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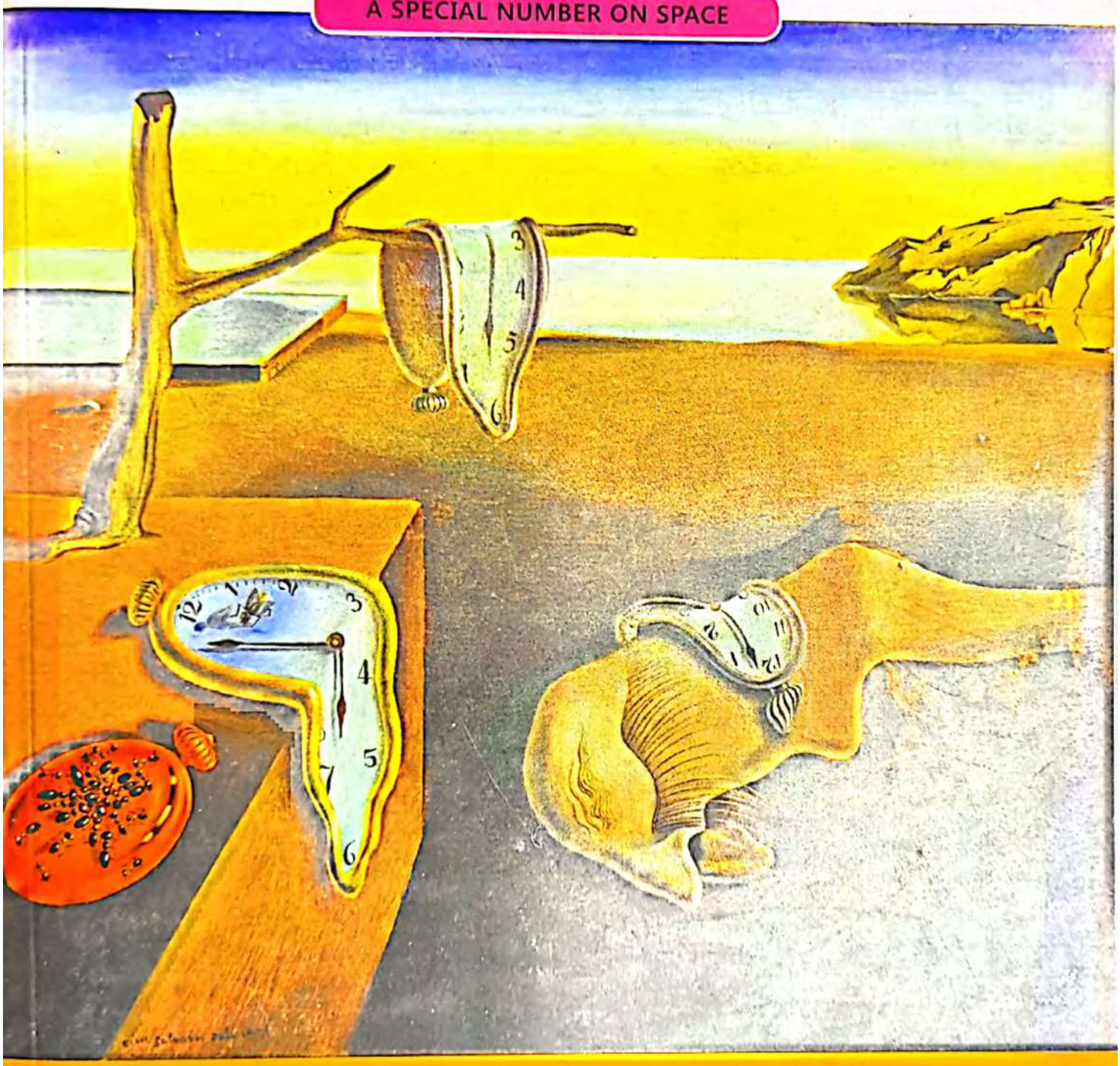

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Cover Painting: The Persistence of Memory, 1931
Artist: **Salvador Dalí**

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Kamala Das

Author: P.P. Raveendran
Title: *Makers of Indian Literature: Kamala Das*
Publisher: Sahitya Akademi **Year:** 2017 **Pages:** 128
Price: ₹50/- **ISBN:** 978-81-260-5394-0

The monograph on Kamala Das, in the series, *Makers of Indian Literature*, provides a critical and comprehensive study of the life and writings of the seminal writer. The book is a product of P.P. Raveendran's long-standing encounter with the multifarious manifestations of the international writer from Kerala. He acknowledges the close association with E.V. Ramakrishnan and a host of other critics and creative writers which proved fruitful in the making of the book.

Kamala Das has been introduced in this book as a perpetual rebel against social institutions. In the introduction written to *The Best of Kamala Das*, in the early 1990s, Raveendran had raised the question whether it was true that Kamala Das expressed nothing but the lusty hungers of a cloistered self? Answering that question would involve an exploration of the political and ideological underpinnings of her writings.

Madhavikkutty was compelled to use a pen name as she had themes which would embarrass her conservative family. She didn't want to hurt her grandmother. To be a teller she had to quibble her 'i' in her narratives. Her's was not an integrated individuality produced by modernity. The total collapse of the self is rendered through the multiple narrative voices in her works. Her autobiography raises a range of questions concerning authorship, memory and relationship between fact and fiction. She shares the collective memory of the women of her mould against the institution of the hetero-normative, monogamous marriage which is highly antihuman. She had to tell that she was a "practiced teller of white lies."

Raveendran affirms that her criticism of patriarchy was not the

She has demystified the myths of domestic bliss and marital harmony that act as bulwarks for the institution of patriarchy. She preferred to call her long narratives as stories, rather than novels. Novel, a middleclass enterprise, as Raveendran has argued elsewhere, would not suit her. Her utterances could well be equated with the concept of 'story telling' of Walter Benjamin. Her conversion to Islam, her concept of 'bhakti,' clash of convictions, contradictions in her, are all well documented in the monograph for future researchers to develop. A symptomatic reading of her endeavors is to be made to understand the crisis of modernity that she has manifested through multiple ways.

