox, Michael).

For almost fifty years, Bond has posed as a savior figure, fought many challenges and won them. Bond is still the same, but he seems to have decided that in the new millennia, his struggle should be against an enemy who belongs to every nation, but also beyond its demarcations- the greed to get more and more from mother-nature, the sheer exploitation of natural resources. At a time when environmental studies is on vogue, how can Bond not go Green?

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Perennial Wounds: Interrogating Women Consciousness with Reference to Doris Lessing's *The Golden Note Book* and Selected Poems of Kamala Das

Feminist question has been a favorite topic of all ages and it indeed has a cosmic dimension and perennial effect. The primitive concept of dehumanization of females hasn't changed much along with the course of time. It is astonishing to see how incessantly the gender issues and womanly experiences resonate even in the current post-modernist, post-feminist era. A rereading of the novel *The Golden Note Book* (1962) by the British writer Doris Lessing reveals the disturbing fact that the feminist issues discussed in this 19th century novel are still relevant in the 21st century and can be identified by women of all generations globally. I have attempted to juxtapose this feeling with rather similar experiences of Indian women in the poems of Kamala Das, the great Indian poet, who was only fifteen years younger to Lessing. Kamala Das, who has been recommended for the Nobel Prize for Literature along with Doris Lessing, which the latter eventually won, in the year 1984, was no less greater with respect to her poetic credo. Both the writers share the same gusto of women empowerment and emancipation. However, things have not changed and the seemingly modern and dynamic women of our age still suffer categorization. I would like to focus on the question why the inner life of women is still chaotic even after the revolutionary changes on the surface level. This paper attempts to delve into the socio-psychological reasons for this predicament of women, with reference to the women characters of Lessing in *The Golden Note Book* and to the feminist ideas saturated in the selected poems of India's foremost women poet Kamala Das.

Even from her childhood, a girl child is educated to behold the vivid and rigid line of demarcation between her and a male child and devise the rest of her life in accordance with the age old concept of the society. When the child grows up into a woman, she either becomes overpowered or bold enough to defy all taboos and assert her freedom at any cost. The characters of both Doris Lessing and Kamala Das showcase the personal traumas and tribulations women have to go through in order to establish and maintain her 'self' in the male dominant society. *The Golden Note Book* openly discusses female sexuality, alienation, self-division, maladjustment and self-therapy. The central women characters in the novel Anna Wulf and Molly struggle with disintegration and disillusionment of ideas and concepts in their multiple role as writer, mother, wife, girlfriend, working women and political activist. Though Lessing had strongly denied the novel to be feministic, the problems addressed in the novel vividly pinpoints the personal dilemma faced by the women of post-war England, which essentially makes it a feminist novel. Lessing portrayed the women in the novel in contrast with the gender stereotypes of the day. They explore the possibilities and practicalities of getting liberated from the traumatic, monotonous, mechanical and customary activities taken for granted by the male dominant society. With a persistent desire to live as liberated women, they abhor the social conditioning of femininity. India's most celebrated feminist poet Kamala Das has candidly illustrated this disinclination in the following lines,

You called me wife,
 I was taught to break saccharine into your tea and
 to offer at the right moment the vitamins. Cowering
 beneath your monstrous ego I ate the magic loaf and
 became a dwarf. I lost my will and reason, to all your
 questions, I mumbled incoherent replies (“The Old Playhouse” 12-17).

The woman in Kamala Das' poems resent this sort of prepotency and is powerfully willed not to be submissive. She is every time in the quest of being a 'real woman' and is astonished at her inability to define what it is. She is induced into the common prejudice that being subservient and getting along with all the pretentious false front, she could please her man, his family and thereby the masculine society. Even when she realizes that she is contrived to acquiesce with the socio-sexual codes of the society, she still nurtures the secret ambition to relinquish the so called blessings of domesticity. Her freedom is encroached upon every time. She fails to achieve the required dimension in man-woman relationship as envisaged by the society. She feels dejected and depressed to find women reduced to the status of mere body in a world ruled by men. The adherents of patriarchal discourse are obsessed with the typical demeanor of womanishness. They condition her for that even from childhood, by buying toys and make up sets. She keeps reminded of the façade she has to put up when she confronts real life more and more day by day. She has been trained to conform to a set of body language and semiotics in order to survive smoothly in the male order.

Dress in sarees, be girl
 Be wife, they said..Be embroiderer, be cook,
 Be a quarreler with servants – Fit in, Oh,
 Belong, cried the categorizers (“An Introduction"120).

Lessing's women detest this cry from the categorizers to 'fit into' the so called web of stereotyped femininity. An ideal woman should be a homemaker who never complains and shoulders all the responsibilities and accusations dispassionately, and Lessing's women are not ready to bask in the glory of such womanhood. Anna and Molly in *The Golden Note Book* are bosom friends and they stand by each other through ex-husbands, parenting crises, single motherhood, lovers, jobs, mental illness and all the upheavals in life. Lessing gallantly narrates the dialogues between them, which, normally, women despise to disclose to the public. Molly has been divorced and her ex-husband Richard marries Marion, his secretary and they have a large house with kids. Marion has been married to him for years and suddenly one day it dawns on her that it was all futile and she has been wasting her time on a worthless man. She elucidates her revelation to Anna:

I thought, My God, for that creature I've ruined my life. I remember the moment exactly. I was sitting at the breakfast- table, wearing a sort of negligee thing I'd bought because he likes me in that sort of thing- you know, frills and flowers, or well, he *used* to like me in them. I have always *hated* them. And I thought, for years and years I've ever been wearing clothes I hated, just to please this *creature* (GN351).

It must be noted that this notion of 'compromise' has a universal solidity. Women audaciously compromise with the way of the male world, just to win appreciation and

approval. And this apparently leads to the gradual disintegration of life, the very female persona, to the level of nihilism. Kamala Das vents out the frustrations and emotional barrenness married women suffer in the sexist, patriarchal society, in her poem “ The Suicide” ,

I must pose
I must pretend
I must act the role
Of happy woman,
Happy wife.
I must keep the right distance
Between me and the low.
And I must keep the right distance,
Between me and the high (*Only the Soul Knows How to Sing* 108).

Women are thus robbed off their identity, self-respect and all the romantic aspirations of married life. She plays the role of a doll designed to move according to the cue of her 'owner'.

People presuppose this kind of behavior and most works of art and movies showcase this make-believe act. Anna Wulf is a novelist and her latest novel is soon to be made film. Anna wonders how they are going to shoot the love between Paul and Ella in the metafiction and she is perturbed at the form, the pattern they would use if it is filmed.

To show a woman loving a man one should show her cooking a meal for him or opening a bottle of wine for the meal, while she waits for his ring at the door. Or waking in the morning before he does to see his face change from the calm of sleep into a smile of welcome. Yes. To be repeated a thousand times (*GN* 210).

The women of Lessing brave this suicidal orthodoxy and dare to break off all the conventional rules that strangle them to near death. They are fed up of pretending the role of happy woman/ happy wife/ happy mother. They are despondent of prioritizing for others by sacrificing their own soulful joys. Where do women belong to, actually? Where and how can they express themselves in the craziest and subtlest way? Anna and Molly keep on engaged in women talk, cracking jokes and laughing widely. Anna writes about sex unpretentiously and one of her characters in the novel opines that women of any sense know better than men about bodily pleasures. Such open discussions in the novel have become controversial those days and the novel has even been considered as porn. I would like to point out that, women are constantly silenced when it comes to the use of certain taboo words and topics and she has to evolve her own vocabulary in the man-made language form to express herself. Kamala Das raises the post-colonial feminist question of the identity of a woman of substance in the following lines:

Why not let me speak in
Any language I like? The language I speak
Becomes mine, its distortions, its queerness
All mine, mine alone (“An Introduction” 9-12).

Women in both Lessing and Kamala Das find it oppressive that the hegemonic and subordinate forms of masculinity has silenced women from being outspoken, verbally and physically. Women discussing sex and private parts are considered weird and odd and deviants from the feminine prototype. It is shocking to see that even words and phrases used in daily talks have to be gender-sensitive. But still we see women who dare not to suppress the free flow of self-expression. In the poem “Words”, Kamala Das says,

... words are a nuisance, but
 They grow on me like leaves on a tree,
 They never seem to stop their coming
 From a silence, somewhere deep within (*Only the Soul Knows How to Sing* 45).

This is because the patriarchal order of language has political implications. This may be because it indeed is, and has to be, a world in male terms, alienating women from the power politics. Both Kamala Das and Lessing have articulated this horrendous estrangement of women from the power politics aggressively and scornfully in their works. Lessing, in her Preface to *The Golden Note Book* concurred women are 'second-class citizens' and cross examined the real motives of the feminist movements of that time. Kamala Das becomes hypercritical when she says “I don't know politics, but I know the names of those in power”, in the first line of her poem 'An Introduction'. This is precipitated from the assumption that women are inferior to men, which has been coerced into feminine psyche from the beginning of time. She is always barred from any type of rebellions or adventures. As Simone de Beauvoir points out:

Society in general- beginning with her respected parents – lies to her by praising the lofty values of love, devotion, the gift of herself, and then concealing from her the fact that neither lover nor husband nor yet her children will be inclined to accept the burdensome charge of all that. She cheerfully believes these lies because they invite her to follow the easy slope; in this others commit their worst crime against her; throughout her life from childhood on, they damage and corrupt her by designating as her true vocation this submission, which is the temptation of every existent in the anxiety of liberty (*The Second Sex* 730).

This is what happens to all women, as they take the patronizing advancement of the society on their life for granted. The conditioning they endure all through their life, in all walks of life is swallowed over without any reconsideration. As a consequence, they tend to be self-conscious and sex-conscious perpetually. They are disciplined to be 'feminine' with respect to the dress code, body language, preferences, domestic roles, meek submissiveness and even sex drive too. Any breach of such codes, they are afraid, will cause displeasure and disapproval from the society. This is the ground reality even if they pretend to be having advanced thoughts and high attitude. That is why Lessing says contemptuously, “Most women will still run like little dogs with stones thrown at them when a man says: You are unfeminine, aggressive, you are unmanning me” (*GN* 9). In order to safeguard their femininity, to sustain their domesticity and social acceptance, women still continue to disenfranchise themselves from the rights to be treated equal and make themselves the object and prey. This causes fragmentation of selves – a queer, nauseating feeling of smoldering flesh. The opening sentence of *The Golden Note Book* is expressive of this bizarre feeling. “The point is, that as far as I can see, everything is cracking up” (*GN* 25). This splintering

sensation leads to psychosis which entraps women into a maze of distorted, nightmarish sagacity. This is the cutting edge, this fissure, this fractured sense, that oscillates between sanity and insanity which eventually make them neurotic. Kamala Das' poems recurrently bring up this schizophrenic perturbation with sharp-edged altercation. The intense, turbulent emotional outburst comes as an imminent occurrence. Allan Graham comments, "Women's lives within society, like the lives of colonial subjects, are inevitably fractured or divided" (160). I cannot but agree with his comparison of women as 'colonial subjects', as I can see that women are still enduring mental slavery from which they cannot rip themselves off. They collide on conflicts and get themselves killed inch by inch eventually ending up in stiffness and restraint. Lessing calls women 'cowards' in her preface, saying it is "because they have been semi-slaves for so long" (GN 9). When Anna feels her life is falling apart, a morbid of fear of going mad grasps her and she records her experiences in four note books, addressing in turn her problems as a writer, her political life, her relationships and emotions and everyday events. See the dialogue between Anna and Molly:

"What's in those diaries then?"

'They aren't diaries'.

'Whatever they are.'

'Chaos, that's the point" (GN 56).

This chaotic combats with life make them belligerent and aggressive and they see the world as a pandemonium. A great distance had been traversed along the road to the emancipation of women and still women cannot get out of the abyss and make way headlong. Yes, it can be argued that we should not overlook the radical changes that have happened to feminine world so far. What I am concerned with is the reminiscence of patriarchal consciousness which still clings on to both male and female even in this century. Whenever a woman dares to voice out her inner feelings, emotions, resentment, aggression and abomination in terms of her relation with men, she is instantly stamped as 'unfeminine' and a 'man-hater'. Having a feminist attitude doesn't at all mean one should entertain animosity towards all men folk. The term has been commonly misinterpreted as yellow colored gender bias. The observation by T M J Indra Mohan in her article in the book *Studies in Women Writers in India, Vol II*, would be appropriate in this context:

Feminism is pro-women but not anti-man. The whole idea of feminism revolves round only value based systems and recognition rather than need biased or gender biased. It aims at overcoming male hierarchy in the most profound sense and ask for, in simple language a treatment as an individual human being. In consequence, feminist thought emerges as 'humanist' thought (Mohit & Kundu 187).

It is indeed not a Utopian ideal to see women at par with men not only superficially, but also inwardly. The silenced female consciousness has to evolve itself through the course of time, to emerge as the mouthpiece of humanitarian love and dignity. Love is the master emotion of all and it can heal any wounds if it is sublimed suitably. Love has the unique gift to efface all abrasions and humiliations as it is the only tool that can get in touch with the soul. It is the need of the hour to encompass ourselves with humanitarianism. What I have found common in both Lessing and Kamala Das is their conviction in the mutual dependency of man and women, holding hands together in the long walk of life. For Kamala Das, love is a bilateral relationship based on mutual trust and mutual understanding. It is firmly based on

the principle of gender equality. Lessing has positively predicted that the feminine concerns of her time would not last long and there would be an era when all the prejudices be flounced off to disclose a balanced and harmonious togetherness. Let us read Lessing's own words from the Preface:

I write all these remarks with exactly the same feeling as if I were writing a letter to post into the distant past: I am so sure that everything we now take for granted is going to be utterly swept away in the next decade (GN9).

Doris Lessing had an unwavering faith in women power and she believed things would change in the next decade and women would gain back their essential nature. It is quite unfortunate to find that even after the lapse of half a century, and even in the current post-feminist, post-modernist scenario, the feminine argument legged up by the women writers of the past still remain relevant, significant and unrequited. I strongly feel that mankind is yet to travel a long way to reconstitute values and redefine culture to be more humane and more balanced. My final thought on this disquisition is that instead of persisting on a male-oriented society, we need to advance to a more humanist society in order to maintain and sustain gender equality. Let me conclude that, until then, the wounds and bruises inflicted on the female psyche will remain perennial and longstanding.

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Re Constructing Identities in Fourth World Literature: Emerging forms of Resistance in G Kalyana Rao's *Untouchable Spring*

'Fourth World' is a phrase employed to describe the indigenous minorities throughout the earth. It refers to the nations, cultural entities and ethnic groups who are suppressed politically, culturally or economically in the name of caste or other such categorizations. Recently a new literary and political trend is upcoming by which the fourth world *selves* are starting to think and speak for themselves with their own consciousness and gaining momentum universally. Even though there were sympathetic literatures to project the problems of this underprivileged group, the original consciousness was missing in them as Spivak rightly pointed when she said there were always some agencies through which subaltern could speak.

'Fourth World literature' is a reply to such agency in literature and history and powerfully re casting a tradition of their own. The Indian Dalit sensibility should be viewed with such aesthetics of fourth world writings. Here a study of G Kalyana Rao's *Untouchable Spring* is carried out to find out how the fourth world writers are trying to re construct their identities through the writings of their own and propagates a fresh domain in the postcolonial scenario with new modes of literary resistance in an Indian context.

Literature of all ages has spawned diverse discourses on culture, identity and their representations. Post colonialism as a theory and practice has debated many of their forms. The colonial modes of representations and the postcolonial re look into them have problematised and constructed new forms of outlook about identities and the shaping and reshaping of them. Recent postcolonialities necessitate their excavation to the methodological framework and structure of historical subjectivity. Though 'Fourth World' seems to be an extension of third world, and seemingly restricted to marginal nations, it asserts a new epistemological order, perhaps through disorders, for history and its study. Fourth World, though not a politically drawn defined area, covers millions of inhabitants under privileged groups—linguistic, cultural, ethnic, political or religious. Hence 'fourth world literatures' have become an inclusive term for the whole spectrum of struggles—physical, intellectual and literary—and are gaining momentum since the marginalized minorities are now the 'authors', rather than the subjects of writing/being written.

Understanding indigenous identities throughout the world in the light of fourth world viewpoint is a recent trend in literary studies with substantial contemporary significance. Fourth world literatures, say Dalit writings in India, Native American/Amerindian writings, Native Australian/aboriginal Australian writing, Afro American literature etc. cover the issues of internationally unrecognized peoples and nations who have low level of political and economic integration. In India the Dalit writings chart a history from erasure to assertion and mount an artistic resistance against cultural blindness. As Alok Mukherjee, the prominent translator, observes in his translation of Limbale's *Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit literature*: "This society needs the dalit's labour, indeed, depends on it for its elegant survival,

but does not wish to be reminded of it. Scriptural authority was invoked to designate the dalit as polluted and untouchable” (Limbale 3). Dalit writers announce their presence, challenging the established notions of reality and Dalit identity by affirming their selves.

The formulation of 'World Council of Indigenous People' and 2007 UN declaration on the rights of Indigenous people have accelerated the political and literary movements from the various marginalized community who were once the majority in the nation but became victims of genocide due to various forms of colonial oppressions even after the country's political independence from external colonizers, and have become the minority in multiple ways. There is an urgent need for separate niche of forth world literature in order to avoid their erasure from history and regain, recast, reinvent and reconstruct their own identity. How the fourth world writers are trying to re write their identities through their own literature has been a focus for literary milieu for the past three decades. Fourth world literature is a site of resistance and it is a space for understanding the shared experiences of the subaltern identities across the world.

This paper addresses how G Kalyana Rao, the Indian Telugu Dalit writer powerfully unveils the Indian Dalit identity of *Malas* and *Madigas* of Andhra Pradesh and the colours associated with it. Rao's *Untouchable Spring* (2010), originally published in Telugu as *Antharani Vasantham* (2000) is a historical document and a memoir that tells the story of suffering, humiliation, deprivation and untouchability touching seven generations of Dalits and bringing the social and collective memory and announcing the folk knowledge, tradition, culture and history in a language which captures the beauty of oral tradition. The work is noticeable for its Dalit consciousness too.

The book presents the historical journey of seven generations, through their reflections and memories. Rao has brought the course of untouchable lives and examines the depth of casteist animosity. The Dalits of AP – *malas* and *madigas*, basically agro based community, are deprived of even one cent of land, for centuries. By casting a celebrated author of books – Ruth as narrator, Rao is recovering the status and authenticity of having a writer form their own group instead of being written and which ensures the emergence of independent dalit creative voice.

As Challappally Swaroopa, a Dalit writer and critic rightly observes:

The alphabet is now a weapon in the hands of untouchables—a weapon to attack the oppression perpetrated by Brahmanism for centuries. Dalits' defense of learning and respect have now crafted self respect from their humiliation strengthening their castes and destroying 'sanatana' values and tradition. People who have been denied basic humanity and have been outcastes for centuries have now stormed into literary avenues, roaring. Today untouchable voices rule Telugu literature (EPW 36).

The work progresses giving a detailed sketch in Indian ink about the sufferings of '*malas*' and '*madigas*' in their '*Palles*' – '*Malappalle* and *madigappalle*' – dwelling places which were situated in *Yennela Dinni*, a village close to *Ongole*, where upper caste Hindu lived in '*Ooru*' which is geographically higher regions and *palles* were lower regions of village. Geographical segregations lead to suppression and seclusion in the case of these Dalits. That is why Yellenna, the boy of *palle* trespasses to *Ooru* to watch a night performance which is denied for them. His running for life when the upper castes lashed him

brutally by palm fronds cast a sea change in the lives of untouchables. The anguish of untouchables is clear when Ruben, husband of Ruth remembers the wicked story of their birth –something which happened out of the wrath of gods. Ruben's mocking of myth is notable and also shows even the folk memory is colonized by brahmanical narratives.

The inaccessibility to common well, lack of permission to sit with upper caste and watch play performance in *ooru*, the unauthorized deaths among the untouchables etc. are some among the bitter experiences that *malas* and *madigas* have to live through. The book gives a detailed account of artistic talents and traditional knowledge which was never turned into a book or recorded anywhere because it was owned by untouchables. Naganna's *urumula* dance performance and Yellanna's rhymed songs are to be cited here. Rao speaks: “Yennella did not write songs. He knew no alphabet to write them. All he had was a feeling heart, a shareable experience” (Untouchable Spring 5). The protest and rejection against the betrayal done by the upper castes is voiced here.

Rao speaks the story behind the story of *Antharani Vasantham*: “That's true—my ancestors lived really outside the village. But they were inheritors of a magnificent culture. Great artists. Literatures too. They did not know how to write. They'd weave songs. Weave poetry Weave *padam*. Mine is that weaving heritage” (Gnapaka Vasantham 114). Rao believed in a revolutionary ideology and stated such a need for a cultural revolution as a necessary ingredient of reconstruction of identity and cultural assertion.