A.C. Sreehari

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കേരള സാഹിത്യ അക്കാദമി

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വാല്യം 49 | ലക്കം 5 • 2020 സെപ്റ്റംബർ-ഒക്ടോബർ

സാഹിത്യത്തിലെ പ്രദേശ ഭാവനകൾ

മലയാളസാഹിത്യത്തിൽ ദൃശ്യവും
അദൃശ്യവുമായി നിലനിൽക്കുന്ന പ്രാദേശികസംസ്കാരത്തെ
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എ.സി. ശ്രീഹരി

വീണ്ടെടുക്കേണ്ടുന്ന പ്രദേശങ്ങൾ

പ്രദേശമെന്നത് ഒരു നൂറ്റാണ്ടു മുമ്പേ, അച്ചടിയുടെയും കൊളോണിയൽ ആധുനികതയുടെയും സർവ്വവ്യാപനകാലത്ത് യൂറോകേന്ദ്രിതമായ ഒരു സാർവ്വലൗകികതയിൽ ഊന്നൽ വരികയും ഇന്ത്യൻ ദേശീയതയും കേരള ഉപദേശീയതയും ബലമുപയോഗിച്ച് നിർമ്മിക്കപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ പ്രാധാന്യം നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടുപോവുകയും മൂലയ്ക്കാക്കപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്ത ഒരു സംവർഗ്ഗമാണ്. ഭാവനാലോകമായ ഇന്ത്യയും കേരളവും നിർമ്മിക്കപ്പെടുമ്പോൾ നമ്മൾ ജീവിക്കുന്ന 'യഥാർത്ഥ' സ്ഥലങ്ങളുടെ/ പ്രദേശങ്ങളുടെ സ്വത്വങ്ങളെ ഇല്ലാതാക്കുകയും എല്ലാവർക്കും ഇടമുണ്ടെന്നു തോന്നിപ്പിക്കുന്ന, പക്ഷേ, ഇടുങ്ങിയതും വരേണ്യവുമായ ഒരു സാർവ്വലൗകികസത്തയെ ആശ്ലേഷിക്കുവാൻ നിർബ്ബന്ധിക്കപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്തിരുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ മദ്ധ്യവർഗ്ഗസാഹിത്യവും അതുകൊണ്ടുനിറഞ്ഞ പാഠപുസ്തകങ്ങളും ഇതിന്റെ പ്രചരണം വളരെപ്പെട്ടെന്ന് ഏറ്റെടുക്കുകയും നമ്മുടെ അബോധത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമാക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. അതിനെതിരായ ചെറിയ ചില നീക്കങ്ങൾ മലയാളത്തിൽ പല സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെട്ടുതുടങ്ങിയിട്ടുണ്ട് എന്നാണ് അടുത്തകാലത്തെ വായനാനുഭവം.

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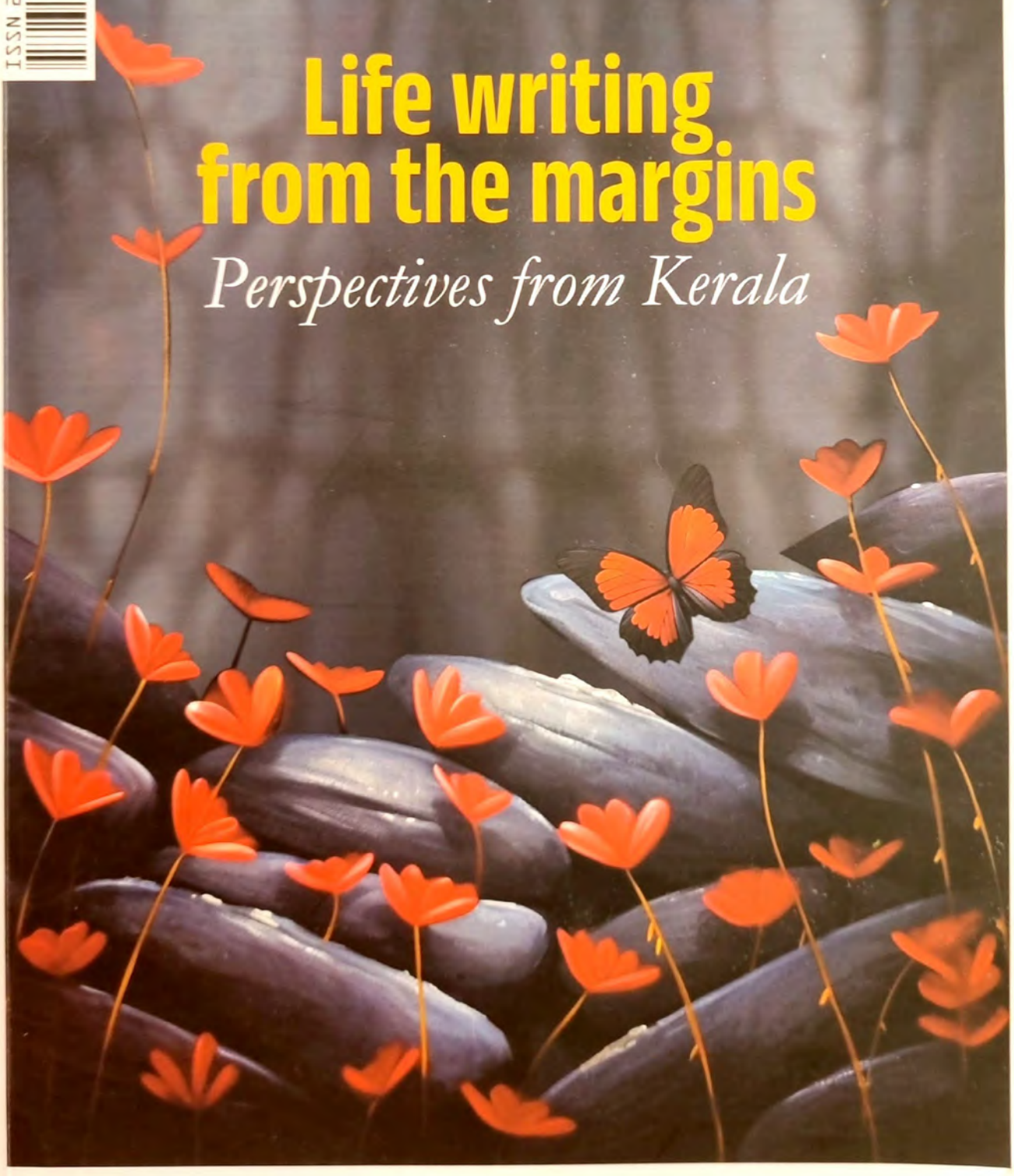
Life writing from the margins