The back and forth movement of plot and the metanarrative style of writing add to the contemporaneity in the structure of novel. Though third person narration is used, we also have the first person perspectives of Ruth –the narrator. *Stream of Dalit consciousness* takes us on a journey to their heart. It is not only the song of pain but also becomes the song of discovery, discovery of humanity through defiance. Ruben's search for truth in one way becomes author's own search. Ruben painfully realizes and rejects the story of his birth as something which happened in the curse of gods. Ruben says: “Siva curses. He curses Jambavanta and Chennaiah to live in *Kaliyuga* eating the meat of dead cows and sweeping the bazaars” (Untouchable Spring 4). It was a condemnation of his birth that was so cruelly painted, of the crime committed on him in history. Themes are deeply autobiographical and realistic in nature. It evolves as a family or community saga, a novel and historical document rolled in to one. Rao is a Dalit convert Christian. He picturises the brutality against Dalit Christians here. The pain is visible when he says:

In this country the air one breath has cast

The water one drink has caste.

...

The word one speaks has caste

Literature and culture have castes.

The state has caste. Its laws have caste.

Justice and the court have castes.

The corpse and the cemetery have castes.

God has caste. Devil has caste.

(Rao 227)

The invasion of *palles*, police encounter with untouchable communists, agrarian

resistance in AP, the Telengana Armed struggle and the suppression of the same by the state etc. are presented with overtones of realistic picture of AP. Author's beliefs in communist principles, revolutionary ideology and *Naxalist* movements etc. reach their extremity in the book. States' capitalistic will and Dalits' resistance frame the last part of the novel.

The book turns to be an intellectual inquiry to the perspectives of truth. Ramanujam evolves as the mouth piece of author, who doesn't have faith in Ambedkarean principles and Gandhian thoughts. According to Ramanujam all these ideologies are just helpful but to ensure the castiest tradition and to work for the progression within the walls of it. He says: "I don't have the illusion about Gandhiji that you have" (Rao 200). Instead communism is presented as a fine set of principles to rescue them. Novel presents struggle as the means of liberation and also projects the necessity of land reformation. Access to land is a means of access to one's own roots and identity.

Thus *Untouchable Spring* is not only about the sufferings but concerns the joyful moments of Dalits' lives too. References to Dalit culture, art forms, poetry, songs, rituals, beliefs, and history are the celebration of spirit of Dalits. The oral tradition of language is proudly used by the author to question the authority of written mode and recorded history. The use of cultural specific words *appa*, *amma*, *ammamma*, *atta nalla*, *pandal*, *mama*, *Jatara festival* etc. show the author's appropriation of language and a history of their own. The search for truth and struggle are presented as historical necessity in the book as Ruben writes in his diary: "I'm searching for that which my ancestors have lost" (Rao 196).

Dalit literature is now passing through a stage of revolt, a revolt which leads to self discovery. As Sarankumar Limbale, the prominent Dalit writer and critic points out: "Revolt is the stage that follows anguish and rejection. 'I'm human, I must receive all the rights of a human being—such is the consciousness that gives birth to this revolt" (Limbale 31). The Novel *Untouchable Spring* ends on an optimistic note. It asserts Dalits are not born to die, but are born to fight, put an end to exploitation and live as dignified human being and suggest a demand for cultural revolution. The novel questions the age old custom prevailed as the untouchable should not pollute the literary world even by a touch. The work should be read as a powerful text of historiography of the deprived over several generations and it also announces the arrival of powerful voice in subaltern literature. It surely provides a recovery and rediscovery of the Dalit selves and should be read with the viewpoint and aesthetics of forth world literature to gain all its implications.

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Story of a Crying Wound: Trauma of Living after Rape

Trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language. (Caruth 4)

In June 2002, Mukhtar Mai, a Pakistani woman from the impoverished village of Meerwala, was gang raped by a local clan known as the Mastoi as punishment for indiscretions allegedly committed by the woman's brother. An investigation ordered by the Punjab governor in July 2002 revealed that Mukhtaran's brother Abdul Shakoor, then 12 years old, had been raped by three men from the Mastoi tribe, who then threatened the boy to keep his abuse quiet. When the boy refused, one of the men accused him of having sexual relations with his sister, Salma, who was then at least six years older than Shakoor. Mukhtaran's family at first tried to arrange a settlement of the dispute by asking that Shakoor marry Salma and that one of the Mastoi tribe marry Mukhtaran. The Mastoi clan was initially willing to accept the agreement but Salma's brothers, including one of the men who raped Shakoor, refused. The Mastoi's suggested that they would be willing to 'forgive' Mukhtaran's family if she came and apologised on behalf of her brother. However, when she arrived at the house of one of the Mastoi men, she was dragged inside, gang raped by four men, and then paraded naked in the village.

In The Name Of Honour is a memoir by Mukhtar Mai. Her book is a touching exposition of her traumatic experience of the rape. The experience of a woman who is raped and presented before the law is rather painful. The trauma experienced by the victim is both mental and physical and it is "a kind of brutalizing shock" (Buse 173). While the physical trauma is time bound, the mental agonies that follow surpass the time limit. The narrative presents the kind of difficulties she encounters after she was raped by four men as a penalty for her brother's 'sin'.

The society in which Mai lives is unaware of the prevalent legal system of the land. Geographically, she lives in a remote area viz. Meerwala, in Muzaffargarh district, far away from Islamabad. Hence, the issue doesn't get public attention in the beginning. The issue is brought to light only when a media person dares to write about it. Even that has a negative impact on Mai's case. The trauma stretches to the police station, court and media. The popularity of the incident is tantamount to her being raped publicly once again. In the beginning of the narrative, the locale of all incidents is a far away village. The reader assumes that the attitude of the society is unrefined as it is a remote village. Social perception towards victims of rape is much more ugly and cruel when we move from the village to the city. The city culture haunts the woman with its speed and technology.

Trauma is a peculiar experience to the victim and the unexpected incident may have far reaching consequences in the life of the victim. The sudden and catastrophic experience invites overwhelming response from the part of victim either immediately or with delay. The immediate response is understood by the society as the outcome of the traumatic incident, while the delayed response is easily equated to a mental disorder alone. The response of the victim may vary from time to time and we can observe in the victim “uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (Caruth 11). The effect of such an unfortunate incident on the psyche of a victim is a wretched one. A person who is continuously exposed to such a terror might even forget that he/she has been living under such a situation. The uneven response from the part of the victim is often helpful to the victimizer as “the patient may not have the full recall of the traumatic history” (Herman 157) and at times he/she may even deny such an occurrence. During such occasions, medical support is needed to bring out the real story of the victim. The medical team has to take maximum care to support the patient both mentally and physically and if they believe the presence of a traumatic syndrome, it should be communicated to the patient. Through this knowledge, the traumatized person is simply relieved to learn the true name of his/her condition and can come to terms with the same.

The trauma experienced by a rape victim is still painful. Rape traditionally has been treated as a heinous crime in all cultures. The severe penalties and social disgrace visited upon offenders made rape to be considered along with serious crimes like murder and kidnap. The sexual offence towards a female in a family will naturally undermine the fundamental unit of the society. Thus rape should be seen as an offence which could not be tolerated in a civilized society. But in the present world, rape is a case for which the society finds it easy to criminalize the victim. The society looks down upon the victim as if her 'self' was also partially the cause of the crime. In our society the victim alone is discussed and the potential rapists get the suspicion of circumstance to escape the scene. It can be taken as the result of some of the legal reformation. While rape continues to be seen as a serious criminal offense, there are dramatic if not revolutionary changes in the conceptualization and codification of rape as a criminal offense. These changes have not always occurred in a consistent and uniform fashion across the world. Rather, a great many variations have appeared in offense terminology, evidentiary requirements, penalty structure, necessary conditions, and probative value of elements of the crime. The intent of the legal reformers was to ensure fairness and equal protection of the law for all involved. And they thought of correcting some of the more blatant abuses of past legislation. But the effect of many of these changes was to trivialize the offense of rape and to devalue the victim.

The legal history of rape was always male dominated. The case was dealt in a court where male supremacy prevailed as a rule. Definitions of offense, evidence, legal defenses, and appropriate penalties were passed by males in accordance with traditional perspectives of propriety and the nature and character of females. As the his-story (sic) has divided the female into chaste and unchaste based on the male whims and fancies, the rape of an unchaste woman often went unpunished and resulted in the trial being a public degradation ceremony of the "nonvirtuous" female. In such cases the evidence of the past sexual history of the victim could be introduced to demonstrate her poor moral character and cast doubt on her claim of non-consent to the sexual intercourse while the past sexual history (including past convictions of rape) of the accused could not be introduced as evidence. These are used in an attempt to impeach the credibility of the victim and protect the presumably innocent male.

Apart from this the position of the female in the society also does matter. Woman has been considered the possession and property of man and the rape of a woman is the rape of a “man's woman”, which also brings down the seriousness of the transgression. Even the ability to examine the sexual history of the victim in great public detail invites the courts' deep mistrust of the female victim. The law shifts the focus of attention from the offender to the victim. As a result, rape victims commonly feel as if they were on trial, their character questioned, and that they were responsible for the rape because of how they acted or because they did not resist strongly enough. The judgments resort to a simple equation like “nice girls don't get raped and bad girls shouldn't complain”. In such a state, justice to the victim largely rests at the mercy of the patriarchal law.

The experience of Mukthar Mai can be best analysed with the tools put forth by Trauma Theory. As Judith Herman says, “unlike commonplace misfortunes, traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity or a close personal encounter with violence and death.” (33) The rape victims have to face problems which are termed by doctors as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD). Mai also had to face some mental disorders immediately after the rape and the impact of the rape is not unidimensional among victims. In a recent study titled Life Change and Rape Impact by Ruch, by Meyers and Harter, it's found that there are at least three realms which are affected by rape trauma. The three areas of impact they mentioned are: 1. Behavior 2. Emotions 3. Cognitions. All these changes are manifested in the victim in different ways. The victim starts to cry all of a sudden, trembles or act in some other way that reflects the impact of the assault which can be taken as examples of behavioural change. In some other occasions the victim expresses fear, self-blame or other emotional concerns. Cognitively, the victim's planning and decision-making are impaired. The response of the victims may vary based on their psychological conditions. Some might express strong anger and some others may be depressed and withdrawn. In Mai, we could perceive all these reactions appearing in varying degrees. She was secluded and dumbfounded the days immediately after the incident. She had thought of committing suicide many times. She hadn't taken even food for many days after the incident. Mai writes, “I was in my room surrounded by my sisters mourning the unfortunate incident befell on our family. I didn't leave the room for three days except for attending nature's call, did never eat nor cry” (24)

It is commonly perceived that the law is the one agency which provides you justice. But in the case of Mai, even law contributes much to her trauma. She decides to fight against the system which blames the woman alone when such incidents occur. She chooses to take revenge on the culprits rather than silently suffering the aftermath of the incident. She wanted to get them maximum punishment. Her decision adds to her trauma as the judiciary, police and law are just extensions of the social system which finds it convenient to criminalize women rather than help them. In the start, she was not fully sure about the ways she had to travel or the rigidity of the law she is going to face. Even then she was ready to fight until death, because for her death has little significance when compared to the pain she had already suffered. Thus, Mai turns to be a real icon of inspiration to the women across the world who have been brutally raped and silenced.

Usually a woman who undergoes such a terror would commit suicide out of sense of shame. The clinical condition suggests that most often the victim may not even remember what has happened to her. In such situations, the victim has to be reminded of the situation she has been through by doctor or counselor. This is because of the incapacity to comprehend

the situation. Mai writes about her wretched state just after rape.

My life is broken to the extent of not coping with the reality of physical and mental terror. I did never think that this much cruelty is possible. I too, like any other girl, was a simple and poor one in my village living under the protection of father and elder brother. (23)

But she came back to life gathering anger towards the culprits and the malicious social system and with an eagerness to spot them being punished.

The stress of trauma has direct and far reaching consequence both on the subject of trauma and on the family. The stressful event poses a problem which is by definition insoluble in the immediate future. The family of Mai had never faced such a problem before. They had only the usual concerns of a poor Pakistani tribal family, which were always manageable to them. Even Mai's divorce, at the age of 18, from her lazy and irresponsible husband had not created any abnormal fuss in the family. She did help her father financially by the income she earned from teaching sewing to the neighbouring girls. The family depended on the agriculture of the father for a livelihood. Though the income was meager from all the sources, their family did exist as one of the happiest family in the village. To this happiness, came the unfortunate incident as a thunderbolt. The problem becomes insoluble in different ways. First, the family had never dealt with a similar problem in the past. Second, to deal with the issue, they have to go through legal formalities to which the lack of formal education is an obstacle. Third, if they are to find justice out of court, they have to compete with the Mastoi clan who are notorious outlaws. The family of Mai does not have the physical or financial power to deal with the Mastoi family. Fourth, the safety and security of the family will be at risk if Mai and her family appear before the law with their grievance. Fifth, re-telling of the incident was almost like getting raped again and again. Mai writes, "to tell my story repeatedly- I cannot even think of it. For, to tell it to someone, I want somebody whom I can trust. If it was a lady police officer, the pain may be less. But the nauseating fact is that, there is no women staff in our police." (39) Finally, what they have to prove is a case of rape to which producing witnesses is almost impossible. Those who support Mai are her family members alone and the witnesses to the rape are potential rapists or those who support the rapists. Mai writes:

In Pakistan, it is rather difficult for a woman to prove herself being raped. Because, she has to, legally, present four male witnesses in the court. It is to ensure that the law to punish rape culprits is not misused. Unfortunately, the culprits are the sole witnesses in my case (53). Altogether, the material condition is unfavorable to Mai and her family. However, Mai decides to fight to bring the culprits in front of the law.

The rape trauma continues to exert influence in other ways too. The problem overtaxes the psychological resources of the family, since it is beyond their traditional problem solving methods and the situation is perceived as a threat or danger to the life goals of the family members. In the wake of the incident, the family of Mai had to re-orient the family goals. Instead of finding ways to meet both the end of life, the family began to engage in law related matters. The media attention of the incident also had serious reverberations in the family. Media persons began to appear in the house every now and then. The security officials employed for the safety of Mai and family posed a great threat for the privacy of the family. Even within the house, the family members felt as if they were in the public place. Another issue is that traditionally, the people of the village invariably depended on the Jirga (the local authority for redressal of grievances). The village people opted Jirga because for

them justice from the state was too expensive. Mai had to break this custom also. Jirga will never bring justice to the family of Mai, for the opposing Mastoi clan exerted its loutish power to intimidate Jirga and thus it will never dare to judge against the Mastoi Clan.

Her trauma has different dimensions and stages. She suffers the pain of rape along with the brutal physical attacks discharged on her brother. Her sufferings begin from the attacks the Mastoi family let loose on her brother Shakoor. He has been misused for sodomy by one of the Mastoi family members and he was threatened by him not to tell the truth to anybody. When Shakoor replied that he will tell this to his father, he was brutally attacked by the Mastoi men and to conceal the sodomy, they came with a new accusation against him. There began to spread a news that Shakoor had illicit affair with Salma, who is from Mastoi family. After spreading the news among the village people, Mastoi men kidnapped shakoor and with the help of the local police, they continued the physical assault on him. Mai writes about the situation:

My younger brother Shakoor is accused of talking with Salma, who is a Mastoi. Shakoor is just twelve and Salma is above twenty. We are sure that my brother has committed no crime. But it is of no use. When the Mastoi clan decides to do something in this regard, we had to bow our heads to their decision. It was so all the time (17).

This is followed by the brutal rape. The Mastoi tribe demanded the Gujjar to plead for the mercy, by which they can retrieve the honour of their family. They asked Mukthar Mai to be sent for apologizing. Thinking that by the apology, the enmity between the two clans will come to a close, Mai's father sends her to the Mastoi family. This proves to be fatal for Mai and her family. The woman is treated brutally by the Mastoi men and they did gang-rape her repeatedly. She writes, "They did it from an isolated barn... Four men: Abdul Qalikh, Gulam Fareed, Allah Dittah and Mohammed Feiz. I don't remember how far it did last. One hour, two or the whole night?" (22)

The brutality of rape was not the final torment for Mai. The real distress was waiting for her in the form of blind law. She is frightened by the police officers to change her testimony in favour of the culprits. When she disagreed to do the same, her brother was attacked again in the police station. The trial in the court is yet another tribulation that she had to relive the vindictive memories of the rape in the court. The court of Pakistan proved to be patriarchal in this case also. The trauma of Mai is terrible when she meets the culprits who have escaped the clutches of the law due to lack of evidence. This brings to our mind the essential quality of law as possessing violence. How can a woman produce an evidence (in person or material) for a rape? Can anyone assume that the Mastoi family members present themselves as witnesses in Mai's case? And the testimony by the victim and the relatives of the victim are never considered by the court as powerful evidences. Even for a scientific proof she will have to suffer a lot. The lack of evidence gives an easy chance for the culprits to escape conviction but this is no evidence that the woman has not been raped. Afterwards, she has to live in a society where the potential rapists live enjoying all the luxuries life provides, but the victim bears all the shame and trauma.

Even Mr. Parvez Musharaf, the then President had a mean opinion about the incident. He opined that, "You must understand the environment in Pakistan... This has become a money-making concern. A lot of people say if you want to go abroad and get a visa

for Canada or citizenship and be a millionaire, get yourself raped” (Washington Post, 13 September, 2005). Mukhtar has responded furiously to this indecent comment. She replied that, “I offer all the “riches” I’ve made out of the Panchayat-enforced gang-rape to the President in return for justice” (Dawn, September 15, 2005).

For any victim, the mitigation of its effects through legal means is very important. But the judiciary needs proof and evidence. But in case of the rape victim, the trauma she has endured cannot be fully brought in front of the law as evidence. Here comes the relevance of literature. The imperceptibility of trauma is the subject of literature. The law tries to heal the perceptible injury while literature attempts to heal the unseen realm of trauma. As a matter of fact, we can assume that a woman who faces such a terrible situation is undergoing series of mental agonies. She has no escape from the scars of the rape. The society will never accept her as a normal human being. At the same time, the accused is let free both by law and society. Altogether we will have to assume that the woman is victimized continuously till her death, for the crime committed by others.

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From the Hub of Miasma to the Haven of Freedom : Facets of Deception in *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Life is Beautiful*

Life is the art of being well deceived; and in order that the deception may succeed, it must be habitual and uninterrupted

-William Hazlitt

Hollywood Movies have always been therapeutic in multiple ways to recreate the image of the modern man in psychological terms, spilling the abstract themes of humanity. Bearing in mind the variance in the categories of movies released, the endeavour here is to showcase the basic structural human thoughts bordering the areas of “Deception” to the road of liberty by juxtaposing two Hollywood movies, namely “The Shawshank Redemption” and “Life is Beautiful.” The Manipulation of one's language in a way trails the sheer threads of deception in one's cerebrum. The contours of a human mind can be mapped explicitly in the backdrop of behind-the bar contexts. The esplanade of deception yet again is more unwieldily run when placed in the most brutal malodour of penalisation. Both the movies feature the traumas of prison life as well as concentration camps. However, the protagonists of these two movies are similar in varied ways in structuring a similar platform in employing their deceptive skills. In a way, the deception depicted becomes instrumental in organising the track towards the destination of independence. In numerous ways, the movies huddle together though they differ vituperatively in the techniques practiced. Both the protagonists, Andy Dufresne and Guido Orefice run a risky deception through which their ultimate independence is guaranteed.

Deceit or Deception has struck its arrows on Mankind long back in History, Mythology and Literature. Reporting channels and newspapers today call our attention to the false identities created by the spies, the fraudulent deals of business tycoons, misinformed campaigns of the political demagogues, and many more gyrating tales of deceit and falsehood. The term “Deception” has cramped humanity from time immemorial ranging from the Biblical myth of Satan and Judas to the Hindu Mythology involving Maareecha, Ravana and many in *Ramayana* along with Lord Krishna's treachery at Kurukshetra marking the dawn of *Mahabharata*. The Cross dressing charge of Joan of Arc in the male military attire in the Hundred Years War and Viola's disguise as Cesario in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* too testifies the seeds of deception engrafted in human heritage long back. Sigmund Freud, the great Austrian Neurologist had analysed the postulation of deception long back by methodically accounting and observing varied nonverbal clues.

The Interpersonal Deception Theory in Psychology scrutinises the interrelationship between communicative contexts and sender - receiver cognitions and behaviours in deceptive exchanges. David Buller and Judee Burgoon are considered to be the propounders of the Interpersonal Deception Theory. Deception Theory in every sense is an inevitable instrument for mankind. The main concept and implication of the theory roots itself to the testimony that humankind is susceptible to levels of deception - either in deceiving others or

being deceived by others. Consequently, this specific tool settles manifold contradictions in our day to day world without hampering the sequence of relationships. However, IDT is the first formal theory to define deception as a communicative activity (Hearn, 2006). Interpersonal Deception Theory, and the ensuing adaptations of IDT, strive for, to explicate the interactive process of deception and to furnish a methodology for identification of deceptive acts. Interpersonal Deception Theory or IDT focuses on minor strategies that built up the sky-scraping concepts of the process of methodical deception and the article traces the imprints of those strategies.

Both the movie protagonists, Dufresne and Orifice track down certain strategies in the inception of their deception techniques although these claimed victims are candidly proved to be innocents. Buller and Burgon, the authors of IDT are careful to state that "the majority of individuals overestimate their ability to detect deception" (5). Dufresne's guiltlessness is never proved in the written records by the authorities, the entry of the palpable real murderer to the prison who admits his culpability, brings to light the innocence of Andy Dufresne. Meanwhile, Orifice, along with his son Joshua is dumped to one of the Concentration Camps only because he has a Jewish Italian backdrop. As Freud puts it, "Out of your vulnerabilities will come your strength" (31). Consequently, we witness both the heroes stamping the hefty walls of their prison to the channels of freedom. Furthermore, the dream of the Mexican Paradise, Zihuatanejo in the case of Andy and the bagging of a First Prize worth a Tank in the case of Joshua (Orifice's son), keeps them going all through the wonderful horrors they witness.