Perspectives from Kerala



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Singling out from the many

Tribal autobiography and the appropriation of the Self

A.C. Sreehari

An autobiography is conceived to be a narrative of an individual. So, it will be significant to analyse the autobiography of a tribal man who is singled out from the many as a modern individual when tribal people basically manifest the energy of living as a group and not as an individual who would not have a story of one's own but of a community at large. A plural orientation of the self would be there among the tribal people who resist being modern single individuals. Objectifying a tribal as an individual and subjectifying one as an author of one's own experiences is what has happened in the case of Bethimaran, the autobiography of Sukumaran Chaligatha, who hails from North Wayanad, a representative of the tribal poets of Kerala.

Autobiography as a genre carries markers of colonialism when it is concerned only with issues of self-formation, argues E.V. Ramakrishnan. He says

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It works in the classroom
Not from part to whole, but from small wholes to larger whole. — *P.Bhaskaran Nair*

Undoing Gender Stereotypes: Re-visiting Fairy Tales

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Abstract

The theories centered on gender reveal that gender roles are socially constructed. Society influences our understanding and perception of differences between masculinity and femininity and these influences in turn play a major role in the construction of one's personal and social identity. One emulates the gender roles from his/ her social milieu in the course of one's life. Judith Butler opines that gender is performance. It is constructed through a repetitive performance of gender. Children learn what is expected of their gender from what their parents, grandparents and teachers teach them. The peer group with whom they mingle and the media too influence them crucially. Gender experiences will evolve over a person's life time, it is therefore always in flux. Stories that children hear during their childhood, play an important role in moulding their psyche, attitude and behavioral patterns. Fairy tales, video games and the like have a faster reach to their mind. In these narratives, women are often represented as weak, fragile, passive, naive, and innocent. They are incessantly in need of someone- a male always, in order to rescue them. The damsel in distress is a stereotype that has often been used in the earliest fairy tales, and can still be seen in modern popular culture. This paper interrogates the gender stereotypes and gender roles in select narratives and attempts to suggest counter narratives. The gender stereotypes and the gender roles that are explicit in the narratives meant for children send a wrong message to the growing generation. Can a girl child who grows up imbibing all these develop into a strong, independent empowered human being? Shouldn't we rewrite these stories in such a way that they are made sure of their own potential? Psychoanalytic studies underscore that childhood is the time when a person absorbs and imitates the rolesto which he/ she is exposed and that these exposures will have a tremendous impact upon their character building and personality development. Care must be taken as to what they are exposed to at such a young age. This would help us solve many problems related to gender that are becoming rampant in the current scenario.

Gender roles and gender stereo types are topics of great significance today. Gender studies have played a major role in tracing the stereotypes as well as in undoing certain stereotypes. The theories centered on gender assert that gender roles are socially constructed The restrictive normality reinforced by the social conditioning of gender hampers the fluidity, freedom and spontaneity of the individual. Society influences our understanding and perception of the differences between masculinity and femininity and these influences become crucial in the construction of one's personal and social identity. An individual emulates the gender roles from his/her social milieu.

Judith Butler argues that there is no stable and coherent gender identity. She opines that gender is constructed through one's own habitual and repetitive performance in everyday life. Creativity in performance can subvert the performativity of the socially assigned gender roles. Butler finds the idea of heteronormativity and normativity restrictive. She argues that an individual's gender behavior can have contradictory aspects which result in instability in gender performance. Gender experiences will

evolve over a person's life time, it is therefore always in flux and can be considered a "free-floating artifice"(Gender Trouble,1990 9). Identity is not connected to an essence, but instead to a performance. Gender performance is learned both consciously and ingrained unconsciously on the psyche of the individual who is unaware that he/she is performing a gender role. Psychoanalytic studies underscore that childhood is the time when a person absorbs and imitates the roles to which he/ she is exposed and that these exposures will have a tremendous impact upon their character building and personality development. Children learn what is expected of their gender from what their parents, grandparents and teachers teach them. The peer group with whom they mingle and the media too influence them crucially.

Stories that children hear during their childhood, play an important role in moulding their psyche, attitude and behavioral patterns. Fairy tales, video games and the like have a faster reach to their mind. A close observation of the fairy tales will reveal a stereotypical representation of both male and female characters. Females are often represented either as weak, fragile, submissive, passive, naive, and innocent who are incessantly in need of someone- a male always, in order to rescue them; or as wicked witches, evil and oppressive step mothers or step sisters who wreak havoc upon the lives of others. The damsel in distress is a stereotype that has often been used in the earliest fairy tales, and can still be seen in modern popular culture. Males are often represented as smart, brave, gallant and chivalrous. There are few representations of men as passive bearers of fate. These stereotypes are demarcated into strict binaries; male/female, good/ evil, active/passive, superior/ inferior, beautiful/ugly. Such binaries burden the children to conform to the norms set by these tales .The possibility of crossing the binaries is glossed over. Real life is misrepresented in these tales as it doesn't provide any space for those who reside in the grey areas or in the in-between spaces. This paper interrogates the gender stereotypes and gender roles in select fairy tales that appeared in the folk tale collection by Grimm Brothers *Grimm's Fairy Tales*and asserts the necessity of the emergence of counter narratives.

Fairy tales are stories that take us to a fantasy world, and bring before us a plethora of characters like fairies, giants, mermaids, talking animals, prince and princesses, witches and the like. These are often narrated tolittle children by their parents or grandparents to appease and enchant them and these bedtime stories help in establishing a special parent-child bond. These tales normally end up with a message or a moral for the little child to imbibe. Fairy tales are not only a source of pleasure, but a provider of knowledge as well. They learn patterns of behavior, social manners and gender roles from these tales. These stories, apart from taking the children to a world of fantasy, reveal to them moral truths which remain ever fresh in their memories as they grow up. However, an observation of typical fairy tales like *Cinderella, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Rapunzel*reveal that characters in general are ascribed stereotypical roles.

The archetype of damsel in distress to be redeemed by a gallant Prince is conspicuous in many of the tales. They are often represented as beings who have no say in their own life. They live and work according to the whims and fancies of other domineering people. Women portrayed as wicked witches, step mothers and step sisters also form an inevitable ingredient of the fairy tales. An exposure to such stories will unconsciously instill in the mind of the children behavioral patterns as to how they should be or how they should not be in their own life. Children are burdened unawares to stick on to strict patterns and norms which can hinder their proper development. The gender stereotypes and the gender roles that are explicit in the narratives meant for children send them a wrong message

Can a child who grows up imbibing all these develop into a strong, independent empowered human being? Shouldn't we rewrite these stories in such a way that they are made sure of their own potential? Another factor apparently lacking in these tales is that no space is provided for those who reside in the in-between space whether it be in the case of class, race or gender and consequently a realistic portrayal of life is not rendered.

A closer look at the protagonists of the above mentioned fairy tales reveal that women are portrayed as submissive, fragile, passive and naïve and these qualities appear to be their essential and inherent traits; and men are juxtaposed as valiant, energetic and empowered persons, capable of doing service to those who are in distress. Cinderella, the protagonist of the fairy tale *Cinderella* is an epitome of endurance. Her mother died when she was young and her father remarried a woman with two daughters. The step mother and step sisters who are jealous of her beauty ill-treat and exploit her and keep her in servitude These three evil women characters stand on the other side of binary and are everything that Cinderella is not. Characters who reside in the in-between space are not given a position of significance in the story. Instead, they are represented either as good or evil. With the intention of harassing Cinderella, they took off her fine clothes, and put upon her an old grey cloak and gave wooden shoes for her feet. "See how the once proud princess is decked out now," said they and led her to the kitchen where she was supposed to spend the rest of her life as a maid to them. She was forced to sit in the ashes on the hearth and hence the name Cinderella. Cinderella never resisted all the injustice meted out to her. She dutifully obliges even when the step-mother asks her to pick the two tubs of beans which she throws amongst the ashes as a task to fulfill before she is allowed to go dance at the ball with her step-sisters. If she had shown a bit of courage during these ill treatments her life would not have been such a torture. However, the damsel in distress is rescued by the Prince whom Cinderella meets at the ball. The Prince,enamored of the beauty of Cinderella comes in search of her with the golden slipper that has fallen from her feet in her haste to get back to the house before the given time. The children who listen to this story will unconsciously internalize the message that any kind of punishment or ill-treatment that one is forced to suffer from the dominating group can be overcome if one remains patient, submissive and duty bound. The tale would have been much better if Cinderella was given the hold of her own life rather than being rescued by a gallant prince who is entitled to save her.

Snow White in the fairy tale *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* is also depicted in the same manner. Jealousy of the Queen, her step-mother over Snow White's beauty is the main villain here. The magic mirror's answer to her question "Oh mirror, mirror on the wall, Who is the fairest of us all" "Thou wert the fairest, lady Queen; Snow –White is fairest now, I ween" drives her mad with anger. Her envy and evil nature is poised as a binary to Snow White's good quality and innocence. Snow White is rescued by three men in the story. First, by the huntsman who is assigned the duty of killing her and bringing her heart and tongue to the Queen, then by the seven dwarfs and lastly by the Prince. Here too, she lacks the courage to act on her own. She is portrayed as the vulnerable who is to be protected always. The seven dwarfs assign her all the "womanly duties" as they agree to let her stay with them. They said, "Will you see after our household; be our cook, make the beds, wash, sew, and knit for us, and keep everything in neat order? If so, we will keep you here, and you shall want for nothing. She readily agrees and resolves to remainwith them for her security and survival and conforms herself to the gender role of a woman and immerses in household chores. The naivety of Snow White becomes clear in her response to her step-mother's

wicked plans. She falls a prey to the tricks of her step-mother thrice. She is shown to be enticed by the gifts offered by the wicked queen; a pair of stays with which the wicked queen strangles her, a poisoned comb which pushes her to a state of unconsciousness and then to the poisoned apple which makes her almost dead. She is portrayed as a girl devoid of intellectual abilities, reasoning capacity as well as resourcefulness. Snow White's tale would have had a positive impact upon the readers if she had been presented as one endowed with all these qualities.

The story of Rapunzel with her long golden hair who is trapped in a lonely tower by a witch isa much acclaimed story. The witch steals the girl child from her true parents as a result of a pact made with her father. She is very selfish in her deeds and isolates Rapunzel from the outside world and puts her in a tower with no stairs or door. She would ask her to let down Rapunzel's hair for her to mount upwards. She would say "Rapunzel! Rapunzel! Let down your hair" and would climb the nicely spun golden hair to reach the tower. The witch cuts her beautiful hair all at once when she finds out that a Prince has been visiting her frequently these days. Sheeven traps the young Prince which causes him to lose his eyesight. However, the Prince succeeds in finding out Rapunzel who has been abandoned in a desert and they marry and lead a happy life, whereas the witch is made to suffer for her wickedness. Here too the strain that can be isolated is that of an innocent girl who is devoid of resourcefulness to act on her own. She is depicted as one who is incapable of any kind of resistance and submissively undergoes all the atrocities meted out to her by the cruel witch. No trace of compassion is visible in the witch even though she impersonates herself as the mother of the innocent little girl who has been tactfully segregated from her parents. A strict adherence to the binary good/evil is explicit here too which makes this fairy tale an unrealistic representation of life.

The Prince depicted in the select fairy tales are no exception in performing stereotyped gender roles. They are most often represented as strong, active, valiant and empowered gentlemen who become enamored of the beauty of the damsels in distress, rescue them in a challenging way, marry them and lead a happy life ever after. In Rapunzel, even when the Prince falls a prey to the magic spell of the cruel witch, he recovers from it so as to rescue Rapunzel and give her a life. The events are not much different in Cinderella and Snow White where the Prince saves the entrapped girls. A reading of these types of fairy tales will boost up the complacency of the growing boys as they are prone to take it for granted that men are inherently strong and brave and that they need not do anything to nurture it further more. This tendency can adversely affect the development of the personality of the individual .As the stereotypical representation of stock characters tend to set unrealistic goals to the growing children, attempts have been made to undo the stereotypes with a view to empower young generation.