While the environs of both the movies are at odds inordinately, both American and Italian ambiance testifies once more that the abstract concepts of deception and freedom takes no mangling though the location may alter. *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption* is a novella penned by Stephen King in the year 1982 which has been adapted to a movie by Darabond later in the year 1994. As *The Shawshank Redemption* opens, we see Andy Dufresne who is knocked down with two life sentences at the fictional Shawshank State Penitentiary in Maine for having murdered his wife and her lover. Nineteen years of his prison life keeps him going with the unrelenting hope that he perceives within him. Andy says to his friend Redding, "Hope is a good thing, may be the best of things, and no good thing ever dies" (*Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption* 12). Similarly, Guido Orifice with his inbred resilience argues against his fate in saving the life of his five year old son Joshua among one of the most brutal and barbarous Concentration Camps. Both Andy Dufresne and Guido Orifice makes use of Deception though they edge out their master plan using multifarious strategies categorised in the concept of Deception.

Deception, in the simplest way is defined as the distortion or omission of complete truth. Deception, according to the *Interpersonal Deception Theory* (IDT) can be categorised and analysed further into Lies, Equivocations, Concealment, Exaggerations, Understatement and Disguise. The most noteworthy communication research stalking from IDT is the study of Information Manipulation and the subsequent theory published by Steven McCornack and Timothy Levine. This theory proposes that, "deceptive messages function deceptively because they covertly violate the principles that govern conversational exchanges" (McCornack, 1992) Furthermore, the theory of Deception states the motives behind Deception which can again be classified as Partner-focussed, Self-focussed and Relationship focussed (IDT 4). Descartes says, "Divide each difficulty into as many parts as feasible and necessary to resolve it" (21) Dufresne on one hand smashes his action plan at the

outset in keeping a tab on the infrastructure of the prison. He reads into the characters like Warden Norton and his prison mates. On the other hand Orefice establishes his deception according to the mind set of his son one after the other. Thus, breaking down both the movies based on these strategies would unquestionably help us to pin down the concept of Deception as it has been played upon in both films.

Both *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Life is Beautiful* sprawls on the pillars of Lies. Take off the lies and the movie crumples. However, a Lie is an intentionally false statement that is made for reasons only known to the one who advocates it. Aristotle said, "Anybody who advocated lie could never be believed"(143). But the Utilitarian philosophers have supported lies which achieve good outcomes known to be White Lies. Fredereick Nietzsche suggested that those who refrain from lying may do so only because of the difficulty involved in maintaining the lie (61). Consequently, we agree upon the Utilitarian concept of White Lie when it can serve extensive purpose without harming anyone. A White Lie in essence is a harmless lie or even otherwise advantageous in the long run. White lies are quite frequently used to mask someone from a malicious or emotionally detrimental truth, especially when not knowing the truth is absolutely innocuous. Andy Dufresne and Guido Orefice thus unwittingly take on to the chunks of white lies while phasing their plan of escape in the most discreet manner. When Andy asks for a rock hammer from Redding to carve rocks, Guido makes his son believe that the concentration camp is just a juncture for a contest - a game zone. Both the heroes had lied to their counterparts (a white lie) when their brains were choking with modes and methods of escape from their incarceration.

Equivocation is an alternative strategy of Deception. In other words, Equivocation is an informal fallacy or a set of misleading terms. In other words, Equivocation makes an indirect, ambiguous or contradictory statement so as to submerge their original motive. On one occasion Andy tells Redding regarding the picture of Rita Hayworth which is hung in his prison room wall. He wonders if he could fly to the outer world through the picture and in fact he does so later. He also adds a comment on Alexander Dumas'book, *The Count of Monte Christo* stating that it is a must read as it is a novel of a "prison break"when none around actually thought of Andy's own escape from the prison. Above all, he hollowed the Bible to make space for the rock hammer he used to tunnel through his cell wall, and placed it back in the Warden's safe the night before his escape, stating, "Dear Warden; You were right. Salvation lay within Andy" (Rita Hayworth 23). Andy desperately wanted his cut and run though he verbalises it in metaphorical terms as Salvation since his warden is an intensely committed religious believer. Thus Andy used his faint equivocations by giving an ancillary reference to much of his actions he was about to advance. Guido on the other hand hoodwinks his son by his claim of winning a tank as the first prize in the game zone where the game zone is in fact the concentration camp. He says, "You have to score one thousand points. If you do that, you take home a tank with a big gun"(Life is Beautiful 1:14). Thus the partners around the protagonists are duped in the most elegant way when they shape their plans and inform others in the most distinct style. A concentration camp indubitably is a game zone in a symbolic sense from where your escape is obligatory. Meanwhile, Andy's restatement of the Bible quote as "Salvation is within"takes an allegorical sense when Andy has by that time schemed his escape with his own self strategy and plans of escape. Obviously an escape is equivalent to Salvation.

"No enterprise is more likely to succeed than one concealed from the enemy until it is ripe for execution", opines Machiavelli (52). Concealment is yet another game plan of

deception that is defined as the omission of important information wittingly. Both the heroes rub out certain substantial ingredients in their conversation thereby proceeding with the modes of their deception. Fostering a misconception is the main aim of Concealment. The demand for the picture of Rita Hayworth induces laughter in many a friends of Andy inside the prison. He speaks of his wish for the picture of a fine woman deliberately omitting the original idea he had in his mind when he used the image to cover up his digging process. Guido on a contrasting level convinces his son about the laboriousness of the game, thereby dispensing with the relevant fact that they are in the interiors of a concentration camp. Guido again advises his son not to speak in Jewish so as to conceal their real identity. Thus, Concealment too takes its toll in jigsawing the brimming picture of deception.

Stretching the truth to a wider degree can again be a part of deception as we call them 'Exaggeration'. Guido exaggerates the event of getting into the bus with his son Joshua. In fact both of them are pushed to the bus leading to the concentration camp. However, Guido tells his son, "Look at this line to get on! Hey, we've got tickets, save room for us!" (*Life is Beautiful* 57:00) He also exaggerates the event of travelling in a bus as a surprise gift for his son Joshua who is turning five on the very same day. In a corresponding fashion Andy Dufresne exaggerates his temperamental sullen attitude and demands a piece of rope to his close friend. While the exaggeration of rope being connected to a suicide becomes a heated debate among his friends, Andy was in fact sketching out his scheme of tying the rope around his waist to carry his belongings as he crawls through the stinky ditch to the outer world. However, when a rope gets exaggerated to suicide (when the real fact is Andy's movement towards life) Guido's hyperbolic statement of an alluring trip in fact ends inside a concentration camp.

Understatement is yet another mechanism used in Deception. Downplaying or minimisation of the aspects of truth is what is called as Understatement. In the movie *Life is Beautiful*, a number of children are actually murdered by the authorities of the concentration Camps. However, Guido downplays the situation by suggesting that the children are hiding so as to score more points to win the tank as the first prize. Since the events are cut down to the schemes of a game, the child never recognises the horrors of internment. Meanwhile, Andy gets assaulted a number of times by a group inside the prison and he suffers them stoically because he never wanted to be placed in a different cell since he had already started his digging process using his three inch sized rock hammer.

The form of disguise had been used right from Biblical allusions with the disguise of Satan as a serpent. Even Literature has levelled up multiple disguises ranging from Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* and Viola to Cesario in *The Twelfth Night* and many more. Similarly, as the movie *The Shawshank Redemption* comes to an end, we realise Andy Dufresne switching on to his disguise as a new character Randall Stephen, a character through which money laundering took place within the prison with the aid of the prison warden, Norton. Niccolo Machiavelli says that it is double pleasure to deceive the deceiver (63). The exact plan of deceiving the Prison Warden named Norton justifies the concept of deceiving the deceiver. Simultaneously, Guido's role in disguise commences as soon as they enter the concentration camp, masked by the spirit of a game player rather than a victim suffering at a concentration camp. He appears before his son as a frolicsome player trying to achieve thousand points in order to get the first prize for his son - the tank.

Though the strategies employed were brought into play in different modes in two

movies, the motives behind the plan of deception differed vigorously. While in *The Shawshank Redemption*, the main motive of deception is self focused, the motive behind Deception in *Life is Beautiful* seems to be partner focused. When the motive turns out to be self focused, the main objective of the mode of deception would be to appease one's own self as in the case of Andy where he escapes into the world of freedom to please his own psyche. On the other hand, Guido's aim in *Life is Beautiful* appears more to be partner-focussed where he tries to rescue his son and his levels of deception comes into punch only to keep his son away from the viciousness of the concentration camp. As a father, he makes use of his fertile imagination to keep his son happy and to prevent him from the obnoxious and diabolic atmosphere of imprisonment.

Consequently, as Niccolo Machiavelli puts it, "The end justifies the means"(44). Thus, in a nutshell, both the movies portray the gentle Machiavellians - Andy Dufresne and Guido Orefice, who reach their destinations through the mask of deception . While Andy escapes to the outer world as a release from prison, Orifice sweeps to death thereby saving his son by asking him to remain inside a sweatbox. Along with the theme of deception, the movies stand on the pedestal of hope. Nevertheless, the movies make us think yet another aspect of Deception, which is Patience. Every act of Deception envisages multiple amounts of patience. If it took more than Nineteen years for Andy to dig through a wide tunnel with his three inch rock hammer, it is nothing less than the amount of Patience that he roots down to, all through these years.

Deception is all pervasive, permeating relevantly in the paddocks of Advertising and Politics and more exuberantly in life. Any Deception right from a lie to a fraud or a money laundering or a massive loot, converts its own identity to the pragmatic strategies of operation conceived. However, the mystery behind a wholesome deception can only be splintered down to a certain extend though not absolutely to its inner nuances or rhythms. Thus *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Life is Beautiful* are two movies which helps us to chronicle with the components of human deception and the concatenation enables us to track down both the challenges and constraints of Deception.

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Da Thadiya : A Discourse on Postmodern Identity

Da Thadiya (Hey Fatso), the Malayalam film, released on December 2012, directed by Ashiq Abu, moves along two complex thematic trajectories. In the first trajectory, the film portrays the disorientations and fragmentations of life, by breaking the conventional structures and concepts of film-making and celebrating the fractures of postmodern identities. The movie quarrels with the falsehoods or incomplete truths created by the power wielders of the world. It explores how the continuous shifts of one's identities enable one to survive and face the world. All the characters in the film struggle and wear masks sometimes for the survival and the alteration of the selves influences power relations between people and institutions. In the second, the film focuses on the theme of obesity and demonstrates how the medical discourse can transform obesity into a disease. An obese is treated as a disabled individual admitted to a clinic like a patient and his self is presented as a 'subject-in-becoming,' an identity changing according to the role or part he is playing. This paper is an attempt to capture these parallel thematic movements within the movie *Da Thadiya*.

Fluid Selves

Da Thadiya depicts the fluid identities of people and the characters in the film undergo “the protean style of self process” and a “series of experiments and exploration”(Lifton 130) in their life. The characters explore new identities through experiments and finally reach the instability or fluidity of the selves. Erving Goffman, the great sociologist, argues for the postmodern, non-essential, transient self, which is not stable. He states that the character is a 'performance' according to the “part, one is playing” (9). The characters in *Da Thadiya* be have according to the demands of the situation and change as time passes. Goffman states that when an individual comes in contact with other people, that individual will attempt to change his/her identity (60). In social interaction, as in theatrical performance, there is a front region where the 'actors' (individuals) are on stage in front of the audiences. There is also a back region that can be considered as a hidden or private place for the 'actors'. The essence of Goffman's analysis lies in this relationship between 'performance' and life. The region can be the barrier at the same time and an opportunity for the individual to act as a fluid self. In *Da Thadiya* the role change of the characters facilitates their identity change and it influences power relations.

Lucka John Prakash, the son of the Congress Party leader John Prakash, has been growing up to the boundaries and reached beyond 120 kilos. He is called 'Thadiyan' (obese) by his friends and family members and he was in love with his childhood friend Ann Mary Thadikkaran, who wreaks havoc with Thadiyan's heart twice. Rahul Vaidyar's magical weight loss programme in which the Thadiyan and many are cheated, is an illustration of Keralite society and the story is narrated by Thadiyan's cousin Sunny Jose Prakash, the lean fellow, son of Jose Prakash. The presence of great leader Prakash who died long ago and blessed with his fat soul and body, is remarkable in the film.

The characters the Thadiyan, Ann Mary Thadikkaran and Rahul Vaidyar in the film are not stable with fixed identity. They are changing according to the situations and their

transformation is gradual. Lucka, the obese, is oppressed for being a fatty and he struggles a lot to escape from the mockery of the world. He tries medicines like a patient and faces many bitter experiences from the society. Finally he accepts the fact that obesity is his identity. Depression of the Thadiyan goes through different moments, at first he comes back to his teen's life with Sachin Tendulkar's innings and later when he is again depressed by his broken love, he dreams a bus journey with his great fat grandfather, a blessed soul, -along with a bus full of angels. It is the inspiration of his grandfather that makes him a social worker and finally the Mayor of the city. Thadiyan's change is due to the change in 'region'. The obese gets admiration and respect from the same people who ridiculed him once. He says after becoming the mayor that he is the father of the city of Cochin which indicates the change of his role and region. "A region may be defined as any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception" (Goffman 66). But the change of his role to 'front region' does not restrict but enables him to 'perform' against the evils in society. The next change in Thadiyan's character is the transition from depression mode to celebration mode and the change from the oppressed to the oppressor. When Thadiyan realizes his lover's role in the cheating business, he loses the feel of love from his heart forever. Thadiyan's change is situational and it reminds us of Lifton's views on "protean style of self process" (130). Thadiyan struggles a lot and everybody has a role in his change.

Another depthless postmodern self is of Ann Mary Thadikkaran, the childhood friend of Thadiyan. She "wears many masks" (Gergen 135) and her transition is always for her happiness and self protection. She leaves him in grief in teens after giving him a glimpse of her Micky Mouse printed underpants and later in his youth as a health conscious girl she returns, and still she uses a mobile phone with the picture of Micky mouse printed all over it, which means that she can't escape from the past even at that time. Ann Mary Thadikkaran's character goes through three different levels of development. First one is that of an innocent childhood friend of Thadiyan and the second one, a health conscious girl with her business tricks. She tempts Thadiyan to reduce his weight and brings him to the weight loss programme of Rahul Vaidyar. Being a partner to the weight loss programme business, she wants to admit a patient to attain her target number. Finally she changes again and regrets her act and comes back when she too was cheated by Rahul Vaidyar.

Rahul Vaidyar is a typical business man who is exploiting the insecurities of 21st century Keralites like the fondness of cosmetics, hair oil, fairness creams, black magic tricks, aphrodisiac medicines and weight loss medicines etc. In order to achieve it he is creating propaganda against the obese that they are sick, disabled and living without any happiness in life due to their huge body. Thus a new depthless culture is formed here where appearances are deceptive, or it can be called commodification of our traditions like Ayurveda. For the betterment of his businesses, he tries to create an identity or a belonging even though he does not have such a pedigree. When the Thadiyan becomes the Mayor of the city, he destroys Rahul Vaidyar's business and in the last scene we can see that the obese becomes a real hero.

The love triangle of Thadiyan, Rahul Vaidyar and Ann Mary Thadikkaran makes us aware of the depthlessness of love. Thadiyan is deeper in his love, he is ready to give up everything for her love, tossing around a couple of grapes for dinner at the clinic but she cheats him. The girl comes later to him for help. Thadiyan helps her and tells her in the last scene that he can't love her anymore because when she started to get thin, her mind also shrank.

Da Thadiya breaks the conventional rules of film lyrics and tunes. The song 'vanam neelayanu' (sky is blue) and another song "My love" are a typical post modern fluid, hybrid, fragmented songs which subvert the enlightenment ideals of rational aesthetics, ethics and knowledge. The song "My love" goes beyond the boundary of language. It mixes Malayalam with English and do not follow the conventional structure and tune. Decentring the language, the song celebrates the disorder throughout the lines. This song implies social cultural pluralism of a postmodern life. The following lines are taken from the song:

My love,
 You are my *panchasara* (sugar)
 Saw you in a *chayakkada* (tea shop)
 Having *pazhampori* (banana fry)

It is difficult to follow postmodern experiments. Language used here has the faith to convey meaning beyond the use of language, a kind of hybridity transcending the boundaries and limitations of language.

The other song "vanam neelayanu" celebrates the disorder or fragmentation in the world and takes it as the only existence of the world we can't escape from. It celebrates fragmented identities and crossing the boundaries of structure. The song announces the identity of an obese to the world. The song rejects conventional style of film lyric and tune. This celebration is also a resistance against the power that rules the society. The lines of the song are really telling in their effect.

Vanam neelayanu bhai
 Palam thoonilanu bhai
 Njan igananu bhai
 Athinenthanu bhai?1

The hero addresses the mankind as 'bhai' which means 'brother' and he says that the sky is blue and the bridge rests on the pillars and he is an obese like this. He repeats "Athinenthanu bhai" three times with emphasis which means "so what, brother?". Most of the lines are not interconnected and couched in a style that poses questions to the dominant power holders of the world. The song opens a vast horizon of meaning and difference, with humans inhabiting a world where there are crocodiles and lizards living in perfect harmony with other creations. At last the song ends with a philosophical tone that life is a brief play of breaths. The song is a post modern celebration and affirmation of a world of possibilities and potential futures. Here the director Ashiq Abu, through his fat protagonist subverts and liberates the assumptions of the dominant style. The film ends with the Thadiyan's celebration of life and through this song he announces his identity as an obese. The change of Thadiyan from an oppressed to an oppressor is an important topic to be discussed. The continuous shifts in role of people form fluid selves and it brings power relations between people and institutions.

The Power of Fake Clinics

The clinic in *Da Thadiya* reminds us of Foucault's 'clinic' where the construction of a 'sick' happens. As Bryan Turnersaid "A disease entity is the product of medical discourses"(11). A disease, obesity, is constructed here in the clinic. *Foucault's* notion of

power driving the relations between society, individuals, groups, becomes important when we realize that all people “wear masks” even if they have central tendencies in their self and the “the mask may be not the symbol of superficiality that we have thought it was, but the means of realizing our potential” (Gergen 139). In *Da Thadiya* an obese is treated as a body or a field of subjugation. Foucault coined the term "medical gaze" to denote the dehumanizing medical separation of the patient's body from the patient's identity. In this film, the protagonist Lucka, the Thadiyan is treated as a big body and admitted in a clinic to be cured of his obesity. People laughs at Lucka for his body but at the same time he conquers their mind with his unusual hug and smile. The title of the film *Da Thadiya* represents the attitude of the public over an obese. *Da Thadiya* or 'Hey Fatso' is a very impolite way of addressing a non slim. A fat one is oppressed for being fatty but it is true that not all fat people are unhealthy, and not all slim people are healthy. Thadiyan's girlfriend avoids him and he is denied a normal life. The fake clinic of Rahul Vaidyar is a postmodern product which exploits the opportunities of 21st century human insecurities. Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* depicts how power is applied in medical perception.

The clinic - constantly praised for its empiricism, the modesty of its attention, and the care with which it silently lets things surface to the observing gaze without disturbing them with discourse - owes its real importance to the fact that it is a reorganization in depth, not only of medical discourse, but of the very possibility of a discourse about disease (19).

Rahul Vaidyar's clinic also gives great attention to the patients. He uses Ayurveda as a medium to cheat the public and creates a false traditional medicine 'Harshamritha Vatakam'. His mission is to remove the obese from the world. A mechanized seductive female voice is controlling the whole processes in his clinic, she asks the chunky men to follow their daily routine correctly. The birth of such 'clinics' is another problem to be discussed in Kerala context. Being the depiction of the 'other', the non slim, the myth of beauty and fitness is revealed through the film. The false assumptions of the world should be demolished and the voices of marginalized should be raised. Just as Foucault states the power exists in capillary forms. Foucault radically claims that power is knowledge but here it is not the knowledge but the 'fake' knowledge that rules the society.

The power problem is central to the affairs in the film. Thadiyan attains power at the middle of the film through election and he becomes the Mayor of the city, until that time society has ill treated him and hereafter society respects him and he gets all the advantages of his position. The position of mayor of the city enables him to take revenge over his enemy. He rejects Ann Mary Thadikkaran at the final scene and returns to his position. Rahul Vaidyar's business collapses and Thadiyan becomes the hero. Various institutions exert their power on groups and individuals. At first it is the clinic that exerts the power and later it is the political power of a Mayor. The government, police, court which need an 'order of things' send Rahul Vaidyar to jail. Thus we find the play of the power everywhere in the film.

CONCLUSION

The film is thus a critique of certain grand narratives of identity. *Da Thadiya* breaks mainstream films assumptions that a non slim, a non white, an unfair can't be a hero or heroine. *Da Thadiya* reveals the fluid nature of identities and how the characters develop and change according to the social circumstances they live through. The film depicts the

postmodern self as a hybrid and complex entity which undergoes continuous shifts and transformations. Another problematic issue in the film is the social construction of illness and birth of fake 'clinics' to cure obesity. The film demonstrates how discourses condition people's lives and make their lives tough with power relations. The protagonist's identity as an obese is accepted before the society and he celebrates it with the song 'vanam neelayanu'. The final celebration in the film, along with the song, is also a form of resistance against the power that structures not only the conceptual and social bases of our identity and but also our very notion about what constitutes health and illness.

Notes

1. The complete film song with its English translation is given below.

Vanam neelayanu bhai
 Paalam thoonilanu bhai
 Njan inganadu bhai
 Athinenthanu bhai?
 Ilakalpachayanubhai
 Pookkalmanjayanubhai
 Njaninganubhai
 Athinenthanubhai?
 Lokamundayanu
 Budhimandelanu
 Eedepambund
 Eedepalleemund
 Eedeedecheenkanniyund
 Njanumundneeyumundubhai
 Prananswasamanubhai
 Poyalpoyathanubhai
 Aattompaattumninnupoku bhai
 Athanganubhai?

(Sky's blue bro
 Bridge's on the pillar bro
 I am like this bro
 So what bro?
 Leaves are green bro
 Flowers are yellow bro
 I am like this bro

So what bro?
World's round
Brain's on head
Here's snake
Here's lizard
Here here's crocodile
I too am here
You too here bro
Life's breath bro
If gone, forever bro
Dance and song'll stop bro
It's like that bro.)

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“Purdah” and the Ramification to “Purdahization”: The Attitude to Veil in Some Women Poets

Malala Yusufzai has been a familiar name these days whose protest against the Talibani *fatwa* of women's education in Pakistan's Swat valley brought on her mortal attack and she barely escaped to life. She co-won the 2014 Nobel Prize for Peace at the tender age of sixteen and made a record of being the youngest Nobel Laureate till date. While such incidents made her famous as an iconic diva of women education they also bring into light, once again, the conservative decree of depriving women of education and thus rendering them incapable of realizing their self-potent. One thing is worth noting in the present context: the frequent photos of Malala taken at different occasions published in newspapers and magazines show her determined face with veil on head. The symbolic veil, so common in many religions, demonstrate Malala's religious prejudices which, notwithstanding her struggle for women's right to education, she cannot eliminate.

Kate Millet's radical critique of the patriarchal culture in her ground-breaking work *Sexual Politics* (1969) promulgated some of those religious codes which perpetrate women's subordination in ideologically fabricated regulations. Most prominent are the discriminatory practices of the ritualistic norms strives to keep women one step down the hierarchy of power. The decoding of religious codes reveals the gender discrimination that women are subjected to right from their childhood. A growing lady is taught the gender norms to *be* a woman. The teachings of religion within patriarchy are beyond the possibility of easy repair because it has its excuses ready to justify itself. The justification of veil, *purdah*, *ghomta* or *burkha* is that women are biologically naïve and in need of protection from the vulgar eyes of men. The naturally endowed beauty might incite the sexual lust of men and it is only under the seclusion of veil that women can remain safe and unharmed. Some religions have another more euphemistic justification too: a veiled women is judged not by her physical beauty but by her “virtues”. Contrary to the beauty-as-tool formulation a veiled woman is not represented by her physical charms but by her qualities which may surpass her physical ugliness. However, such excuses are not successful in shrouding the sexual politics that are manifested covertly in the ideologies of patriarchal culture. Susan P. Arnett finds the origin of the *purdah* in ancient Persia. The Muslims were the original inventors of the *purdah*. Later, *purdah* became a widespread practice in India during the British rule when the Muslims as well as the Hindu women were prescribed to veil their countenance. Now the questions arise: Does *purdah*, which has been integral to the lives of women of different religions, has any cultural significance? How have the women poets' reactions to *purdah* evolved over time and place?

Sarojini Naidu who was more well-known as a passionate freedom fighter is also an acclaimed poet, but the traditional conformity to the so-called “normative” is a marked characteristic of her poetry. Naidu began her poetry under the influence of the English Romantics, and took long to develop her individual style. Her active participation in the Freedom Movement helped in shaping her politically vigorous tone when, in her later poetry, she overtly manifested a clearly identifiable feminist voice. But the process of maturation took a long time to reap the fruits of literary plant. The subjectivity of Naidu is typically

formed of the colonizers' language, that is, English which her father forced on her. Her sojourn to England on the Nizam's scholarship inculcated in her the English culture which, quite paradoxically, became her strength in her struggle with the English colonizer at a later period. Naidu's early poetry is naïvely conforming to the gender norms of the then India notwithstanding its implied anguish at the suppressed subjectivity. Even she writes about Indian life with its myriad assortment of cultural diversity she is seldom able to set herself free from the gender norms that the categorizers of a deep-rooted patriarchal society devised for women. Meena Alexander, herself an acclaimed poet, wrote on Naidu that her "work is haunted by a voice telling of other female selves, resonances of subjectivity, that endure mutilation and are imprisoned psychically" (52). In "The Purda Nashin" she depicts the woman whose life is a "revolving dream" which revolves round the purdah's seclusion and she cannot discern the possibilities of subversion of the gendered role that she conforms. Instead of seeking the ways of subversion from the purdah's surrounding, Naidu's woman seems to feel comfortable in the dimness of veil. Dwelling in a patriarchal culture she dare not throw away the shackles of veil that held her subjectivity suspended, rather, feels safe in the secluded serenity of purdah:

Her life is a revolving dream
Of languid and sequestered ease;
[...]
From thieving light of eyes impure,
From coveting sun or wind's caress,
Her days are guarded and secure
Behind her carven lattices,

But thought the lady is apparently safe in the seclusion of purdah and remains unharmed from the "hand unsanctioned" her mystery is finally unveiled by Time. What is revealed by Time is not a secluded safety of the women but her sorrow which "looks into her face". The women are destined to suffer and their heart bleeds in silent pain, and the purdah here connives in the suppression of the women's sorrow which might have been exposed unless the presence of purdah:

Who shall prevent the subtle years,
Or shield a woman's eyes from tears?

The concept of purdah changes with the passage of time as the women poets' reaction to purdah ensnares broader issues than simple intention of subordinating them. Kamala Das who belongs to the next generation of poets to Naidu wrote in radically feminist tone. Be it her frank confession of sexual ventures or overt rebellious tone directed at the patriarchal norms, Das is overtly critical of the hollow pretense of patriarchy. Although she herself was religious to a certain extent and used to wear *burkha* after her conversion to Islam, Das records her machismo in "An Introduction" where she delineates how she tried to break away from the regulatory practices of men-dominated society. Butler opines that gender is not a cultural formation that assumes meaning in sexed body, but gets its meaning from performative repetition of activities like dressing, fooding, gestures, and so on. According to her, gender is a fluid construct without any stable meaning. She says in *Gender Trouble*: "There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively

constituted by the very “expressions” that are said to be its results.” (33). As the specific performance of gender is constitutive of gender, the redeployment of the performative codes can subvert the “normative” gendered roles. Das tried to subvert the customary gendered norms by sacrificing her womanliness-she stopped wearing woman's attire and stated wearing her brother's trouser, but was forced to play the role of a woman:

[...] I wore a shirt and my
 Brother's trousers, cut my hair short and ignored
 My womanliness. Dress in sarees, be girl
 Be wife, they said. Be embroiderer, be cook,
 Be a quarreler with servants. Fit in, oh,
 Belong, cried, cried the categorizers.

Das's accord to the patriarchal codes are embodied as far as her dressing is concerned; otherwise, she exposes, in a devastatingly hard-hitting language, the blatant nature of a culture that is unabashed in the denial of women rights.

It was in Imtiaz Dharker, who was born in Lahore and brought up in Glasgow, settled in Bombay after marrying an Indian, that purdah gets a very different treatment. Her Muslim culture incites agitated comments from her because of the religion's orthodox chauvinistic attitude. Islam's “permission” of limited freedom to its female followers has been a matter of unease presence in Dharker's poetic oeuvre which imparts a political bent to her writing. Dharker's two Purdah poems form a characteristic unit which inheres her flaunting discontent against the pretentious sham of Islam which veils woman in the name of securing their chastity. But it is not a simple “reaction” to purdah but the poem glosses over multifarious societal issues conspiring at the enactment of women's consciousness. This newly acquired consciousness of women about themselves is inspired by the “Second Wave” feminist movements which, although share the basic premises of the “First Wave” feminism (material and cultural subordination of women), shifts its focal emphasis “to the politics of reproduction, to women's 'experience', to sexual 'difference' and to 'sexuality', as at once a form of oppression and something to celebrate” (Selden, et al 130). In an attempt of conscience generation, Dharker unmasks the gender-hegemonic rules which create stumbling blocks in the way of women's self-realization. Her poem “Purdah I” highlights the early formation of a Muslim girls who is taught to veil her body with purdah which is described “as a kind of safety” (50). Dharker identifies the “purdahization” of woman as putting a dead man in coffin because purdah not only hides a woman's face and body but also her identity, thus metaphorically rendering her dead:

The cloth fans out against the skin
 much like the earth that falls
 on coffins after they put the dead men in. (50)

But the poem ends in a note of optimistic as the purdah-nashin woman, passing through the myriad experiences of life, attempts to achieve her identity:

Wherever she goes, she is always
 inching past herself,
 as if she were a clod of earth,

and the roots as well,
scratching for a hold
between the first and second rib. (ibid)

According to the Islamic and Christian myths, the first woman was created from the rib of the first man, and thus the reference to “rib” ironically evokes the subordinate, “second-sex” condition of the woman, but at the same time, exemplifies the possibilities of her newly acquired conscience. The wicked attempt of curbing the women's subjectivity is thwarted, as she becomes aware of her rights “while doors keep opening/inward and again/inward” (51).

The American poet Sylvia Plath wrote a poem on purdah which is written quite in the same fashion as Dharker. Despite the vast cultural and contextual differences Plath shares the same sense of victimhood as that of Dharker. In her poem, Plath represents purdah as an oppressive weapon in the hand of patriarchy to keep the sexuality of women suppressed. Contrary to the proclamation of saving women from vulgar eyes, purdah aggravates the plight of women by rendering them an object of curious male gaze. Plath writes about purdah from the perspective of a women victimized by the orthodox Christian prejudice. But whatever be the religion the propaganda associated with purdah always connotes something oppressive and suppressive. In such lines as “I gleam like a mirror” the woman in purdah “wishes to be reduced to a pure shiny surface that only reflects back the gaze of others” which is “a strong image of imprisonment and self-negation, evidence of her powerlessness” (Bayley and Brain 2). She is “an instrument of self-reflection for others, principally her husband, whom she sardonically describes as 'Lord of the mirrors!’” (ibid). Purdah makes a woman exclusively available to one man in an almost slave-like bondage wherefrom any possibility of reincarnation into a full-blooded human being is curbed:

Veil is
A concatenation of rainbows.
I am his.
Even in his
Absence, I
Revolve in my
Sheath of impossibles,
Priceless and quiet
Among these parrakeets, macaws!

But Plath's purdahized, incarnating as a Clytemnestra-figure, is finally successful in letting “unloose” her suspended self. In an almost unexpected self-reflexivity, she sets free the fierceness buried within her to repay the oppressions devised by the custodians of patriarchy. She will no longer remain submissive as a “jeweled/Doll” but confound her master as a “lioness,” making him shriek.

The purdah covers the “devout” Muslim woman's countenance but at the same time suppresses her gestures from being realized, and thus performatively renders her voiceless. Subramaniam wrote of the poems of Dharker: “In a cultural climate that favours monolithic

cultural identities, Dharker's unabashed embrace of unsettlement as settlement clearly isn't designed to curry favour with the conservatives". But the façade of globalization that meets us reveals only one dimension while the darker sides remain unobserved. On the International Women's Day in 2014, Dharker wrote in the magazine *Verve*:

Women are a huge powerhouse in today's India. Look around you. There are women racing ahead in all kinds of fields: finance, literature, broadcasting, art, IT, design, law, science, medicine, education. You name it, we've got it. Women I meet have a confidence, a sense of themselves that I have never seen before. We don't need to compare ourselves to anyone. We're free-standing, self-powered sources of energy.

A powerhouse, true.

And yet this is a powerhouse with over 90 per cent of the power switched off.

Dharker cites some unnamed survey data that bring out the darker side of the illusion—the majority of India's children who suffers from malnutrition are girls; nine out of ten pregnant women are anaemic, and among the aborted fetuses 1,999 out of 2,000 are female. This record does not insinuate to a “shining” condition of womanhood in Indian context. Dharker's poetry can be read as optimistic of the newly attaining voices of women and also remarks on the darker sides where women's voice is still held suppressed, as is illustrated in the two *purdah* poems.

“Purdah II” is a complex poem in which the poet's reaction to her religion has multiple directions—be it her resentment to the Islamic oppression on women, the hypocrisy and lustfulness of the Maulavis/Hajjis, the treatment of Muslim women in European countries, or the Islamic marriage. Here, the *purdah* is not just a hiding garment but a cultural symbol which makes a distinction between the East and the West. The Muslim women in the Europe are taught to practice *purdah* because it is said to be a mode of preservation of cultural rubrics abroad. Her Muslim upbringing in the Europe reflects her antipathy to the Maulavis/Hajjis who, to the poet, are impious and lustful:

He snapped a flower off his garland

and looked to you.

There was nothing holy in his look.

Hands that had prayed at Mecca

dropped a sly flower on your book.

But such sacrilegious acts are not exposed because it is invariably the woman who is condemned for an adulterous relation. Bruce King writes about Dharker's poetry, “There is a powerful criticism of Muslim treatment of women [...] While women are viewed as slaves and commodities the worse effect is on the spirit, the falseness between what women feel and what they are allowed to show, the distance between them and their social selves. At the heart of the problem [...] is female sexuality” (322). Dharker represents female sexuality in its celebratory prospect in segments of “Purdah II” where women select their grooms themselves, but such acts predictably earn bitter consequences. They are bound to abstain from their longings for their choicest men just as they are taught to veil their body. The Muslim women abroad are destined to marry men of their own sect, even if the union is loveless:

A horde of dead men
held up your head,
above the temptations
of those alien hands.
You answered to your race.

The poet writes of her own experiences of meeting Muslim women in cities like Birmingham and Leeds, and relates the stories of two girls. Saleema, who was married to her cousin and was burdened with "annual babies" "rebelled at last." She eloped with the man of her choice, in the words of Dharker, "At last a sign, behind the veil,/of life." But that second marriage failed too and her previous "swan neck" became "bowed" with shame. Naseem, who eloped and married a White man expecting that he'd set her free, but her own relative-women go up against her "misdeed":

Naseem, you ran away
and your mother burned with shame.
Whatever we did,
the trail was the same:
the tear-stained mother, the gossip aunts
looking for shoots to smother
inside all our cracks.

Naseem too was betrayed in her marriage as happiness remained unattained. The Muslim women are considered to be commodities to be "sold and bought" who are taught "to bind/their brightness tightly round/whatever they might wear,/in the purdah of the mind." Purdah here is an apparatus of suppression of women's subjectivity wielded by the patriarch. Thus, the two purdah poems of Dharker are vested with cultural as well as psychological meanings. In the succinct assessment of Rajeev Patke, "Purdah-I" offers deeply felt evocations of the experience of growing up as a woman in an Islamic society while "Purdah-II" elaborates on how the symbolic veil divides and suppresses" (270-71).

The practice of purdah evolves with time's progression, and the women poets' changing reactions to it bear witness to the change that takes place in popular mind set and cultural scenario. Although Dharker's allusion of powerhouse has most of its lights switched-off some lights are on. The various women's rights movement which came into the scene since the 1960s made a case for women's liberation, and raised strong voice of protest against oppression on women. With the increasingly felt need of women empowerment at the precinct of twenty-first century purdah's seclusion is supposed to demystify the "security" propaganda by exposing gender-centric oppressive norms. This depends on realization of women-in-purdah of their potential, and such self-realization can take place only for the dissolution of boundaries between the physical concealment and psychic suppression—the purdah of outside and of inside.

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Alcoholism as A Colonial Strategy: A Reading Of Beatrice Culleton's *In Search Of April Raintree* and Jeannette Armstrong's *Slash*

Canadian history is the record of a colony paying allegiance to several mother countries; to follow Canada's historical development is to trace its time as a colony of France and England and finally and most elusively, as an economic colony of the united states. Part of the history of Canada is an account of the slow realization of its own independence, an acceptance of its importance within an international framework, and most significantly, a discarding of the colonial mentality which had characterized the country and its actions for many years.

There were a large flow of Europeans to Canada. Clearing the forests they established settlements and cultivated the land. The Native failed to check their encroachment in the face of the European fire power. As the settlements advanced to the interiors of Canada, the First Nations people were forced to go further away. The Natives' customs and way of life were forced to be abandoned in the onslaught of the Euro culture and it destroyed the social welfare of Native existence. Gradually Europeans had the control of the land in their hands. They began enacting laws ignoring the Native values. The culture practices of the First Nations people were looked down by the new comers and these people were considered as an inconvenience.

There were different attitudes among the Natives to the foreigners. While some admired the Europeans as their benefactors, seeing their technology, writing system etc, others blamed them for bringing pestilence and death. James.S.Friders in his book *Native Peoples in Canada* quotes the view of B.Trigger in this context. According to Trigger, “the Europeans were able to settle down in Canada because a large number of Natives wanted them to do so” (15).

The Europeans felt that the Natives were socially, spiritually and culturally inferior and they should be 'civilized'. All the rules and regulations were to increase the dependence of the Natives on the European settlers. To add to the ruin, the Europeans opened beer parlours all over the Reserve lands. The desperate Natives naturally turned to liquor and addiction. The colonizers succeeded in creating the image of the Natives as drunken and lazy.

Social services like health and education were not provided to the Natives in Reserves. This added to the social problems like alcoholism and dependence. Racism, the concept of the generic superiority of the Whites, restricted interaction between the Natives and the Europeans. History is always recorded by the empowered forces and they record their own fabrications to justify their injustice. In Canada many positive events involving Canadian Natives had not even been recorded. The Natives are simply omitted from Canadian history.

Among the different ways used by the Europeans to subjugate the Native people, the most important and destructive method was the introduction of alcohol among the Natives. The colonizers wanted the Natives to be lazy, drunken and filthy. We can see how the cruel hands of Europeans work on the lives of the Natives through alcohol. Many people lost their

family and even their lives. Beatrice Culleton's *In Search of April Raintree* and Jeannette Armstrong's *Slash*, deal with the theme of alcohol as a way of European subjugation. We can see how the Natives were constructed as drunken savages and how it affected the family life of Natives.

Beatrice Culleton's *In Search of April Raintree* centers on April Raintree who is a Metis, and living in Winnipeg with her sister Cheryl and her parents. The Raintrees- Henry and Alice are alcoholics and the children believed that they were taking only medicines. April says, "My mother didn't always drink that medicine, not so much as my father did." (2). April started the story with the medicine days:

That was when my parents would take a lot of medicine and it always changed them. Mom, who usually quiet and calm, would talk and laugh in a loud obnoxious way and Dad, who already talked and laughed a lot, and loudly, just got clumsier (2).

As children, April and Cheryl were ignorant of the villain in their life which appeared to them as medicine in the initial stage. April tried to keep Cheryl away from all these. Once April tasted the medicine and she felt awful. When her mother came from hospital with the little baby Anna, April asked her mother, "will she have to take that medicine? It tastes awful" (5). Her mother replied her innocent question, "No, she drinks milk... well, it's for grown-ups only" (5)

The poor children didn't know about the alcohol and the miseries that were waiting in their life. Because their parents were alcoholics the children were forced to leave their parents and they had to live in foster homes. The real troubles in their life started from there.

Europeans pictured Native as always drunkard. To make them inferior Europeans introduced alcohol. April's father and mother were affected by alcohol and April and Cheryl were the two victims of European colonization. The use of alcohol caused their separation. April remembers:

Most of my misery, however, was caused by the separation from parents. I was positive that they would come for me and Cheryl. I constantly watched the doorways and looked out front room windows, always watching, always waiting, in expectation of their appearance (10)

But they never appeared in their life and they were separated just because of alcohol.

April and Cheryl too were separated in to two different foster homes. April's life with Mrs. DeRosier put her in real trouble. April's parents stopped visiting them at their family visits. After one family visit Mrs. DeRosier told her own children that they were fortunate in having a parent like her as April's parents were too busy boozing it up to even come to visit her. The DeRosier kids taunted her about having drunkards for parents. It was new ammunition for them to use against her and it bothered her a lot. One day she told them, "They are not drunkards! They're sick. That's all. Sick!" (31). But the kids mocked her telling that "half-breeds are pretty stupid... your parents didn't know how to take care of you. They just know how to booze it up." (32-33). Then they started mimicking drunken people and talking to each other with slurred speech.

April's innocence was shattered when she learned through the DeRosiers that her parents were drunkards. She wanted to run out "I could run all I wanted but I couldn't run away from truth." (33). She decided to keep the truth to herself and not to reveal anything to Cheryl. Family visits were arranged but their parents never showed up. At one visit only their

Dad came and told that their Mom was sick. But April knew the truth about them. She thinks “my parents were weak alcoholics who had made their choice. And then I would loath them” (37).