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Towards a Non - Anthropocentric Paradigm: A Study of Select Narratives

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Abstract :

Enthroning human being at the centre stage of the universe gathered momentum with the emergence of humanism. This human centeredness later on gave way to a more anthropological term, viz.: anthropocentrism which considers Man as the Supreme Being. The anthropocentric point of view has created an ecological imbalance on our Earth. To ensure a harmonious coexistence of human beings and animals it is imperative to go beyond the narrow anthropocentric paradigms. A non- anthropocentric view which gives space, accepts and acknowledges the differences of other beings is to be developed. The present paper attempts to make a study of Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, Life of Pi directed by Ang Lee and Instinct by Jon Turteltaub to focus on the basic precepts of humanism, anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism in the select narratives.

Keywords: *humanism, anthropocentrism, non-anthropocentrism, paradigm.*

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Enthroning human being at the centre stage of the universe gathered momentum with the emergence of humanism. Humanism looks into science instead of religious dogma in order to understand the world. It upholds freedom of the individual and insists on the idea that all human beings have the potential to lead an independent life.The well acclaimed eulogy of man in Shakespeare's*Hamlet* "What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! Howinfinite in faculty! " (Act II Scene II)captures the core of humanism and adorns him as the paragon of animals. Bertrand Russell in a lecture *Why I Am Not a Christian*(1927) implores the human beings to conquer the world by intelligence and underscores the power of science and its potential to make us stand upon our own feet and to look to our own efforts to make this world a fit place to live in.

Humanism encourages us to feel that, no matter who we are, we have untapped abilities, unknown potentialities, and more strength, inventiveness, and capacity for survival and progress than we know.Humanistic thought lays emphasis on the evolutionary and pragmatic character of human knowledge and ethics. Human relationships and interactions are of paramount importance in this approach.

The Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* saw in Renaissance the emergence of the modern spirit of individuality, which the Middle Ages had stifled. The medieval period is frequently caricatured as a time of ignorance and superstition that placed the word of religious authorities over personal experience and rational activity.Enlightenment scholars saw reason as superior to faith and disregarded the coercive power of the church.

The importance that the individual assumes in Western philosophy starting from authors such as Descartes and Locke owes much to the humanistic emphasis on the centrality of human reason in the universe. Aristotelian cosmology proposed "an earth centered finite universe wherein humans were differentiated from and seen as superior to, animals and plants by virtue of their rationality" (Merchant 142). Later, the human centeredness in humanism gave rise to a more anthropological term, viz.: anthropocentrism. Anthropocentrism privileges humans as the center of the world and positions them as the core of meaning, value, knowledge, and action. As an ideology, it functions to maintain the centrality and priority of human existence through the marginalization and subordination of other living beings.

Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes, the leading philosophical spokesmen for the scientific revolution were all strongly influenced by the Christian anthropocentric theology which privileged humans above all other living beings. Bacon claimed that modern science would allow humans to regain a command over nature, which had

been lost with Adam's fall in the garden. Descartes, considered to be the father of modern Western philosophy, argued that the new science would make humans the masters and possessors of nature.His famous "mind-body dualism" resulted in the view that only humans had minds (or souls): all other creatures were merely bodies (machines); they had no sentience (mental life) and as a result could feel no pain. And so, in the middle of the 19th century Darwin had to argue, against prevailing opinion, that at least the great apes experienced various feelings and emotions (Merchant 143).

The central position or supremacy bestowed upon the humans began to be questioned with the development of modern theoretical science. The Aristotelian cosmology was replaced by the original non-anthropocentric cosmological worldview. Ecology as the "subversive science" stepped across anthropocentric threshold, and implied an eco-centric orientation to the world.

Baruch Spinoza, the Dutch philosopher developed a non-anthropocentric philosophic system which provided an intellectual opportunity for western culture to abandon anthropocentrism. He attempted to re-sanctify the world by identifying god with nature. Unlike Descartes, Spinoza found mind (or mental attribute) throughout nature. Through criticism of Descartes, Spinoza developed a philosophy that would channel the new scientific understanding of nature primarily into spiritual human self-realization and into an appreciation of God/nature rather than into the misguided attempt to dominate and control nature. Spinoza's system is a fruitful guide to ecological understanding and self-realization and provides a pantheistic vision. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Harvard University philosopher George Santayana grew increasingly disillusioned with the anthropocentric pragmatist and idealist views of the time, and looked forward to an eco-centric revolution in philosophy.

The shift in the ideological perspectives relating to the position of human and non-human beings on earth is reflected in literature and films. The present paper makes an attempt to study Daniel Defoe's *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*which upheld human centeredness andtwo films *Life of Pi* and *Instinct* which focus on anthropocentrism and non- anthropocentrism with a view to emphasize the need to move beyond anthropocentrism to ensure a harmonious life for all living beings on earth.

The predominant features of Renaissance Humanismsuch as the indomitable spirit of optimism, zest for discovering new lands and thirst for knowledge and adventure were reflected in the fictional works of great writers of the period. Writers like Daniel Defoe were excited by stories of sea farers surviving alone on uninhabited islands. His novel, *Robinson Crusoe* published in 1719 focuses on the Enlightenment

concepts of economic individualism, colonialism and imperialismand examines how an individual left alone in an uninhabited island develops the capabilities for survival by tapping the minimum available resources and enthrones himself as the self-made king of the island.

Crusoe, the protagonist of the novel is an embodiment of humanism. Materialistic to the core, he intends to make as much profit as possible by engaging himself in travelling and trading. He relished independence and upheld the principles of individualism. The fundamental tendency of economic individualism prevents Crusoe from paying much heed to the ties of family and he opts for a life of travel and adventure. Along with some planters, Crusoe sails to the Guinea Coast in search of quicker ways to become rich. But a storm takes them to unknown areas and they wander through the sea for about twelve days. Eventually the ship struck a sandbank; the stop was so sudden that the sea at once broke over the ship. Huge waves overturned the ship and they were immediately separated from one another. Crusoe was stranded on the strange island where he was beset with two powerful fears: "of perishing with hunger or being devoured by wild beasts". Traces of imperialism and anthropocentrism crop up in him and he tries to conquer and colonize the island.A typical anthropocentric colonizer, he goes for hunting and shoots down birds without stopping to know whether their flesh is edible or not.He exploits all the resources of the island for his personal benefit. The gap of human companionship is filled by taming animals like goats, cats, dog and parrot. The complacency of Robinson Crusoe was shaken with the arrival of cannibals. He saves the life of one of the captives from the cannibals and names him Friday to commemorate the day of his rescue.Crusoe's lessons to Friday and his attempts to civilize him by teaching him western ways of life is regarded as a prelude to colonialism

After twenty eight years of life in the island both Crusoe and Friday were saved in a ship and brought to England. The study reveals that the humanistic ideals of self-reliance, individuality, reasoning power and farsightedness can work in unison to help a person to survive on an uninhabited island. Robinson Crusoe, the protagonist of the novel is represented as the dominator of the island and his conquest of the island becomes complete when he proclaims himself as its supreme ruler.