Natives were always expected to be drunkards, liars, prostitutes etc. April was accused of stealing and for having bad relationship with boys. That created problems for her and even her best friend Jennifer stopped talking to her. April thinks “again I was a loner and now I didn't have a single friend at school.” (56). While April wanted to escape from the Metis world Cheryl felt closer to it. When her life in foster homes came to an end and when she had a job of her own, April had a search for her parents but she couldn't find them out. During her search she realized the real situation of the half-breeds. She thought: If I had been brought up in those slums, I would have been brought up with flies, with mice, and rats, and lice and germs. I would have been brought up by alcoholic parents and what I would be like now? (76)

April got married to a white man and Cheryl continued with her works for her people. The miseries caused by the alcoholic parents came to an end. But the villain came to their life again. When Cheryl was with April, she inadvertently revealed her search for parents to Cheryl. She said, “Finding them would most likely have opened old wounds for them and for us” (93). April wanted to tell Cheryl that their parents were liars, weaklings and drunkards. But she couldn't tell Cheryl that alcohol was more important to their parents than their own daughters. April had given Cheryl cherished memories of them.

April got divorced and she came back to live with Cheryl. Life turned to be traumatic for them after April was raped. April came to Winnipeg when Cheryl was hospitalized and she was shocked when the doctor asked whether Cheryl had drinking problem. The doctor said, “when she came in she was highly intoxicated” (105). April recalled the doctor's words “...highly intoxicated... oh, God, please don't let her be an alcoholic” (106). But April's prayer was in vain. Cheryl became a real alcoholic. At the trial time April came to know that Cheryl was a prostitute too. All these were shocking realities to her, “another victim of being Native” (148).

Alcoholism, drug abuse, family violence, suicide, prostitution are the products of hopelessness, despair, poverty and loss of identity arising from the “loss of cohesive cultural relevance... and a distorted view of the non-Native culture” (Armstrong, 208). It is true in Cheryl's case. She told April: “You turned your back on me long time ago. You think I don't know why you married Bob? It was to get away from me, that's why. I'll bet you wished you were an only child. I bet you wished I was dead” (155).

Cheryl had drunk a lot. She told April that she found their Dad, “I did find our precious dear Dad. He is a gutter creature! April, a gutter-creature!” (159). She also told her that their mother committed suicide because she couldn't bear the pain. It was this despair that led Cheryl to destroy herself into drinking. When her father and her partner Mark forced to give money she became a prostitute. All her cherished memories of her parents flew away when she saw a drunken father. She had no one to support her. Even April was away from her. That ended up in her drinking and prostitution.

Alcohol and suicide are seen as doorways of escape from a life lacking in hope, and filled with pain and unhappiness (Manyarrows 151). Cheryl took alcohol as an escape from the pressures of her life. But she couldn't escape from the realities through alcohol and she committed suicide just like her mother. She couldn't survive through her problems. That is

the explicit damnation of alcohol on the life of April. She lost her parents first and her dear sister at the end. After the death of Cheryl, April opened the door to Cheryl's room and the first thing she noticed was an empty whiskey bottle. She grabbed it by the neck, raised it high and brought it down, smashing it against the edge of the dresser. She was screaming : “ I hate you for what you've done to my sister! I hate you for what you've done to my parents! I hate you for what you've done to my people! Our people!” (174). Culleton is true when she affirms that drunkenness and escaping into a world of alcoholism will not bring about any social change. The will to fight and struggle for the right cause without any room for withdrawal will only sow the seeds of success.

Jeannette Armstrong in her novel *Slash* also talks about the effects of alcohol in a different way from Culleton. Here the parents of the protagonist Slash are not alcoholics. We can see the parents who are suffering from the drunken sons and trying to lead them in a good way. The Europeans opened beer parlours all over the Reserves. It was their way of dominating the Natives by making them inferior through alcohol. Native people became addicted to alcohol. Slash's Dad and his grandfather were people who talked against the opening of beer parlours. They argued about whether or not it would be good for Indians to go beer parlours and drink and buy beer and other stuff like that. Here we can see a very different attitude to alcohol from that of April's parents. They were people who realized the trouble that could be caused to the lives of the people.

But there were people who were in support of opening beer parlours and liked drinking. Jimmy, Slash's friend who always wanted to live as Whites told him that he tasted beer with his older brother Kenney. He said, “we sure felt funny. It was fun. When I grow up I'm going to drink and have full fun all the time...” (20). This was the impression that even a child had about alcohol. Jimmy was under the impression that he would feel good when he had the drink and he was unaware of the consequences of it. Slash's Dad talked to Pra-cwa, his voice quiet but angry sounding. He said:

First it was the schooling, then it was the Welfare and Band housing, then it was the beer parlours and land leasing and now its development. Pretty soon, Indians don't have to do nothing but get money and spend it drinking... lots of our people are going to die. Already lots are dead from drinking (42).

Slash drank beer for the first time. It tasted awful but he wanted to see what getting drunk was like. He started feeling light and bouncy and everything seemed funny for him. Jimmy and him laughed and talked about girls and sang. When he came back home his Dad said, “You been drinking. That's why you didn't come home. How do you feel?... hell with it!” (46). His Dad further explained the bad effects of it. He said: "The bad thing about it is, pretty soon you get to want it all the time to make you feel good. You can't feel good about anything, unless you got that drink in you. Then you're good for nothing. All you'll work for is that booze, and you'll feel empty inside all the time" (47).

The law came to being that Indians could buy beers. The Priest and the Council wanted to let liquor be served at community hall. They said it would make Indians more equal and that Indians would learn how to use it right if they had social drinking and dancing at the hall. That had the impact of Europeans upon the people. Then there came the talk of a new drug that made people having visions and things. Slash asked about it to a guy. He said, “I use marijuana. Lots of university people do. I won't give you guys any though... it against

law. Besides it don't do much that's different than alcohol" (49). Jimmy and Slash tried it. After that Slash lost interest in everything and he quit school. Slash and Jimmy started drinking a lot. Here Slash had a father who could show him the right path. But Slash went wrong. Indian men and women were dying from suicides, and deaths that were related to drinking and drugs.

Slash made a lot of travel and he seriously thought about why a lot of Indians were drunk and it made him real mad inside. "It's oppression being exercised on a people weakened and defenseless" (96). His brother Danny's death because of his over drinking made him think a lot about the things that had led to his death. His parents were wishing for the sons to be with them and to be good. But they lost one son because he was drinking too much.

Every year more and more die from drugs, alcohol, and suicide. Every year the prison and skidrows get fuller and fuller with Indian people and the reservations get smaller and smaller as White developers get richer (165). Slash's mother asked him why he didn't quit drinking and doping. She was really sad. She said, "You're just adding your number to those we lost, like your brother Danny. We don't want that. We want you to be able to help our people by using your smartness" (166).

Here is a mother who is teaching her son good against his bad habit- drinking. She is just opposite to April's mother who herself doomed in drinking and committed suicide to escape from the pain of living. After his mother's talk he became aware of himself. He wanted to search what he really was as an Indian. He wanted to be proud as an Indian. When he was with medicine men, an old man made a lot of sense to him. He said:

Many of you are talking about losing out to the White man. You talk about losing your culture... it is not the culture that is lost. It is you... we are the ones who are lost, in alcohol and drugs and in cities and in the rat-race... our spirits will starve and the only thing to fill the empty hole inside will be alcoholic, drugs or greed for money (191).

Slash travelled again with a new eye. He became aware of the situation. He told Joe "ninety percent of my people are dying a slow death" (198). Joe also helped him to find a way. He realized what he was. Otherwise he would have ended up just like Danny, his brother. Slash told one man in the circle that it had been hard for him to put aside his drinking and talking. He was afraid that it might hit him in the face again if he wasn't with the circle of our people that were a strong support group. He asked Slash to be in control of himself. He realized that how much he would be better if he had listened to his own parents teach him things while he was growing up.

Unlike Cheryl, Slash was able to survive himself coming out of the cruel hands of alcohol. When Cheryl committed suicide, Slash realized his mistakes and able to overcome it. But in Slash's life there were so many people to teach him the negative aspects of alcohol and his parents and the people around him gave him a new way. There were people to support him. But Cheryl was completely alone with a drunken father and a drunken partner. When April came to know about all these it was too late for Cheryl to overcome the situation..

European constructed Native as Other. For April, this forcing is symbolized by her rape as a "squaw" and by her sister's suicide. The violence is analogous, in Gayathri Spivak's words, to "the epistemic violence that constituted/ effaced a subject that was obliged to Cathect (occupy in response to desire) the space of imperialist's self-consolidating Other"

(209). April finally constructs her identity through a reaction. She is not allowed to be White; she refuses to be that Native constructed for her by White discourse. She has opened up a new identity and a new community for herself, opening up the space between the two “authorized” possibilities: White and the drunken Indian Other, both isolated from any community. She chooses like Slash, to give her loyalty to a people, a community and a future that stands against the imposition of the dichotomy.

Both the novels end with a look into the potential of the future rather than at the bleakness and pain of the past. They open up possibilities rather than dogmatically closing it down. Both show that people can and do change, although the process is as much the result of large- scale social change as of individual will.

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An Alternative Spiritual Countenance: Exploring the Mystic Feminine in *What the Sufi Said*

Sufism, the flexible spiritual mysticism, is often comprehended as a prototype of mystical experience of Islam. It is an undeniable truth that Sufism originated from the Islamic tradition and still bears its inevitable links with the mainstream Islam either as a tributary of the conventions or as a threat to the purity of Islamic values. The present paper seeks to unravel the tangible wisdom of Sufism, which places it as an individualistic but transnational spiritual thought glorifying the spiritual woman who holds a secondary status otherwise according to the religious myths of creation. The camouflage of religion that supported a monolithic spiritual ideology discarded the spiritual countenance of body-spirit synthesis in divine discourses. The reason for discarding body is this assumption: body is irresistible dwelling of *Maya* or unreal. In *Feminist Theology in The Third World* Ursula King argues that while gendering God, God is “more approachable and personable” as a female than the “immutable, unchangeable” male. She substantiated it by stating that female body undergoes tremendous and radical renovations through the biological transformations that come as a part of womanhood and motherhood (King 256). Surprisingly this feminist argument was the key evidence taken to set women apart from the world of divine. To put it bluntly, woman who recognized sexuality before Adam was casted as an Other and to her transcendence was denied like a forbidden fruit. The Sufi paradigm that “the female body is the locus of continuous theophany of the Divine in human beings” (Galian1) reinforced the feminist argument in the spiritual arena. *What the Sufi said* by K.P. Ramanunni, a restatement of the above mentioned Sufi paradigm, delves deep into the intersection of spirituality and feminine on the one hand and proliferates the symmetry of corporal perceptions with the spiritual ideologies on the other. In fact the first i.e. blending divinity and femininity effected the effortless amalgamation of the second: physical/sexual and the spiritual. Mystic feminine in *What the Sufi Said* is instrumental in bringing about this alternative feminist visage of spirituality amidst the mainstream religion oriented spiritual dialogues.

In order to probe into the ways of alterity the following queries may be examined:

Whether the spiritual principle in the novel is religion oriented, or what is its ideology.

Which are the fundamental characteristics or nuances of the feminine principle that traces the alterity in the midst of normalcy?

What is the role of the protagonist in spreading and sustaining the proposition in the text?

Whether the text has retrieved any specific historical context or locale as its framework for feminine spiritual principle.

Why and how far the feminine principle that the novel projects is an alternative.

How the writer substantiates the scope of survival for this seemingly textual philosophy.

Sufism is a spiritual path for individuals to subsist in the reality by awakening the consciousness of the self. It is vested on the conception of human beings having immense powers of transformation but oblivious of the capabilities by living in the conditioned existence. Awareness of one's needs and self and the recognition of the eternal spirit are the two essential goal of Sufism. The etymology of the term is linked with 'Safa'/purity or 'suf'/unity. ("Origin of the Word Sufism"). Sufi doctrines flourished with Islamic doctrines through the teachings of Shaykhs from 632 A.D. On following the Sufi orders, the enlightenment was made possible for the common people to whom the rationalized approach to the religious texts made the transcendence impossible. This could be the reason for the unprecedented acceptance of Sufism even in the modern times. Probably Sufism has added an icon, a feminine figure to be worshipped or as a priest to the uniconic mainstream concept of the religions. This resulted in branding Sufism as a pagan ideology as in the way feminist theology was treated in the Western world. *Early Sufi Women A bilingual critical edition of As-Sulami's Dhikr an-Niswa al-Muta 'abbitdat as-Sufiyyat* is an earlier document voiced women spirituality in Sufi tradition. The work written in the eleventh century provides the account of the life and struggles of about eighty Sufi women lived between eighth and eleventh century. The impression of women spirituality as evidenced in the work authentically represents the possibilities of the existence of spiritual ideology separately as in the same way it exists inside the religions.

Feminist Theology is a recently emerged discipline of philosophical investigation in to the nature and object of worship in the religious spiritual framework. This branch of knowledge dug out the hidden Goddess worship existed in most of the religions, the proof of which is the presence of stories about Mary Magdalene, Isis, Adiparasakthi etc. in the religious discussions. The major feminists who re-examined the Divine feminine worship, with the aim to reinstate the lost legacy of Goddess includes Sallie McFague, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Merlin Stone, Max Dashu, Beverly Clack, Ruth Mantin, Karen Torjesen, Charlotte Caron, Melissa Raphael and Pamela Sue Anderson. Most of them associated the worship of Divine-feminine to the monotheistic viewpoints such as "Christian feminism or mysticism, Muslim feminism, Jewish feminism and are Spiritual Feminists who do not necessarily identify with the term Goddess but uphold the idea of the Sacred Feminine Principle or perhaps utilize the term Mother-Father God" (Iolana 13). Divine-feminine in Sufism spread the kind of worship similar to this. Sufism being a part of Islam observing monotheism upholds the similar monotheistic system of values to a certain extent. But the Sufi principle, according to some scholars, at its core tends to move in the direction of folk tradition of polytheism, "that purport there to be multiple deities—both male and female. Yet others may align more in the metaphysical claims of theism, ditheism, atheism/materialism, henotheism, pantheism, and pane theism" (Iolana 13). Amidst these varieties, the feminist theological notions try to capture the sense of union and harmony among the female worshippers. They move with the argument that this harmony can be achieved only on worshipping Sacred feminine, an immaculate conception who is capable of transforming the nature, process, progress and result of their faith. Kerala, the polytheistic realm of faith is, for this reason, a fertile soil for the nurturing Goddess worship. This alternative spiritual principle thwarts the conventional patriarchal religious schema. Accepting body as a spiritual space of spiritual desire, the principle recognizes the potentials

for women to control even the spiritual realm without inhibitions based on her sexuality. This is brought forth by placing spirituality in a global footage with multiple cultures that reject the thoughts of refutation of femininity in spiritual discourses and women's existence as a spiritual leader. *What the Sufi Said* is a fictional attempt with an aim akin to this.

Tharavad is not only an ancestral home but feudal mansion holding the ghosts and archetypes of cultures. Karthy, the future matriarch of *Meleppullarath Thararvad*, was a feminine figure in the novel with an aura of Divine around. She acts as the mother figure, the eternal creator who defined, refined and proposed the essence of spirit in each individual and counter acted on the canonical notions of sectarianism due to totems, rituals and taboos essentially religious. Even in childhood she posed the existential question whether she herself is the Goddess in the attic (Ramanunni40). Not only Karthy, but also the male members in and out of the family such as Shanku Menon, or the village officer who came to inspect their home, lay unconscious by meeting this Immaculate Conception, recognize this. Karthy had the similar kind of realization on watching her naked image on the mirror. She grasped her essence drop from the body, then spread to the universe and accepted for a moment that it was not Karthy but the eternal mother (Ramanunni 43). The elaboration of this archetypal maternal insight is the fundamental core of unity of the spirit. This is not an abstract pull that can be easily oversimplified as insanity. But the tradition of Kerala and Sufia recognizant of the undercurrents of human development and less rigid on the taking of sane/insane duals. So the work prevents the misinterpretation on Karthy's nature or behaviour by emphasizing the normal part of her personality. This is brought forth by means of her affair with Mamooty, an ideal of manliness at the moment of meeting. But his introduction and their marriage did not serve the requirements of the conventional plot of inter religious marriages. In the novelist's attempt of welding the broken strings of Hindu Muslim relationship he unknowingly fell as a prey.

The transnational spiritual thought propagated through Sufi wisdom worked on Karthy too after her marriage. Her marriage with Mamooty was done out of the needs of the body rather than out of love. So it acted as an inverted parallel to the spiritual selection, the individuals seek as a part of birth or biology. This fact is vaguely stated between the lines when Karthy felt her femininity's call at the first meeting. But the conjoining of spirits is not fully denied in the progress. Karthy's conversion to Islam can at first be estimated as an act of conformism: a wife should be adherent to the religious ways of the husband. Later it has been reckoned that her actions subverted this oversimplified evaluation of the psychology of conversion. The recognition comes when the spirit of nature inherent in certain kinds of stones called *chithrodakkallu* slept under the conflict of external spirituality rejuvenated on Karthy's arrival. As the famous feminist theologian Carol.P. Christ observed in a conversation with Erdmann "*the re-emergence of the Goddess... has great power to transform the way that we think about the world ... because traditionally the God symbol has signified power and control and rationality, while the Goddess symbol has been understood to signify the body, nature, and the irrational*" (Erdmann, 121). So in a world where everything cannot be explained rationally and in a world of emotions confronting the matters of sensitivity such as belief, religion or tolerance a Goddess can act better identifiable spiritual embodiment. Sufi convention also upholds similar kinds of philosophy. This justified Mamooty's act of building a temple for his wife in the property of *Mappilapparambu* (114) as well as the progress of Karthy from an ordinary woman, to a woman of exceptional femininity like *Bhagavathy* in Hinduistic beliefs, a Goddess similar to *Beevi*.

The setting of the novel is Ponnani, in Kerala which is also known as the second shrine of the Islam for Keralites. It was the educational capital of Kerala of Muslims lived during Fifteenth and sixteenth century. During eighteenth Century, the mutual respect of Hindu and Islam of the region was destroyed in the conquest of Tippu Sultan, who sought to acquire money kept in the Hindu religious places. The robbery and destruction of religious symbols sow the seeds of communalism. The eternal religious harmony was threatened along with the sense of community, which the Hindu and the Muslim possessed. Viju Nayarangadi has observed in the preface of the Malayalam version of *What the Sufi Said* that on the threshold of modernity, the cultural history of Ponnani has travelled through the greatest traumatic reality of “untouchability” (Ramanunni 2) within Islam and between Islam and Hindu. The architectural patterns of the mosques of Ponnani reveal the historical truth behind the seemingly fantasized history. The history within the fiction, geography and the spiritual traditions of the setting added to the new realizations pertaining to the root cause of sectarianism in Kerala. It depicts the transformation of Lord Kochunni, a Hindu Land lord to an outwardly devoted Muslim, Avarumusaliyaras an aftermath of the conquest of Tippu Sultan. This is a context informative of the role of power in creating the tension and hatred in between the religions, which had no grudge otherwise. *What the Sufi Said* is, essentially, a novel of *de*-secularized values i.e. as in the way deconstruction, without destructing the foundation, constructs in a novel fashion and the novel is producing new perspectives to the term secularism. Feminine spiritual counterpart is used as a healing agent for the wounded self of the human beings, the victims of forceful conversion to live. Interestingly this is achieved by means of conversion and retention i.e. Karthy's conversion to Islam after her marriage and her retention of her spiritual essence in the newly adopted religion. Though the novel showcased a series of repercussions of inter religious marriage and forecasts the communal riot by recreating a temple in the Muslim property, at the very next instance it alleviates all these tensions of prejudice. The spiritual healing strategy of Karthy, that cured all the incurable diseases leading to her popularity, was the pacifying agent announcing the acceptance. The spiritual healing made her spirituality appealing to the common folk. This indisputably marked as a milestone in the development of Karty, a Muslim wife to the Immaculate Conception- the Beevi of the Jaram (grave) at Ponnani.

Interestingly, Karthy's development to the Semi-Goddess is by no means renunciation but by means of her sexuality that she did not and could not resist. Karthy's horoscope forecasting her nonconformist habits sets the ambience for the grand consecrate project. A similar story can be traced in the Sufi myths about the girl Sassi, the daughter of the King of Bhambor in Sind, the “paradigm of moral courage and spiritual triumph”(Abbas 86) who died in the war against the orthodox society. When Sassi was born the fortune tellers predicted that she would bring shame to the family. In the oral narrative of Sufism it as been stated that Sassi was abandoned but the surrogate family made her the ruler and thus she became the spiritual leader. In Karthy's life also ShankuMenon, her uncle, prophesied her unpredictable maturation and once remained spellbound when the young girl with divine spirit returned after the bath. The unnatural gush of menstrual blood on her attaining puberty made even the mother unconscious. In addition to these, she was deified even by strangers lay awestruck on the vision of Karthy in the attic, mesmerized by the super-feminine spirit in her. All these instances are capable of elevating her to a Goddess. But not only this, Mamootty's withdrawal from her also reminds the readers of the fantasies and supernatural stories about vampires who would suck the masculinity out of men. After becoming the Beevi of *Musliarakom*, she cured the so conceived incurable diseases of women and

children, like a pacifying mother. The total destruction, she brought forth to the assassins of her husband and the husband's homosexual partner under the disguise of quenching their lust, was later justified as an act of liberating their spirits in chains of worldly passions. These actions are simply echoing the rejuvenated but hidden Eros underlying in the Goddess worship of Kerala. The mother in Karthy was not the mother to the children of Mamootty and herself, but an immaculate conception about to be revealed. Her body partakes the healing process of women's and children's aches and stories about them spread from mouth to mouth through female ears. Even her act of raising Amir, the homosexual partner of her husband, to the status of a potent male is an act of liberating him from the status of a prey in the relationship with Mamootty.