The advent of humanism relegates all the other living beings on the Earth to a marginalized position and they are deprived of their right to live.While those who are anthropocentric welcome developmental activities, the non-anthropocentric group, especially the environmental activists raise their voice against the ruthless attack on nature, its fauna and flora. To educate the public on the need to protect the vanishing species and to make them aware that Earth is a place meant for all living beings,

various strategies have been formulated by lovers of nature. As film has developed into a suitable media to propagate ideologies easily among the public, it has been fruitfully used to awaken them to the dire necessity of protecting nature.

The basic precepts of humanism, anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism converge in the two films selected for the study. Yan Martel's award-winning novel *Life of Pi* and the film rendering of it by Ang Lee serves as a typical example of this convergence. The film *Life of Pi* shows how a human being left alone in the midst of a turbulent sea in a life boat with carnivorous animals learns to survive by fighting against odd situations. The Film *Instinct* advocates the need for the coexistence of human beings and animals. Both films are examined from anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric perspectives.

Pi, the protagonist of *Life of Pi*, assimilates various ways of life from his surroundings and society which proves to be useful to him at different stages of his life. The lessons that he has learned from Appa, Mamaji andmother helped him to face the stark realities of life boldly. The real training that Pi got from his family and the great deal of freedom and the encouragement that he received from his mother instill confidence in him and readies him to be more independent in his later struggle for survival when he is left alone at the mercy of the turbulent sea and the ferocious beast.

Pi is an unusual child who looks at life differently. Unlike other children of his age he is curious to know the mystery of the universe, the depth of God's love, the meaning of life and truth in religion. He develops respect for all religions when he realizes that the ultimate goal of all religion is to disseminate love. He learns to love the fauna and flora and extends his sympathy and compassion towards all living creatures. The film exemplifies him as a true spokesperson of non-anthropocentrism.

Pi's father, a zoo keeper looks upon animals from an anthropocentric perspective. To him they are just tools or machines for making money and when this fails at his homeland he resolves to dismantle the zoo to move on to Canada with the zoo animals in search of better prospects. His action is at par with Rene Descartes' famous "mind-body dualism' which held the view that "only humans had minds (or souls); all other creatures were merely bodies (machines)" (Merchant 143).

Unlike his father, Pi develops a close affinity with the animals and observes their habits and behavior. His attempt to tame the animals with food is thwarted by his father who warns him "He is an animal, not your playmate", to which Pi answers "animals have souls. I have seen it in their eyes".The insight to give equal status to human and non-human world is reflected in his words.

Pi loses his family during the journey to Canada when the Japanese ship with nearly 200 passengers encounters a shipwreck. He was left alone with some of their zoo animals: zebra, hyena and a tiger in the lifeboat. The animals fight with each other and get killed. Pi has no other living being for company except the Tiger, nicknamed as Richard Parker. At the risk of his own life he keeps away from killing the tiger as he identifies himself with it. This identification of oneself with the other living beings is the core of deep ecology. Such a world view will help in re-forming the Earth. He accepts and acknowledges the difference of the wild animals and understands that they could live together in harmony by coming to a kind of mutual understanding. He demarcates the territory for each one of them and gives space for the wild animals rather than trying to occupy and conquer the whole space solely for him. He doesn't consider himself as a supreme being, instead believes that the world belongs to all living beings. Pi sees the human and the animal kinds as connected but separate worlds, and realizes that though the animals can be tamed, they can never be expected to be as humans. He extends a kind of non-anthropocentric world view.

Instinct is a psychological thriller, in which John Turtletaub examines the mind of an anthropologist, Ethan Powell who has been missing for a few years, living in the African jungles with the gorillas.He spent days and nights with them and was able to become a part of their group. The distance between him and the gorillas got reduced day by day. These herbivores lead a peaceful life in the jungle without obstructing the life of other animals. When the rangers came to shoot such innocent and harmless gorillas, he had no other way but to kill them for which he was confined to a psychic asylum. The act is highly symbolic and it reveals the non-anthropocentric view of Ethan Powell. He has only contempt towards those rangers for intruding in to the territory of the gorillas and for depriving them of their right to live. To express his protest, Powell resolves to remain silent and refuses to share his views with others. When the attempt to unlock his heart becomes a failure, the leading psychiatrist of the Psychic Asylum assigns the task to his upcoming young student, Theo Caulder who is an ambitious researcher in psychiatry and a spokesman of humanism. He considers professional excellence and fame as great achievements. His probing questions, promising assurances and curious searching eyes attract Powell to the doctor. Powell is thoroughly disillusioned by the way the world and humans have changed. He reduces the whole world into mere "takers" and "givers" where the powerful and the demanding takers incessantly exploit the powerless and take away everything from the givers leaving them dispossessed. He says that one will find more danger in one day in any city than one will ever find in those forests. Powell

tells about how the hunters, tribals, gatherers and planters led a harmonious life with nature in primitive culture. They never killed more animals than they could use. They never ploughed more land than they needed. They fought, but never waged wars. They were a part of the world and used the resources judiciously. They never exploited the world the way modern man does. They never tried to impose their dominion upon the world. To Powell, the only thing we have to give up is our mad craze for power to establish dominion on earth. He shows great admiration towards primitive men who lived a life in harmony with nature. As George Sessions observes: "the cultures of most primal (hunting /gathering) societies throughout the world were permeated with nature- oriented religion that expressed the eco-centric perspective. These cosmologies involving a sacred sense of the earth and all its inhabitants, helped order their lives and determine their values." (Merchant 140)

Powell tries to make us aware that we have no right to establish dominion on earth. As Bill Devall observes, we are no kings here, nor gods but mere dwellers of this place. The world which has evolved through the ages is a dwelling place for all living beings. A new cosmic / ecological metaphysics which stresses the identity (I/ thou) of humans with non-human nature is a necessary condition for a viable approach to an eco-philosophy....Man is an integral part of nature, not over or apart from nature. Man is a plain citizen of the biosphere, not its conqueror or manager. There should be a "democracy of all god`s creatures" according to St. Francis; or as Spinoza said, man is a "temporary and dependent mode of the whole of God/ Nature."(Merchant 133). A vehement criticism of anthropocentrism and the urgent need to establish biological equality is underscored in the above cited observation.

Powell recalls the time he spent in the African forests along with the mountain gorillas. As the days passed,he became a part of their group.Powell was overwhelmed at the acceptanceof a human being into a gorilla group.Deep in those forests away from everything he knew, everything he had been taught, he found peace, kinship and even safety. All these get dismantled with the entry of the greedy anthropos into their habitat and this intrusion forces Powell to kill the rangers

To Theo Caulder, the journey towards Ethan Powell became the journey towards the ungoverned man in the primitive state. With the help ofCaulder Ethan Powell realizes that freedom is not just a dream. It's there on the other side of the fence we build all by ourselves. Caulder's preconceived notion about a world which places humans at the centre completely gets dislodged after going through the process of change and education given by Powell. He emerges as a totally transformed man who has a heart enough to accommodate all creations of nature under the roof of

mother Earth. The film implores human beings to go beyond anthropocentrism and to live in harmony with nature.

The domination of man over nature for fulfilling their selfish needs, the ecological imbalances caused by habitat destruction and reclamation of land for developmental activities have resulted in an ecological crisis and the Earth is slowly losing many of its dwellers. Actions that threaten the sustainability of ecology which create ecological imbalance are on the rise. The study aims to showcase a new paradigm that has to be formulated to reinstate an eco-centric earth where all living beings can enjoy equal freedom to live their life.

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Exploring the Popular Culture of Street food: A Journey into the World of Taste

CASS

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ABSTRACT:

Food, one of the most essential necessities of human life often tells the story of human history, its culture, economic and social conditions. Food is a marker of class and an instrument of socialization. Eating together plays a great role in building up human relations and spreading the culture of taste. Street food that are usually sold on the streets by hawkers and vendors in portable stalls and carts is one of the much sought after choice among the current generation. Street food culture is closely linked with road travels and has become a fashion statement for the riders who are on a mission to discover new tastes and to get in touch with unfamiliar places.

India with its rich culinary tradition and diverse cuisine offers a wide range of tastes that stirs the appetite of a food lover. Arevival of the traditional food that caters to the needs of the modern taste is noticeable in such small streetshops and this enables the passing on of dietary wisdom from generation to generation. However, the migratory flows in this globalized era has brought about a mixing of cuisines and tastes too. A coexistence of tastes; old and new is the highlight of such food points.The finger-licking good food provided in the streets are often a mélange of exotic spices and ingredients that satisfy our olfactory senses too. The climatic conditions influence the choice of food. The hot, ready-to-eat street food being much cheaper and affordable attracts a large number of the lower- middle income group. The advantage of being freshly cooked also invites a lot of people to savour the delicacies. A carnival sque celebration is acharacteristic feature of all these stalls. They become symbols of local identity and popular culture – a culture which is widely favoured or well-liked by many people. This paper attempts to examinethe interconnectedness of street food and popular culture and its impact upon the life of modern generation.

Exploring the Popular Culture of Street food: A Journey into the World of Taste.

Food, one of the most vital needs of human life often tells the story of human history, its cultural, economic and social conditions. Food is a marker of class and an instrument of socialization. Eating together plays a very significant role in building up human relations and spreading the culture of taste. Street food that are usually sold on the streets by hawkers and vendors in portable stalls and carts is a much sought after choice among the current generation. Street food is closely associated with popular culture. Raymond Williams observes that popular culture is a culture which is widely favored or well-liked by many people. Culture suggests "a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group". Street food culture has seeped into the lives of people and it has opened up new avenues in the food industry. It caters to the food demands of the urban dwellers mainly the middle income and the low income groups. Street food is closely linked with the road travels and has become a fashion

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statement for the riders who are on a mission to discover new tastes and to get in touch with unfamiliar places and cuisines.

Popular culture as Stuart Hall claims is a site where "collective social understandings are created" (Storey 4). It is a culture "lived and experienced by people in their day-to-day existence in a particular place and at a particular moment in time" (Storey 46). It carries within its definitional field connotations of inferiority: a second best culture for those unable to understand, let alone appreciate real culture (Storey 8). Raymond Williams agrees with Hall when he observes that popular culture is the culture that is left over after we have decided what high culture is. Popular culture is a residual category that accommodates texts and practices that fail to meet the required standards to qualify as high culture. In other words, it is a definition of popular culture as inferior culture. Nevertheless its inferior status has been glossed over now as the current generation accept it as a part of their culture. This paper attempts to examine the interconnectedness of street food and popular culture and its impact upon the life of modern generation. The paper also looks at some of the major cities of India which provide the best street food in the country.

India with its rich culinary tradition and diverse cuisine offers a wide range of tastes that stirs the appetite of a food lover. A revival of the traditional food that caters to the needs of the modern taste is noticeable in street food stalls and in this way the dietary wisdom is carried on from generation to generation. The migratory flows in this globalized world has created diasporic identities and this has led to the development of hybrid varieties of food which involves a mixing of cuisines and tastes. Food items like noodles and pizza of foreign origin are appropriated in a local manner. Local varieties of such foreign cuisine find currency these days. A coexistence of tastes; old and new is the highlight of such food points.

The "finger-lickingly" good food provided in the streets are often a mélange of exotic spices and ingredients that satisfy our olfactory senses. The climatic conditions influence the choice of food. Each country has different food patterns that provide them with ample nutrition and health to cope with their climatic pattern. The hot, ready-to-eat street food being much cheaper and affordable attracts a large number of the lower-middle income group. The advantage of being freshly cooked also invites a lot of people to savor the delicacies. A carnivalesque celebration is the characteristic feature of all these stalls. Today, roughly 2.5 billion people around the planet eat street food. (Colleen Taylor Sen xix).