The motherliness in the woman makes her a Goddess-mother to the entire humanity. The rising of the tomb of Karthy after her death, though unrealistic, enchanted the fishermen to worship the Beevi of that *Jaram* of Secular spiritual counterpart. This magic realistic segment of the novel transforms her to be an Avatar of Beevi. The Sufi story teller, with the aim to safeguard the values of harmonious existence, continues the stories of Beevies arrived on the rise of evil. By locating the tale in the Islamic cultural capital of Kerala, projecting a converted Hindu as the vehicle of the doctrine of the God(ess) model and politicizing the spiritual dimensions of the female body, the novel unraveled the archetypal spiritual imprints the individuals. The novel suggested that the common folk failed to recognize the spirituality due to religious teachings, practices and due to the so called normative code of conduct of the society. Nevertheless the novel was constructed carefully, under the caution that it should not propagate an alternative dogmatism, against the existing one. The memory of Tippu attacks juxtaposed with the memories of Bhagavathy discarded reveals the meaninglessness of the fanaticism built on the purity of blood and birth theory. The conversion tantamount to liberation is again an eye opener that even the polytheism failed to meet. The spiritual earnestness made Karthy, who converted to meet the corporeal pleasures, worship her body thinking about *Aham Brahmasmi* ideal. The protagonist of the work, Karthy, was chosen as a key to open up the eco-spiritual polyphonic principles that cure the umpteen human carcinogenic conditions. The application of feminine principle in the culture of worship, or through Sufi stories, the novel seems to have responded to the religious questions that the demolition of Babri Masjid roused. By tying up a new tale on Beevi, at the end of the old, of a Beevi, the writer shares his anxiety on the extent of a tale to sustain a philosophy of peace propagated. At the same time he foresees the arrival of alternative philosophies on human recognition of the humanity's degeneration.

A method of scholarly investigation with truth finding inquisitiveness towards the history and a different spiritual invocation is required to solve the problems of spiritual arena, says Omaima Abou Bakr of Cairo University by citing the views of J. Ruys established in the work *Playing on Alterity* :

Ruys, therefore, proposes an empathetic *memoria* as a way forward in medieval studies in the face of documentary silences: "It may even be that our medieval subjects, themselves highly conscious of a continuum from the ancient world to their own time, might have been pleased to think that they would continue to partake in the imaginative chain of memory, not only as remembering subjects in their own day, but as subjects remembered in ages to come (Abou-Bakr 353).

K.P. Ramanunni summons the *memoria* through the character Karthy who later embraced Islam and invokes the archetypal memories of Beevi, the savior of the co-existence of two religions. Sufi account of Karthy harks back to the episode of Anne Hutchinson, the first feminist theologian, according to Carol .P. Christ. In the trial what Reverend Hugh Peter of Salem mentioned about Annie is true of Karthy, the protagonist of the novel: “She had rather been a husband than a wife; and a preacher than a hearer; and a magistrate than a subject”(Christ 1). Ramanunni's rendering forecasts the debates on Professor Amina Wadud's leading Friday ritual prayers in New York City before the International media and the reaction of Professor Dr. Soad Saleh and the following declaration, “ women's body even if veiled stirs desire” (Shaikh 12). Ramanunni's bringing into play the memory of a feminine cult that started and continues both in the global society and the repercussions of that in the academia suggests that the need of a reciprocity between Divine and feminine is vital in the present day context of violence, hatred and marginalization of women and feminine doctrines.

As in the way the novel utilizes the narrative of a mystical tradition to elaborate on the notions against the longstanding religious hostility through a subjective female oriented spiritual discourse, the paper attempts to rather secularize the extremist realms. The seeds of hatred culminated in the religious spheres due power and wealth equations underlying the history are touched upon in the novel with the aim to find out a solution of love through Goddess-mother, or priest who has flesh and blood. In this way the paper on *What the Sufi Said* attempted to articulate the doctrine of transnational female spiritual essence, an alternative spiritual face that acted as the aesthetic healer to the wounds made by partition and in the post-colonial India.

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A Formula for Infinity: A Study of *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* and *The Thousand and One Nights*

“The end of the road might be the beginning of another” (Barth 23).

Every text is a “textual mortuary” as long as the reader does not come in and transform it into a “textual factory.” Infinity has always been a significant area of research in the field of philosophy. Nothing is complete and finished. Even the “Image of thought” (17) which Gilles Deleuze conceives as finite delves into the aporia of infinity to a postmodern eye. The nature of a true act of thought resembles a rhizome with no beginning and end. Everything in the world is connected with each other and remains in a state of infinite creation.

Emmanuel Levinas uses infinity to designate that which cannot be defined or reduced to knowledge or power. In Levinas's magnum opus *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, he says: “The idea of infinity is the mode of being, the infinitude of infinity.... All knowing qua intentionality already presupposes the idea of infinity, which is preeminently non-adequation” (26).

The notion of infinity is a source of concern not only for philosophers but also for literary theorists. They have been experimenting with infinity in different styles. Frank Kermode's in his highly influential study, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction*, contends that: “We cannot, of course, be denied an end; it is one of the great charms of books that they have to end” (23). Barbara Herrnstein Smith echoes Kermode in her view that “closure allowed the reader to be satisfied by the failure of continuation, or put another way, it creates in the reader the expectation of nothing” (34). Both these critics base their opinions on their perceived human need rather than the urge to make sense of the world by organizing time from beginning to the end. However, Kermode's analysis, by his own admission, is rooted in beliefs inherent to Western Christianity that view the entire universe as moving from a discernable beginning towards the impending end times.

As Jorge Louis Borges pointed out in his lecture on *The Thousand and One Nights*, Eastern cultures have not felt the same need to chronologize their literature and histories. They, rather than adhering to a finite time-line, viewed literature as an eternal process. *The Thousand and One Nights* inspired Borges to believe in the potential for literature to be infinite rather than chronologically linear with a beginning and end. It also provided him a theory of narrativity which focuses on the possibility of infinite storytelling. In a lecture Borges pronounced “idea of infinity is consubstantial with *The Thousand and One Nights*” (46). This potentiality of literature to be infinite is what Italo Calvino deals in his fictions. Calvino, by introducing stories without an end in *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, tries to resurrect Scheherazade, the teller of infinite stories.

Far from being a conventional narrative, in which events are described from the outside by an omniscient narrator and everything proceeds smoothly from an initiating incident to a denouement, *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* has a bewitching and playful

form. It is a self-reflexive book about a reader who is trying to read a book called *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*. The first chapter and each subsequent alternate chapter are written in the second person. They form a linking narrative between the intervening, even-numbered, chapters, which all purport to be extracts from various books which the reader tries, at different times, to read.

The novel highlights the problems of the one dimensional aspect of traditional narrative structures. Calvino explains why there is no traditional plot, linearity and a clear sense of ending in the book: “My working method has more often than not involved the subtraction of weight. I have tried to remove weight, sometimes from people, sometimes from heavenly bodies, sometimes from cities; above all have tried to remove weight from the structure of stories and from language” (*Memos* 8).

Calvino comments on his own narrative throughout the text, and his most clear comment on this particular form of resistance to traditional narrative structures occurs when making explicit the sexualised connotations of interrupted climax, and satisfying ending.

Lovers' reading of each other's bodies... differs from the reading of written pages in that it is not linear. It starts at any point, skips, repeat itself, goes backward insists, ramifies in simultaneous and divergent messages, converges again, has moments of irritation, turns the page, finds its place, gets lost. A direction can be recognized in it, a route to an end, since it tends toward a climax, and with this end in view it arranges rhythmic phases, metrical scansion, recurrence of motives. But is the climax really the end? Or is the race toward that end opposed by another drive which works in the opposite direction, swimming against moments, recovering time? (*Winter's* 10)

This paper attempts to unravel the potential for infinity that is inherent in the narrative structures of both *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* and *The Thousand and One Nights*. The study provides an overview of the potentially infinite narrative model presented in *The Thousand and One Nights*, and it argues that Scheherazade's primary narrative technique, never ending story telling style, rather than following the design of the “frame tale,” bears close resemblance to the structure of the arabesque. It affirms the argument that Calvino refutes the sense of ending and opens a space for infinite story telling by adopting the narrative structure demonstrated by Scheherazade. Calvino using the arabesque narrative technique, which has the potential to be infinite, attempts to make his works in a state of becoming.

Calvino states in his Harvard Lecture Series, *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*:

Someone might object that the more the work tends toward the multiplication of possibilities, the further it departs from that unicum which is the *self* of the artist, his inner sincerity, and the discovery of his own truth. But I would answer: Who are we, who is each one of us, if not a combinatoria of experiences, information, books we have read, things imagined. Each life is an encyclopedia, a library, an inventory of objects, a series of styles, and everything can be constantly shuffled and reordered in every way conceivable. (42)

Calvino traced and investigated the possibility of achieving a “perfect model” to understand

the world. One conclusion reached from his investigation is that any fixed model is exclusive. The world is fluid-like, it is constantly moving and changing. Thus, he proposes to understand it in terms of an open system, an encyclopedia. It is inclusive and encompassing, thus, an ideal model to represent Calvinian idea of infinite possibilities within a totality. The infinitude of the cosmos cannot be directly represented in an exact and precise manner. Every work of Calvino is a literary experiment to approach and express the idea of perfect infinity in an organized system. Calvino was determined not to surrender to nothingness, with his literary experiment, he intended to demonstrate that novel is not a dead and close form, on the contrary, it is a tool capable of representing the idea of infinite possibility, in a rather unconventional way.

Calvino in his attempt to achieve infinity has employed the narrative techniques of *The Thousand and One Nights*, which suggest the possibility of infinite storytelling and in itself an experiment in the creation of infinite narrative, beginning with the hypothesis that Scheherazade can save her life and the lives of her female compatriots by perpetually having one more story to tell. Even the novel's title suggests that the book will contain infinite stories. In Arabic culture the number 1000 connotes "infinity," and therefore 1001 is "infinity plus one" (Littmann 362). But no book can actually contain an infinite number of stories. Scheherazade must create a narrative that alludes to the possibility of the infinite, "a formula for infinity."

The Thousand and One Nights's literary technique for generating a potentially infinite number of stories is generally referred to as "frame" narrative. Many critics simultaneously apply the term "Chinese box" to refer to the nesting of stories inside one another. But to describe stories as being contained within a frame necessarily places boundaries around the text, undermining the very notion of infinity. *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Decameron*, and *Don Quixote* are examples par excellence of the technique of narrative embedding, but none, while having the appearance of containing hundreds of stories, has at its goal infinite story-telling. In fact, the game laid out by the narrators in *The Decameron* is to tell a limited number of stories in a limited number of days. But *The Thousand and One Nights* has its goal of infinite story telling in its very structure.

As the narrative impetus of *The Thousand and One Nights* is infinite storytelling, the text requires an unlimited space for infinite narrative generation. Both Boris Uspensky and Juri Lotman use the word frame as a limiting term to mark off a clear beginning and end to the work of art, which in literature translates to creating a space in which the narrative will take place. This particular definition works well in describing the highly structured storytelling that takes place in *The Decameron* where the narrators seek a closed-off space as a refuge from the Plague. The en-framed stories of *The Decameron* are told within strict boundaries, at specific times of day, afternoon, in specific places like the enclosed garden. The storytellers always maintain a preset order; the King or Queen of the day commences the narration and stipulates the day's theme, and the day's final tale is always reserved for Dioneo. In contrast, the time and place of the storytelling in *The Thousand and One Nights*, at night in the king's bedroom, bear no relation on the beginning and ending of Scheherazade's stories; individual tales begin and end only at the whim of Scheherazade. The break of dawn and the uniform speech from Dinarzad praising her sister's narrative talents signal that Scheherazade will be allowed to live another day, but do not act as a closing mechanism for the stories. In fact, some tales are stretched throughout several nights and many tales have begun or ended in the middle of the night, leaving enough time to begin another story. As

Sandra Naddaff writes, “what seems to be the end is, in fact, only another manifestation of its beginning” (112). Thus, the return to the bedroom scene cannot be considered as a true “frame”. The term “frame” also generates a binary opposition—inside versus outside, open versus closed—which presumes that the ensuing tales are contained within the first tale, an arrangement that does not resonate with the collection of stories in *The Thousand and One Nights*. Naddaff, who describes *The Thousand and One Nights* as possessing a frame with “ever flexible borders,” writes “the text possesses an ability, indeed a willingness, to accommodate ultimately any tale” (5). *The Thousand and One Nights* defies the appropriation of a closed framing system because the work’s very method of storytelling “symbolizes fiction which postpones its own closure” (Faris 811).

The second problem with applying the term “frame” or “embedded narrative” to *The Thousand and One Nights* is that it implies subordination. Although Todorov coined the term “embedded narrative” in connection to the storytelling method used in *The Thousand and One Nights* in which “a second story is enclosed within the first” (70), he compared this to the subordination of clauses that occurs in linguistics, a view that places the stories on different levels connoting a primary and secondary narrative. What is embedded in *The Thousand and One Nights* is its willingness to risk or save the life of Scheherazade through storytelling. *The Thousand and One Nights* stories like “The Story of the Merchant and the Demon,” which form the first story-cycle cleverly mirror Scheherazade’s own predicament and cannot, therefore, be deemed unimportant or unrelated to the frame tale.

The third dilemma encountered in applying the frame model to Scheherazade’s stories is its failure to depict the connecting system between her stories. The frame diagram is fitting for narratives, like *The Decameron*, in which stories may be grouped according to theme or teller, but which are otherwise unrelated to each other. In *The Thousand and One Nights*, stories give birth to stories when a character in the preceding story has another story to tell. As Ferial Ghazoul asserts, “every tale relates directly or indirectly to the generating tale” (31). For example, in “The Story of the Porter and the Three Ladies,” one of the ladies forces the three visiting dervishes to tell their stories or else they will be killed. As a result, three more stories are born, and in fact, the second dervish relates a fourth in his story: when he tells of his encounter with a king’s daughter she, upon hearing the sad circumstances that have befallen the dervish, is prompted to share her own sad story with him. Rarely do stories stand independently in *The Thousand and One Nights*. According to Todorov, this linking structure makes *The Thousand and One Nights* a “marvelous story machine” (78). One alternative to the frame model is Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s theory of the rhizomatic nature of books, because it illustrates the outward and thus truly infinite growth of the narrative. Like the Scheherazade’s life-saving method of story-telling, “the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction ‘and . . . and . . . and . . .’” (25). The model of the rhizome insists on waywardness, the absence of a structure or pattern. While the adventures in *The Thousand and One Nights* may at times seem random, they are built around well-patterned story-cycles. As a result, the narrative structure of text is neither a frame nor a rhizome, but instead it directs the reader to an altogether different structure—the arabesque.

The arabesque narrative structure provides solutions to the above-mentioned dilemmas and, more importantly, the arabesque is, in itself, a symbol of infinity. Ernst Kühnel, whose foundational study of the arabesque notes that there are no fixed rules for the leaf-like pattern other than “the obligatory bifurcation and its ever-continuing course” (35). In her study, *Arabesque: Narrative Structure and the Aesthetics of Repetition in the 1001*

Nights, Naddaff describes the arabesque as follows:

Derived from a denaturalized leaf or tendril pattern, the overall structure and movement of the arabesque are based on the fundamental premise of repetition, indeed redundancy, and correspondingly symmetry. The initially free-falling lines of an abstract leaf pattern diverge at a certain moment and rhythmically and reciprocally repeat each other in order to form the central palmette of the arabesque. This digressive but patterned movement is repeated and elaborated until a seemingly arbitrary point. The entire pattern is then reproduced. The foundation of the arabesque, then, is the repeat unit, the horizontal and vertical mirroring of the design which ensures its spatial perpetuation (112).

In contrast to the vernacular use of the word “arabesque” as a “flourish” or “squiggle,” Naddaff explains that the arabesque is “carefully patterned” and has an “entirely predictable movement” which suggests its “significance, intention and effect” (111). She introduces the idea of applying the concept of the arabesque to *The Thousand and One Nights*, but only employs it to describe the repetition of specific structural patterns found in story cycles like “The Porter and the Three Ladies.” Although ultimately this technique results in perpetual narrative, Naddaff does not use the arabesque to signify infinite narrativity, but rather “the way that narrative repetition impedes the temporally determined progress of a story from beginning to end” (112). But her application of the repetitive arabesque pattern to *The Thousand and One Nights* should be applied more fully to the very principle of infinite storytelling.

Invented by the Arabs, the arabesque originated over 3000 years ago. It flourished under Islam and was incorporated into the art of Iranians, Turks, Berbers and Indians, who have used the arabesque continually for the past thousand years. Both art critics and historians agree that the tendency towards non-representational art and ornament took root in Islamic nations because of warnings in the *Hadith* against making images. Although there is no symbolic meaning behind the arabesque, the pattern itself is meant to bring about the contemplation of infinity. According to Ismail Hamid, Muslims strived to express the infinite attributes of Allah in their arts, employing the arabesque to direct “the eye of the viewer away from the things of this world toward the perception of a design that potentially repeats itself into the realm of the divine” (113). He continues: “within this climate, the arabesque develops as that form which embodies what one might claim as a fundamental principle of an Islamic aesthetic.... The arabesque takes as its point of departure; the denatured, indeed unnatural, threads of a leaf patterns and spin a self-perpetuating, potentially infinite design” (115).

The arabesque functions as a descriptive model for *The Thousand and One Nights* because of its equal relationship to the object on which it appears, which again is opposite to both the frame and other “designs” in Western art. The arabesque resolves the issue of narrative connections, because, according to Kühnel, it never appears in isolation but is always connected to, and emanating out from, its stem—just as the tales in *The Thousand and One Nights*. Unlike other framed stories such as *The Decameron* and *The Canterbury Tales*, connections in *The Thousand and One Nights* are not made by similar themes or characters that reappear, but by the actual act of narration which itself engenders the stories.

This arabesque structure that is embedded in *The Thousand and One Nights* is

employed both practically and philosophically to imply the creation of an infinite narrative even today. Italo Calvino and his works move around this technique of arabesque in order to emphasize the significance of infinity in the very structure of the novel. The works of Calvino evokes Scheherazade's artistry in avoiding “the end” (her end) by refusing to finish her story. When Calvino alludes *The Thousand and One Nights* in his fiction, it is for the purpose of rescuing a narrative in danger of coming to an end.

If on a Winter's Night a Traveler pays tribute to *The Thousand and One Nights* through its series of unfinished tales which both seduce the reader and perpetuate the narrative. Calvino's interest in narrative infinity is evident as early as 1956 in the introduction to *Italian Folk Tales*, a collection of fairy tales which he himself compiled and edited. Calvino states that the most important criterion for a tale to be included in his volume is that the tale must contain “the infinite possibilities of mutation” (16). Calvino also addresses the fable genre as infinite in its ability to grow over time: “In all this I was guided by the Tuscan proverb dear to Nerucci: 'The tale is not beautiful if nothing is added to it'” (24). This principle of addition becomes a central factor in Calvino's novels in the 1970s, novels which represent his experiments with structures in an attempt to create infinite narratives.

If on a Winter's Night a Traveler reveals Calvino's desire for narrative's own infinite continuation beyond the physical borders of the book. Calvino wanted to capture in his writings the potentiality of all that remained unwritten; the infinite number of unwritten stories that will always outweigh the number of those written. In the words of Carlos Fuentes, “Calvino wished to capture within a book the unread but not unreadable part of the universe, creating the illusion that the reader, when he or she reads what is written, also reads what has not yet been written” (59).

The question was how to achieve such a feat, and Silas Flannery, Calvino's fictional author in *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, imagines the perfect solution. Flannery expresses his excitement over “a beginning that can be followed by multiple developments inexhaustibly” (Winter's 176), and he decides to write “a book that is only an incipit, that maintains for its whole duration the potentiality of the beginning” (Winter's 177). Then, ask Flannery and Calvino: “Would it break off after the first paragraph? Would the preliminaries be prolonged indefinitely? Would it set the beginnings of one tale inside another, as in the *Arabian Nights*?” (Winter's 179). Calvino came to realize that narrative should not actually be infinite, but should instead suggest infinity. He explains: “Suddenly, I decided to give up, to drop the whole thing; I turned to something else. It was absurd to waste any more time on an operation whose implicit possibilities I had by now explored completely, an operation that made sense only as a theoretical hypothesis” (Castle 127).

Calvino understood that “infinite” in narrative could only signify the potentially infinite; that is to say, it is a mathematical process that never stops because we can always imagine one more number that can be added to it. Infinite narratives must be in a potential state, because the book is a necessarily finite medium. Although the actual printed text ends, a potentially infinite narrative suggests that more texts, and more of texts, are in existence elsewhere in a potential state. It is this potential for infinity that the original manuscripts of *The Thousand and One Nights* exhibit.

The narrative situation of the storyteller seducing the reader through interrupted stories is one of its most common similarities to *The Thousand and One Nights*, the text also creates a similar “arabesque” structure, evident in the diagram Calvino created for the novel

and published in the literary magazine *Alfabeta* (Appendix I). This structure resembles an arabesque in several ways. First, if the diagram is rounded instead of straight they form the same pattern as the arabesque: a generative “vine” runs through the middle and progenies side branches and stems. Second, the lines of this diagram continue off the page at the top and bottom, alluding to infinity, like the arabesque, by extending beyond its temporal space. Thus “il minimo vitale” and the “la ricerca della pienezza” at the top of the diagram are not the first stories, but stem from previous stories that are not shown on the page. Moreover, each story is drawn as being linked to another story, which represents the connectedness of the arabesque. The narrator in the chapter “Looks down in the gathering shadows” explains the importance of this technique: “I am producing too many stories at once because what I want is for you to feel, around the story, a saturation of other stories that I could tell or maybe will tell... stories that cannot be told until other stories are told first” (*Winter's* 108-09). He does not want the reader to be able to distinguish a beginning or an end in the story chain.

Calvino does not mention the arabesque design with regard to *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, but the book does offer the metaphor of a pumpkin vine, identical to the arabesque with its spiraling stems and interweaving vines that spread out in all directions. Calvino compared *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* to his *Italian Folk Tales* because “its effect is created by a sense of the storyteller's abundance, by the pleasure of a sheer proliferation of stories” (Gray 22). This structure's ability to produce an infinite number of “books” is apparent in the very chapter titles of *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*. The titles give the names of ten unfinished novels which, when placed together, form the title of a possible eleventh novel. However, the final chapter of *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* tells the beginning of a story from *The Thousand and One Nights* that creates a twelfth unfinished story. The Reader gives it a title and adds it to the list of books he is searching for which now reads:

If on a winter's night a traveler, Outside the town of Malbork, Leaning from the steep slope, Without fear of wind or vertigo, Looks down in the gathering shadow, In a network of lines that enlase, In a network of lines that intersect, On the carpet of leaves illuminated by the moon, Around an empty grave- What story down there awaits its end? 'he asks, anxious to hear the story (*Winter's* 258).

By linking the titles, what one can understand is that there is continuity within discontinuity, order within disorder. The principle of addition is what differentiates Calvino's novel from the traditional “frame tale” and is what links it with the pumpkin-vine/arabesque structure of *The Thousand and One Nights*.

The unframed structures of *The Thousand and One Nights* and *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* set up patterns which promise that tales can continue to be added to the text even though the physical novel must end (Olds 118). Thus, the textual structure of *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, like that of *The Thousand and One Nights* promises us of the existence of an infinite number of texts still waiting to be read. These unread texts are alluded to in two ways, through the technique of interruption and through the plethora of books Calvino fabricates in the novel. Calvino said that *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* was not about unfinished stories, but about interrupted stories. The difference is that an unfinished story leaves a void out of which the narrative cannot climb. An interrupted story, on the other hand, is one which tells the reader that there is still more to come. This is an important aspect in Scheherazade's

storytelling as well, because the promise of more is what spares her life. Each night she cuts her narrative short, tempting the king with the phrase: “What is this compared with what I shall tell you tomorrow night if the king spares me and lets me live!” And the king responds, “By God, I will not have her put to death until I hear the rest of the story. Then I shall do to her what I did to the others” (23). The interrupted story both keeps the king's interest and prevents him from hearing the rest of the story. And it is this interpreted story which makes *The Thousand and One Nights* a book in the state of an infinite creation of stories. Although critics often discuss the incipits in *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* as having no connection to the rest of the novel, these beginnings may actually function as the generative force behind it, creating the Reader's story by forcing him to go in search of more narratives. Of course Calvino's game in the novel is that each search results in another incipit which must then produce another narrative involving the Reader's quest, and so on. Consequently the incipits do not branch from the novel, but instead act as what Todorov's stated, suppliers of the rest of the novel. They are the pumpkins generating more pumpkins.

Infinite narrative presented by Calvino are able to create extensions and connections, Calvino's arabesque-like plan ensures that there are no “dead ends” to narrative. Every story is connected to some other story, to an original, older tale and to a future tale that has yet to be written. The reading *The Castle of Crossed Destinies* reminds of *Othello* and *Macbeth*. *Invisible City* recalls Marco Polo and the thousands of stories that exist behind his name. In *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* readers are caught in Scheherazade's tale and tales she did not create but could have, like the novel's twelfth incipit. A network, or spiral like the arabesque, does not only illustrate forking paths, but that lead the reader down an infinity of other paths, both in the past and in the future. It is “a system of infinite relationships between everything and everything else” (*Memos* 112) and it multiplies infinitely because every story will always lead to another story. As human beings, we like closure, to be able to shut the door on something, to file it away as a success or a failure. In the writing world a good ending will keep the reader thinking about the story, long after it is finished. A great ending leaves the reader feeling satisfied. But the stories like *The Thousand and One Nights* and *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* are meant to continue infinitely by postponing the ultimate end, making the act of reading an eternal process. In Calvino's narratives, every end is a new beginning. This narrative philosophy resonates with T S Eliot's assertion that “What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from” (Eliot 23).

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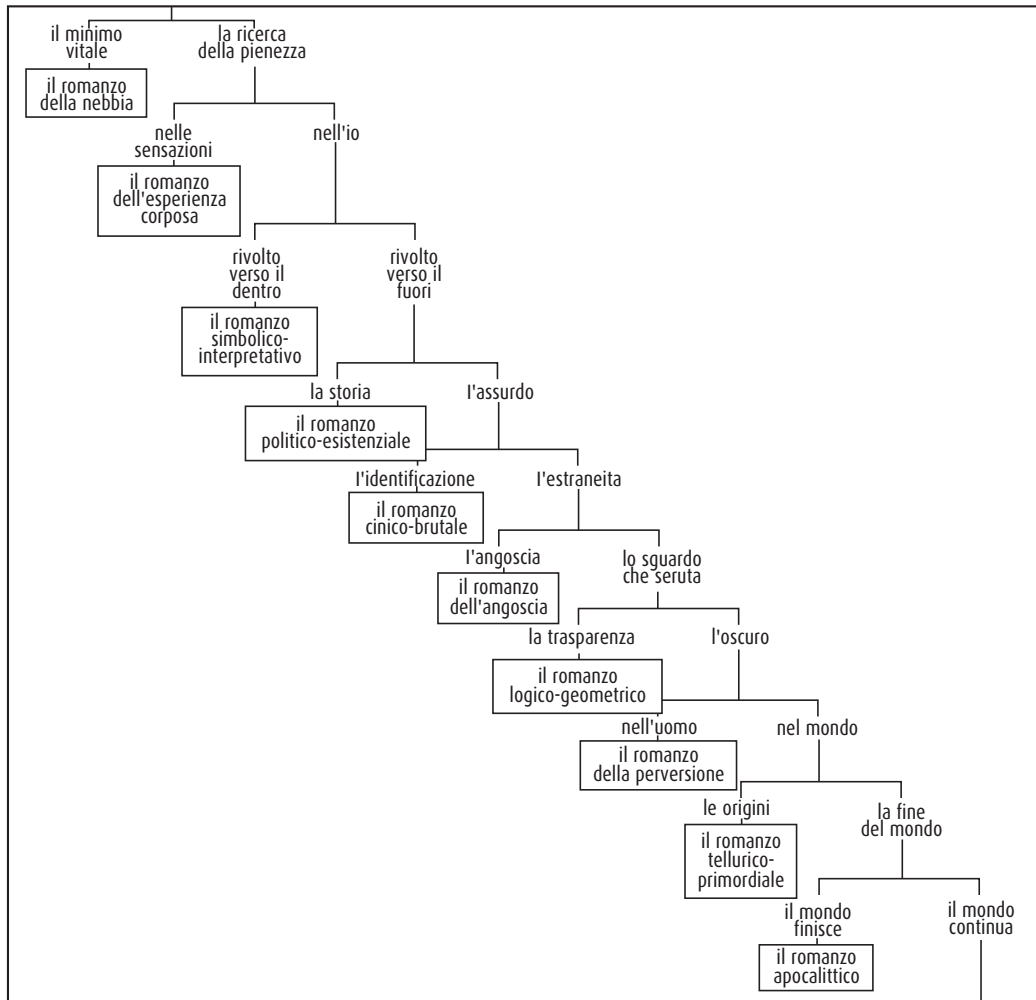
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Appendix I



Co(mmo)difying Warli Art- Art For Art's Sake or Art For Life's Sake?

Life itself- the different ways in which the different problems of human association have been solved- represents the ultimate and chief of the arts of Asia.

A.K. Coomarswamy

The term folk art is used to cover the strikingly diverse and original regime of art objects made by ethnic groups as well as the people in the lower rungs of society. These ethnic art forms embody traditions of protracted continuity and change over the travail of many centuries. And, we come to the realization that development is tradition and continuity. What we celebrate as culture today becomes the heritage of tomorrow. Culture and heritage are two sides of the same coin.

The UNESCO, which has taken yeoman efforts to protect world heritage and cultural diversity defines heritage as tangible and intangible. Tangible heritages are monuments, artifacts, the environment, nature and other concrete objects, while language, literature, customs and the arts and so on are intangible heritages. The presence of a rich and varied fond of folk art is a pointer to the richness of a culture. And in searching for identity in a crisis ridden society, it is inevitable to revisit and redefine tradition in an attempt to steer towards a better future. It is with this perspective that the subject of this paper is approached. The paper tries to acknowledge the roots of a great artistic tradition established by the Warli community but were unfortunately, consistently kept outside the established art history through blatant marginalization and oppression. The repudiation of this indigenous tradition was encouraged by the shameless consumption of a colonial aesthetics which devitalised our art studies and curricula by hegemonizing a hollow westward gaze. Conservative cultural historians who hail from a social milieu which practices untouchability toward tribal communities fail to recognize the sustaining energy of this ethnic art tradition, thus leaving it to fight for redemption from social discrimination.

Warli Art was first discovered in the early 1970s creating a great sensation, for it was different from the folk and tribal idioms known to urban India till then. It stood apart from the then prevalent art forms because it did not narrate mythological stories in vibrant tones. Embedded in the deep chasm of time, here existed a whole range of paintings adding a new dimension to the tribal art of India. Warli paintings, by the Warli tribes of Thane district in Maharashtra, are strangely ascetic. Unlike the too colourful folk paintings of India done in primary colours, the Warlis painted on austere brown surfaces using only one colour- white. This facade of sobriety however is countered by the ebullience of the themes depicted. These are remarkable in their intensely social nature. They look outwards, capturing the life around and by implicating through them the humanness of living. Men, animals and trees form a loose rhythmic pattern across the entire sheet: a synchronisation of swinging and swirling movements, describing the day to day activities of the Warlis. In doing so, they seem to be seeking communication amongst themselves and with the outside world.

What is the significance of this art for the Warli? When asked, they say that these are

'*lagnacecitra*' (marriage paintings), and are considered indispensable to the ritual of marriage. Perhaps, the Warlis also find them necessary because they express their entire world-view, concretizing a deeply felt truth. The art of the Warlis then, is part of a ritual tradition and needs to be studied within this context to be fully understood. Ritual Art, here as elsewhere, exists for a very specific purpose where it fulfils their immediate aim of cultural transmission, at another it represents that which the community is thriving towards. In animating what is recognized as an inner truth, the paintings point the way to that which is needed in their lives.

The paintings generally made on paper epitomises the strength of an ancient tradition of art practised in the villages. These paintings can be found, one in every two or three huts, in every village and have been made by the village artists- the Savasi'ni, or "a woman whose husband is alive" confirming its identity as a fertility ritual. The paintings function in a way similar to the seasonal cycle for the Warlis. There is a repetition of the same format- a central figure of a Mother Goddess surrounded by an elaborately decorated square. Surrounding the square is a landscape of soaring trees through which humans and animals weave in and out, preparing for a wedding. Made at the time of marriage, they express their most fertile moment and all that precedes and follows it. Just as the seasonal cycle dies a natural death at the end of the year, the marriage paintings too are often neglected and forgotten, once they have given birth to life. The ritual cycle of the year thus approximates the circular space of the paintings. The pattern often reminds one of the primitive cult of pantheistic art. Although the composition is the same, each painting is unique in its palpating inflections. Many new elements appear in each painting reflecting both the artist's and the village community's particular sensibility. Far from being mechanical, each painting is remarkably vibrant and can be freshly experienced each time. It is interesting that the act of painting itself was always seen as "writing" (*cauklihane*) for it was the primary means of expression for the artists. The visual forms and sometimes non-forms were the only means that the artists had for mirroring their own well of experience, knowledge and emotions, as well as that of the community. Warli paintings often remind us of the relationship between consciousness and material culture.

There is a lot of difference between a society not conscious of its art and a society conscious of its art as an object of analysis and appreciation. Folk in general or descent groups in particular do not understand individualistic tastes and interests, for they think only as a collective. It is the collective passions and values that he represents as any other member of the group where members do not exist as individuals. The closely knit collective existence precluded individual authorship in arts and crafts. Even when individuals create them, they belong to the group. Such groups do not exist much today due to the impact of advanced agriculture, trade, urbanisation and industrialisation over the past few decades. Under the influence of the market and urbanisation, these ethnic craftsmen, broadly grouped these days as dalits and adivasis and are treated as marginalised communities. Trapped in the margin as castes and tribes of third rate citizens clamouring individually for recognition as communities of legitimate stake to the nation and its resources in the process of which most of these indigenous communities have lost their art and craft to technology.

Nothing greater enhances the feeling of aesthetic joy in Warli paintings than the presence of trees. Painted with a fine eye for detail, they seem to sway and swirl with the breeze, laden with the very stuff of life as it were. The most fertile tree of the Warli paintings and the most unusual is the monkey tree. If trees form the language of the Warlis, it is not

surprising as they have always lived amidst them. As late as 1882, the Thane gazetteer records that the area was thickly covered with trees (mostly teak), being a source of both nourishment and livelihood for the tribals. It was in these impenetrable forests that the Warlis along with the other tribes lived since time immemorial. Their fervency brings to bear upon the passionate core of existence. In the Warli paintings, the ostensible reason for painting trees is to provide shade for *Palaghata* or the Mother Goddess. She is the Patron deity of marriage. The very word *Palaghata* can be taken to mean the pot over-flowing with plants (*pal-* plants, *ghata*-pot) and could represent the goddess of fertility. The pot of abundance or the overflowing vessel, *punnaghata*, is the commonest of all auspicious symbols used in Indian art throughout history. A. K. Coomarswamy points out that the pot itself then, should be regarded as an iconic symbol of and equivalent to the goddess herself. It is the inexhaustible source of life, of water, combining with the ever living vegetation or tree of life... the womb of creation which encapsulates birth, life and death of all living things. The Warliwomen paint these trees forming an archetypal *dohada* pattern (the *dohada* motif in Indian sculptor shows a beautiful woman touching the tree with her foot thus satisfying its longing to bear fruit). One gets the impression that their presence is also meant to provoke fertility in nature. But trees are not mere fertility charms in the Warli paintings. Trees in the Warli area are very stylized- their basic shapes are drawn from nature and then transformed to express the Warli- view point. These trees are composed entirely of dots- clusters of dots form the moving, ever changing reality of the Warlis. They seem to reflect their basic world-view which is one of constant flux.

The Warli mode of articulating forms within it reveals their basic form-consciousness and their world-view. Space is not only the base on which the artist expresses himself but also the immanent form of all experiences and perceptions that cannot be eliminated. The first Warli artists to be “discovered” were some old Warli women who were asked to transfer on paper what they made on the hut wall. The results were an array of wondrous trees looming magnificently towards the sky. The art of the Warli takes place within a ritual context for a specific purpose.

So what is the result of removing this art from its context? The answer would obviously be commercialization, thus deteriorating the quality and essence of this ancient art form. The new market for ethnic arts and crafts, the intentional efforts of conservation by tribal organisations as part of their politics of identity, and the romanticised middle class interests have given a different kind of significance. The situation is worsened when these ethnic groups are impaired of cultural traits of community bonds and identity in the process of proletarianisation and marginalisation. None of these ethnic groups enjoy recognition as a political community. Folk identity of arts, crafts, technology and aesthetics cannot exist in such a situation of subjection and domination. Many of these Warli communities are still hopelessly deficient in nutrition, and doomed to hunger and disease. Most of the craftsmen subsist on wage labour under highly exploitative conditions. This has destroyed almost entirely their culturally contingent arts and crafts. The central factor is that theoretically, the persisting system is an amalgam of relations in diverse forms of subsistence incorporated and structured by the dominance of economic relations under capitalism. More or less relieved from the pre-capitalist social encumbrance and placed at the mercy of the market with freedom to buy and sell, the people are now integrated in hierarchies of bureaucracy attached to the state, semi-state and private enterprises. In general, the scenario is of hybridisation and disintegration irrespective of the fact whether the revival is triggered by the market or

identity politics. There is a good market for these paintings that fetch fancy price. Naturally the folk art is being commercially used today to decorate, design, and shape textiles, utensils, pottery, tools and various other categories of objects of everyday life, but with little or no benefit to the indigenous folk who pioneered them.

There is growing international patronage of folk-art labelled as 'grass -root art' and 'ethnic art'. One result of studying Warli art in isolation from its ritual tradition can be that it is "exoticised" where it is made up to appear in a form which is larger –than- life, under-valuing its real meaning. This in turn results in the traditional motifs being repeated in the paintings without any change or innovation. Thus there is a constant presence on many Warli painters to make only the traditional "caukat" with the goddess, palaghata. The other effect is commercialization of the art where content and form are both degraded to appeal to a mass market. Warli paintings have been affected in both ways, but primarily in the latter way, where even as they reach a wider number of people their quality has deteriorated.

In the changed situation some of the artists and craftsmen have become proud of their heritage and for the same reason seek to pass on their valuable heritage to the younger generation, instilling in them the new social realities of money and recognition. They shall not emulate the faceless existence of their forefathers. So when they move up the social ladder they may take the cudgel, assert themselves, critique the culture that relegated them to the margins and adopt a rebellious tone. Their anger, protest and memories of injustice are many layered-from the numbness of historical wrongs to the pain of rejected love for being a Dalit.

Folk arts and crafts are being increasingly recognised as part of the national heritage, an aspect of the plurality of the nation's history and culture. The Warli art form embody certain cultural idioms that people inherit rather than acquire, but sustain only in the nature-friendly habitat where they originally evolved. Nature is the centre of folk-creativity. Thus art is subjected to transformation that ensures the sustenance of its practitioner. And an art history that does not acknowledge this great native tradition and the later transition will forever be incomplete...Art like life must evolve. Dynamic cultures cannot disregard or sever their heritage in their forward movement and consequently, have to be reckoned in a cultural dialogue thereby empowering them to face the challenges of the present and future.

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Marxism: The Future and Beyond

No Freudian imagines that Freud never blundered, just as no fan of Alfred Hitchcock defends the master's every shot and line of screenplay.

Terry Eagleton

Every theory carries with it the seeds of its own survival and destruction. This is especially true of Marxism that has been savagely haunted like a detestable spectre with the seeming likelihood of excommunication. It is intriguing to respond to the purely material issue of whether or not Marxism is likely to be placed for public viewing before a customary post-burial eulogy is delivered. To take something pragmatic from the [in] famous declaration of the death of the author as god by Barthes, (*Death of the Author*, 1967) it would just be akin to endorsing its having been alive once before the coldness of scholarly consensus, the voice that prides itself on issuing death certificate to tenets that outlived their usefulness, took it apart. In what he himself claims to be a striking cerebral inspection of why socially significant theories have it in them to go miles still further in *Why Marx Was Right*, 2012, Terry Eagleton, (2) one of the less truculent left-wing thinkers of our times, toys with the teaser that Marxists around the globe would be adequately relaxed upon learning that Marxism is finished and that they now 'could pack in their marching and picketing, return to the bosom of their grieving families and enjoy an evening at home instead of yet another tedious committee meeting'(Eagleton, Terry, *Why Marx Was Right*, 2012 (1). His words bear testimony to the unbearable burden intellectuals, genuine and fake, have had to bear while following the most self-less of humanists from Germany.

The Singularity of Marxism

Students and sometimes even scholars tend to be preoccupied with the seemingly questionable space Marxism should occupy in the discussion of matters germane to literature. They may even conclude in unceremonious haste that it has ceased to exist as a viable theory that promised a lot and impressed much once. It is imperative that they bear in mind that they are, although unwittingly, insinuating and triggering what may be termed a second spring of Marxism when they question its significance and worth as a critical tool and that Marxism, like any other theory, justifiably deserves the dignity of the analysis of its own failure if they believe it has failed and faltered recently. It is clear for everyone to see that Marxism is arguably the only theory which is materialistic enough to be scientific, precise and penetrative without having a morbid fixation on the existence of a world or of forces which lie beyond the natural world that we live in. The theoretical singularity of Marxist philosophy is underscored by its devotion to some of the central principles held in high regard by Marx, its high priest, such as the understanding and awareness that the social world especially in terms of categories of class are determined, defined and informed by relationships to economic and productive processes, exploitation perpetrated by the dominant class, and the belief that the development and prosperity of society can't be dreamt of without the event of the proletariat leading a revolution. On the practical side, Marxism is a sure cure pill for the ills of unequal societies transcending geographical boundaries – an unambiguous commitment to fight to bring justice to the downtrodden and the humiliated.

The assertion that Marxism can't just be dead and finished until capitalism, its arch rival, is done and dispatched is vindicated. And it is corroborated by the stark statistical data that about ninety percentage of what should be possessed by the majority of the occupants of the world is held by the mighty ten percentage of plutocrats who make the rest live at their mercy.

Marxism in literature: The Seed bed of Ideology

Despite Marx and Engels not recommending anything called Marxism for interpreting works of art, the literary world took a liking to it once the value of Marxian thoughts illuminated by several multilingual scholars ranging from George Lukas to Theodor Adorno caught the fancy of the creative firmament. We have come a long way from the days of the unreasonable 'vulgar' demand by certain Marxists for preaching social realism succumbing to party line in literary works but what still remains a critical point for debate is the ubiquity and omnipotence of ideology, a belief system influencing human enterprises, in life from which the raw material, to use a term much favoured by fans of Marxism, is taken. The careful revisiting of Marxism behoves us to be cognizant of pervasive ideologies. Patriotism, from a Marxian stance, keeps the penurious helpless in watching the rich, their privileged binary, amass wealth and they are confused by their being part of a country so much that they can never rise above the imposed bounds of geography and physicality of their nation to band with the poor belonging to several other countries. They are, in short, dumfounded and indoctrinated by the claustrophobic 'oneness' in the country to which alone they should remain indebted. Religion, derided by Marx as "the opiate of the masses", is another *ideological apparatus* that has lured the hapless individuals over centuries so viciously that they have learnt to accept their traumatized destiny on earth, in spite of their being tempted by the sight of the land of honey and milk promised in the next birth. Marxism sees literature as a tangible representation and manifestation of compelling ideologies by which each writer is affected.

The Plurality of Voices

One vital error which might have occasioned a drop in interest in Marxism may be the fallacious stand that only those works centered on social realism and promoting equality need to be of interest to the critics who choose to put on the Marxist mantle. Interestingly, many critics today are liberal in asserting that they have scholarly interest in even those works in literature that reinforce capitalist, imperialist or other oppressive ideologies detrimental to the holistic growth and constitution of a society. They explain how a particular literary work attempts to put an individual in a quagmire by stifling his desire and right to lead a decent life. It is in this respect that many works in literature particularly novels that become useful for Marxist critics to dissect to see how the dominant class establishes its dominance over the less privileged lot. Put simply, we need not worry at all any longer about whether or not a literary work has a Marxist agenda. We may still read it through the Marxian lens seeing why it is ant-Marxian. The reflection of the socio-economic conditions of the turbulent times of the production of the work is of particular interest to Marxist critics. Also, of great significance is how the work might be seen as a critique of organized religion making characters unable to offer resistance to multifarious oppression and subordination. The Marxist critic employs the method whereby the bond between the context of a work and the social class and status of the author is explained often on the assumption that the writer is unaware of what she/he is trying to communicate in the text. Marxian thinkers quite often make a meaningful distinction between the *overt* content of the text and the *covert* content. If

this notion is used to explain major tragedies by Shakespeare, for instance, startlingly fresh interpretations can be unearthed, different from what they appear to say to the reader on the surface.

Why Marxism Can't Die

Marxism can't die out; time will never let it slip into a vegetative stupor or lapse into oblivion even if it attempts to annihilate itself. It is increasingly obvious how Marxism has chosen to address the pressures generated by the appearance of newer, mind boggling theories without doing much internal harm to its inherent vitals. Nonetheless, it is equally heartening to take a look at the way it has changed of late towards the direction of affiliating itself to psychoanalytic criticism from which it did maintain a safe distance despite the two having potentials for a symbiotic relationship. No one today believes in ideology as a *false consciousness* as described by Engels and it has assumed, to a large measure, the air of a neutral catchphrase the demystification and eventual illumination of which is stressed by Pierre Macherey who brings critics and aesthetes to the staggering realization that a literary text both embraces and emancipates itself from the compelling, enervating contradictions of ideology. Conflating Marxism and Freudianism, Macherey sensibly probes the possibility of removing that long standing zero tolerance that the former has stubbornly manipulated asserting that there are instances of *silences* or *gaps* in a text brought on by the inexorability of ideological loopholes and that the textual absences seem symptomatic of a *repressed unconscious* not of, to be sure, the author but of what he writes (Macherey, Pierre. *A Theory of Literary Production*, 1966 (237) The Marxist critic is thus relieved from the religiosity of fanaticism and fascism and is able to make silences speak, gaps reduced, borderlines blurred and fathoms exposed reveling in the newfound critical apparatus to flirt with texts in a refreshingly down-to-earth manner gluing together what we once thought would never live together, the Marxist male (obstinate) and the Psychoanalytic female (flexible). The angst and uneasiness of Eagleton is not schizophrenic taking birth from the fear of his beloved god's kingdom being toppled but it springs from the logical confusion of a stable psyche plagued by why Marxism as a theory has to repeatedly come under fire particularly when there is no manuscript in sight pointing to its being bogus and exposing Marx meant it a joke when he spoke of dreams of a society bathed in the glory of equity and humanism. It is axiomatic that it is still a theory that delivers as much as it promises and it is yet to be superseded by anything better and more convincing.

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Satire in Shakespeare's Sonnets 1-5 & 9

Introduction:

Critics have been concerned about the identity of the male persona in Shakespeare's sonnets. Some critics have insinuated that Shakespeare might be a homosexual after all. However, the tool in the hand of a writer may be employed in diverse ways and Shakespeare may have deliberately employed that device in the composition of the sonnets under consideration as he may have swapped the image of the male persona for the personality of the Queen in order to escape the vigilance of the court. This study is preoccupied with the authentication of the claim that the male persona in the sonnets is probably Queen Elizabeth. Ample justifications are available to authenticate this claim and the study has unravelled similar posture directed at satirising the Queen even in Antony and Cleopatra where Cleopatra's romance with leading rulers of the world such as Pompey, Julius Caesar and Mark Antony may be a subtle way of castigating Queen Elizabeth and her desire to remain single when world leaders of the time jostle for her hand in marriage to no avail. What Cleopatra has, she gives liberally while Queen Elizabeth withdraws her love from all suitors and this constitutes the underlying theme in the sonnets of Shakespeare.

Synopsis of the Sonnets:

Shakespeare pretends to address a young man in the sonnets under consideration (1-5 and 9). The poet has a relationship with the man. However, everyone knows that Shakespeare is the official bard of the court. It is, therefore, apt that the poet chooses such a device in identifying the individual. He has nowhere to hide. The object of the satire is the Queen. This ability of Shakespeare to exist in the court while castigating the flaws of the Queen unknown to her is what John Keats (1965) calls "negative capability" (70-71).

The means through which Shakespeare achieves the satire of the Queen, as Keats says is the sense of beauty inherent in the poems. Readers are emotionally attached to the poems and the truth in them without taking cognizance of the environment and the fact that the male persona in them might have been swapped in the place of the Queen. The poet argues about the importance of procreation but the youth seems to be adamant as he (she) is not prepared to marry. Everyone knows that the only personality whose desire to remain single at the time is the Queen. So, whatever justification Shakespeare may provide in defence of the male personality may not be easily authenticated in time and space. So the searchlight is beamed on the Queen who remains the only personality in history to have remained single despite all entreaties from suitors the world over.

Theoretical Framework:

The theoretical thrust of the paper shall be diachronic and synchronic dimensions of investigating meanings. Ferdinand de Saussure (1959) provides illuminating hints on synchronic and diachronic dimensions of meanings situating them within the structure and the environment respectively. The level of synchrony will be an examination of the poet's choice of words and the values that may be garnered therefrom while diachronic level will take the study to the level of the environment especially the history of the Queen and the relevance to the subject matter and themes of the sonnets under examination. The paper will

be also be guided by what Richards (1965) considers to be the inherent pseudo-statements in poetry generally. These pseudo-statements are poetic truths and therefore far from scientific truths. The search for “order and coherence, and so freedom, to a body of experience” according to Richards may not be devoid of some poetic designs. In this regards, “words” are like “skeleton” a form of “structure by which the impulses which make up the experience are adjusted to one another and act together” (85).

Shakespeare's preoccupation in the sonnets may amount to what Richards (1965) considers to be a pseudo-statement. Shakespeare gives expression to the prevailing circumstance especially the desire by Queen Elizabeth to remain single and to achieve this, he finds solace in language and by twisting it to a great advantage, and Shakespeare succeeds in hiding under the veil of words to orchestrate an experience which the Queen might even find amusing.

While the resort to the imageries of plants, harvest and regeneration may not be false, the underlying intentions are hidden under the plants that the readers could hardly link the image of the rose with a human being. This device is given authorial foundation by Richards (1965) as he situates the intentions of the poets within a veil and language becomes the gulf that separates the poet's symbols and the subject matter from the readers. It becomes a task, therefore, for the reader to successfully decode the signs and symbols in order to supplant or impose himself within the thought of the poet (85-86).

The success of the mission by Shakespeare in the sonnets may be associated with the nature of language in the poetic universe. According to Paul Valery (1965) language produces two effects in the readers: negation and retention. Negation of language comes with the understanding of the message while retention goes with the inability of the reader to understand and thus a continuous romance with the word or message for a very long time before the message could be understood.

Concept and Definition:

Ferguson M. *et al* (1997) defines “a poem as a composition written for performance by the human voice” (1103). Indeed, poetry reflects a peculiarity in the arrangement of words which seems to constitute a negation of the rules of grammar. This inclination ties poetry to performance especially an elevated use of gesture, reading and peculiar use of the vocal cords. The effects are affective anecdotes in the audience as all senses are brought to bear in savouring the performance that poets and non-poets may easily recognise a salient departure in the composition through the use of language from the usual style of writing. The performance may be capable of taking the audience beyond the moment to the recognition of a non-existent state through the unusual artistry in the composition.

The sonnet is a genre of poetry and it is usually characterised by a structural typology which is generally known to consist of fourteen lines. Poetry, according to Fergusson (1997), can be classified into three different categories: epics, dramatic and lyrical poems. Under these three major categories are the following sub-genres: ballad, burlesque, elegy, ode, sonnet, farce, lyric and limerick (191). The poems under consideration fall under the sub-genre of sonnets.

Satire is a medium of composition or communication that attempts to castigate a foible in an individual, society and beliefs. It is a “literary art of ridiculing a folly or vice in an effort to expose or correct it. The object of satire is usually some human frailty; people,

institutions, ideas, and things are all fair game for satirists” (Meyer, 1987: 603). The poems under consideration identify some follies in the behaviour of Queen Elizabeth and thus castigate these in order to discourage people from imitating same. The Queen's inclination towards a single, unmarried life receives the hammer of the poet and within the exhibition of the idea, Shakespeare brings the gains in marriage to the fore. The idea in satire may be understood from the fact that the satirist's preoccupation is with the need to discourage a pattern of behaviour and thereby discourage others from following it: “satire casts a critical eye on vices and follies by holding them up to ridicule-usually to point out an absurdity so that it can be avoided or corrected” (Meyer, 1987: 1029).

Application /Analysis:

People associate poetry with deep and abstract thought because of the fact that it may take an effort to unravel the web of meanings in them. This may not be the case with the sonnets under consideration. The poems are simple, logical and self-explanatory. They negate the general perception of poetry as comprising private images that may not be discernible to people except conscious efforts are made to deconstruct the codes and images. The first four lines of sonnet 1: (From fairest creatures we desire increase/That thereby beauty's rose might never die,/ But as the ripper should by time decrease,/His tender heir might bear his memory;/) express a universal truth and the truth has a universal correspondence and may be applicable to both plants and animals. The truth is that every creature, whether plant or animal, is fair and it requires procreation to preserve its continuity. The rose is like a lily and the beauty may not last longer than the wink. Imputed to man, the short life-span of the rose is contrasted with the structured life of every human being.

Symbols evoke better emotions in readers than metaphors. They paint a vivid picture of the subject and the reader can hardly miss the mark. The following symbols collocate with one another to reveal the absurdity of the desire to remain single. Shakespeare's efforts at painting a picture of the persona in these symbols may be adjudged a success as he reveals, through a painstaking selection of the right words that could reveal his emotion and through “fairest” the reader is immediately presented a picture. The adjective “fair” may be nothing save whatever may be desirable, lovely and beautiful. From such a phenomenon, that could conjure the sense of beauty, human beings usually long for increase and permanence as this is the only means of preserving the beauty of the plant (rose) or the ripper (the Queen). The image of the fairest creature is contrasted with the symbol of the ripper undergoing a decrease. Of course, wrinkles are manifestations of the fading beauty as well as debilitating strength.

Yeats W. B. (1965) situates the symbols within a form of revelation. The metaphors paint a vivid image of the situation or emotion and provide the poems with “beauty, as a sword-blade may flicker with the light of burning towers” (62). It would be mischievous to deny the flicker that the choice of words in the poems has made to the emotion of the poet. The outrageous situation is immediately evoked when the persona is contrasted with the image of a seedling that is allowed to waste having consumed the tuber. Yeats (1965) provides what may be considered an illuminating hint on the correlation among the poetic devices in successfully arousing an emotion (62).

Taking a cue from Yeats (1965), therefore, the presentation becomes successful as the symbols are juxtaposed with the rhythm to produce a perfect emotion. For instance, “increase” collocates with “decrease” to evoke an image of imperfection. Consequently, the persona “dies” unknown to her “own bright eyes” and “lies” about whatever may be the

reason for her decision. She is equally “cruel” to herself as she burns her “fuel” without expending it on any worthwhile endeavour. The truth is that her “content” is her undying “ornament” and her “spring” may reveal the “niggarding”, a symbol of the inherent barrenness in her.

The first sonnet has the capacity of taking the reader to the emotional realm, far from the myopic world of the persona to the exclusive reality of the poet, and the subjective reality of the persona is contrasted with the synthetic reality of the poet as well as the unrealistic subjectivity of the Queen. Poetry fulfils the quest for artistic appeal as well as the moral regulation of the society through appeal to the reader's sense of outrage as well as the aesthetic transformation from the present to the enclosed world of the poet. Art, therefore, becomes a means of regulating the moral tempo of the society. Art is synonymous with the collective ethos of the society, a moral, social and cultural charter of both indigenous and modern society. The beginning of the homosexual culture may be traced to the desire of folks to negate the tradition of childbirth and continuity.

The second sonnet begins with a conclusion about the implications of the resolve of the persona to remain single: *When forty winters shall besiege thy brow*. Forty winters refer to forty years of a blooming existence when the beauty of the persona shines as if it is oblivious of any winter. The consequence of every growth is retardation when every part of the body seems to recede into gloom unlike the period of bloom. The first implication is the fact of her old age. She becomes a shadow of herself in contrast to the beautiful period of her youth. At forty, age begins to tell on every living being and no matter how hard attempts may be made to preserve the beauty, the cheeks would be visited by “deep trenches” which are symbols of old age. Age and time are enemies of beauty. They take what may have been earlier given and gradually, the beautiful structure becomes a carcass of its old self: *And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field*.

The poet's choice of words is categorical. He does not mince words. He is confident that age would take the beauty that everyone celebrates and replace it with bones and lean spirit. Attention will shift from her, and upon other blooming youth it would be shifted: *Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now, / Will be a tattered weed of small worth held: / Then being asked where all thy beauty lies, / Where all the treasure of thy lusty days, / To say within thine own deep -sunken eyes, / Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise*. Of course, a living parallel may be drawn from the life of the living-legend named Dolly Parton. She is married but has since considered it a physiological and biological snag to her beauty and alluring breasts to breastfeed a baby, and has chosen to remain barren where bumper harvest should tend her frame.

The birth of a child or more may become means of assessing the beauty of the persona in her younger days or salad days, as Shakespeare would say. The beauty may then be preserved through regeneration but the absence of an heir makes the field extinct. Her beauty that could have radiated all through her old age, because it may be perceived through the children and of course a means of comfort, filters away into oblivion (*Proving his beauty by succession thine. / This were to be new made when thou art old, / And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold*).

The third sonnet continues with the castigation of the persona through subtle revelation of the truth of her degeneration; a fact that she might not know in view of her delusion and obsession with her assumed beauty and unrivalled structure. The poet takes the

persona through some truths. Two mirrors are salient to the identification of the beauty of the persona. The first would be her heirs and the second would be herself but since she fails to fulfil the natural course for procreation and regeneration, it becomes difficult for her to compute her age through the kids. The mirror remains the only means of measuring her age and frame: *Look in thy glass and tell the face thou viewest/ Now is the time that face should form another*. The reflection that the mirror is likely to present may be distorted. In other words, she is likely to be deceived about her usual beauty and ageless frame.

Many people are not likely to realise the act of their ageing until they behold their younger ones. Kids are the best reflections and the quick realisation of this fact may inform her decision to give birth to a baby. The birth of a new baby is tantamount to the repair of the loose frame in reference to the image of engineering where basic tools are needed to repair some components: *Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest*. Percy Bysshe Shelley says the “poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world”. In this regard, Shakespeare seems to be living to the billing as a legislator and moralist. It amounts to self-delusion if the persona fails to realise the fact of her age and the need to release her hand in marriage: *Thou dost beguile the world, unless some mother/For where is she so fair whose unearned womb/Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?/Or who is he so fond will be the tomb/Of his self-love to stop posterity?*

The subtle admonition of the Queen continues as the poet reveals some salient truths that can hardly be controverted: *Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee/Calls back the lovely April of her prime*. The Queen is confronted by the truth of the preceding claim and the fact that she is a mirror to her mother. Birth is like cloning. It brings every part of the originating body to bear in her new life as some kids can hardly be distinguished from their parents in terms of resemblance and intelligence even when they seem to develop on these qualities better than their parents. The persona too may behold vividly her younger days even in old age and once again come face to face with her “golden age” when her beauty radiates through the fabrics of the world. The opposite of this will be barrenness and the death of her image as she passes into oblivion.

The fourth sonnet makes reference to loveliness that is not wisely spent in “unthrifty loveliness” and wonders why the persona has to devote attention to herself while expending her beauty on nothing that is worthwhile: *Unthrifty loveliness why dost thou spend/Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?* The natural truth in the poem may be found in the symbiotic relationship between man and nature as what it gives, it takes back: *Nature's bequest gives nothing but doth lend,/And being frank she lends to those are free*. The idea of nature giving to those that are free may be juxtaposed with the fact that nature may be considered cruel as the beautiful things in it are no sooner given than they are taken away. It becomes a matter for deep concern to deem it necessary to give birth to children when such kids are likely to be exposed to nature's inclement circumstances such as illness, fear and death.

Shakespeare becomes a rebel in this regard. The term rebel is not a deliberate attempt at disparaging the personality of the poet. Rather, it is meant to show the multidimensional faces of poets generally. Out of annoyance, the poet calls the Queen “beauteous niggard” and queries why she would want to “abuse/the bounteous largesse” she is freely given to give? She is then called the “profitless usurer” who makes so much money from borrowers but has nothing to show for it. She deceives no one but herself and when the time of reckoning shall come, she will find no acceptable account to make. At death, the beauty will be buried with

her and should she give her love to a man, the offspring would be like the image of the “executor”.

The fifth sonnet is a continuation of the sermon on the waste that tends the gentle frame of the Queen. It is the case that the frame which refers to the body here, that attracts attention after series of cosmetics may soon witness a famine. The eyes that dote on her may soon take flight and become rebels to the gentle frame they love to see. All these may be done through the unceasing gyration of time and this he personalises here in order to show its indomitability. Time flies in a gentle manner and takes what may seem the beautiful sight (summer) to the haggard time of ill-frame (winter). Winter will no doubt affect every aspect of the gentle frame: the breasts, like leaves, would succumb to the overbearing power of time and winter. They would fall and what may be once blooming with life in search of attention may soon be sapped to the marrow whether or not she gives birth to children.

Conclusion:

If readers were in doubt about the authenticity of the claim that Shakespeare may be alluding to the Queen in the sonnets, the study's desire to isolate the true focus of the poet informs the addition of the ninth sonnet in order to provide copious proofs that the Queen is the male persona in the poems. The first line of sonnet nine begins with a question possibly addressed to the male persona: Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye/That thou consum'st thy self in single life? Readers may not pay serious attention to the other lines as the thesis statement shows clearly that a male persona is being addressed in the lines. From the third line to the tenth line when a masculine pronoun “his” is used, other lines may, as well, be directed towards a female personality and the lines would not lose a grain of the meaning: Ah, if thou issueless shalt hap to die,/The world will wail thee like a makeless wife,/The world will be thy widow and still weep,/That thou no form of thee hath left behind,/When every private widow may well keep,/ By children's eyes, her husband's shape in mind:/'

The word “issueless” may, as well, refer to the Queen and the reference becomes so apt through the frequent use of “the world”. An ordinary male friend may not be so popular that his barrenness would attract the attention of the world. It could only refer to the Queen whose imperial position at the time draws global attention. It is crystal clear that the Queen sits on the throne of England and remains single all through. The word “sits” in No love toward others in that bosom sits, can only refer to her as she remains selfish and would not know what it takes to love a child. What may interest her majesty is nothing but material acquisitions and she would exercise no scruple in crushing whatever may stand between her and the fulfilment of her goals. The sonnets attest to the fact that “poetry is an art of language” (Paul Valery, 1965: 77).

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