Social networking sites play a great role in spreading news about street vendors who sell good food. Stories and blogs written in their favour by those who relish street food and the word of mouth advertisement are the only affordable sources for spreading information about the presence of such street food stalls. The stalls which come alive in the late evenings are illuminated in such a way that no passerby can escape the glance of delicious food items stacked in the glass cupboards. The mobility of the stalls act as a great boon to the street vendors as they can assemble their improvised stalls in accordance with the demand and number of customers. Street vendors who usually sell food from an open-air stand, cart or truck place their stalls in places where the people congregate in large numbers. Bus and train stations, vicinity of schools and colleges, carnivals, fairs and athletic events are their usual venues. They also focus on the routine commuters, slum dwellers and labourers who cannot afford expensive restaurants run by the corporates. People belonging to the low income group derive a surrogate pleasure consuming similar food items served by the street food vendors. The shanties and stalls which may not be officially sanctioned continue to cater to the needs of common man and win their appreciation. A subversion of power is observable when they enjoy a carnivalistic pleasure relishing the delicacies provided in the food stalls.

Street food stalls provide income to a large number of illiterate as well as less educated people. Entrepreneurs look upon it as a source of employment. Setting up a stall requires minimum start up investment and little training; one just need to possess cooking skills and expertise in management. The unused labour of the family members who may be veterans in culinary art can be profitably made use of in the business which will add on to the income of the family.

The lack of hygiene in some stalls becomes a problem that needs to be addressed when the street food culture is

growing tremendously. Health hazards posed by the street food stalls remain a matter of grave concern. A major factor is the insufficient availability of clean water. As the stalls often shift from place to place, a permanent wash basin with pipe system cannot be installed. The water containers need not always be clean and there are chances for germs to grow inside the stored water. The utensils used for cooking and serving may not be cleaned properly. All these increase the chance for the spreading of epidemic diseases like diarrhea and dysentery. Exposure to flies and rodents and poor personal hygiene and cleanliness during food preparation and handling are certain drawbacks of such food points. The food items like snacks that are taken home as parcels are often wrapped in newspapers, this can lead to the carbon content in the newspaper mixing with the food items. The lack of proper storage facilities may lead to the spoiling of food. In tropical countries with high temperature and humidity, the problems are intensified, especially if the ingredients or the dishes are kept at a room temperature for a long period of time which turns it into an excellent habitat for bacteria to thrive. One of the most effective ways of killing dangerous microorganisms is by proper cooking. Serving at or reheating food to 160°F (71°C) may eliminate many of the bacteria. As street food plays an important role in the eating patterns of people in many developing countries, international organizations have been working to develop guidelines for its production and regulation. The two most prominent are the Food and agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), both divisions of the United Nations (Colleen Taylor Sen xxix)

Eating street cooked food regularly may invite health problems as the majority of the stalls re-use the same cooked oil to deep fry the food items. This reduces its nutritional value and invite stomach diseases. Waste management is quite hazardous for the street vendors and this often ends up in heaping the waste at some places without any management. Rules and regulations regarding street food need to be made stringent as it is the source to pacify hunger to a very large number of people. Even though authorization and licensing is required to conduct the sale and production of food items, only a very small number of vendors take the license issued by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

FSSAI has introduced a "clean street food hub programme" which involves identifying street food hubs and auditing these for cleanliness and hygiene. A "clean street food hub certificate" will be issued to those who meet the criteria put forward by the FSSAI. Ahmedabad`s Kankaria Lake Area with nearly 66 vendors became India`s First Clean Street Food Hub. Ensuring standard by implementing such programmes give a sense of assurance to the large number of people who depend upon street food. Such initiatives will also boost the tourism prospects of street food industry. FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal said to the Economic Times that their aim is to bring sustainable change and improvement in street food hygiene and to raise health and safety standards of street food. They propose to train th. individuals and to provide them with gloves, aprons etc. and to work with different authorities to give better street lighting, drainage, garbage removal and safe water to the vendors.

Street food is mostly made of fresh ingredients rather than the ones that are stored in the refrigerators for days. Lack of storage facilities is sometimes a blessing in disguise since they focus on preparing the exact amount of food that can be sold in one day. Lively street food stalls are the main attractions for the night riders. Most of th se stalls start in the evenings and are owned by persons who do certain other jobs in the day time. The enticing aroma of the freshly cooked and fried food items attract the people who are out after their job, or are just walking around to enjoy a pleasant and stomach-full night. Unlike the restaurants which provide food after a long wait, the serving of dishes is quite quick to cater to the needs of the fast-life. Families often buy food from stalls and eat from the cars which are parked nearby.

Street food stalls were the hangout places for men right from the early days and it continues to be so even now. Savoring the authentic delicacies of a region from its local street food stalls has become a major attraction for the tourists also. During the earlier days, street food vendors sold their products in man-made baskets or portable stands. Later on, they upgraded the same and resorted to vehicles of various kinds such as tricycles or push-carts. Now, the street food

industry is flourishing at a faster pace and the vendors have started using food trucks which enable them to expand the business.

The preparation of street food is done in an inviting way making the process of cooking transparent to the customers so that they can enjoy a live cooking experience also. The snacks are fried on the spot in deep- frying pans sizzling with oil and sending out enchanting aroma. Fried food items are the most popular among the street foods and they are in great demand during festivals, fairs and evenings. *Pakoras* or *Bhajis* are usually made by frying cauliflower, potatoes, eggs, onions or paneer coated in a flour batter. Stuffed *samosa* also is a very popular snack. The marinated red chilly smeared pieces of chicken, duck, mutton, beef and other meat ready to be hung on open grills to make *kebabs* and the like are mouthwatering sights. They are usually served with naan or parathas. Fresh tender corns smeared with salt and chilly paste are roasted and sprinkled with lemon juice and seasonings. Roasted meat and dishes made out of it like *shawarma* have become popular in the country with the arrival of Arabian cuisine. Thinly minced meat is rolled into a *kubbos* smeared with mayonnaise and is presented along with salted vegetables. Boiled eggs and vegetables are used in different ways mixing it in accordance with the preference of the customers. Steam cakes and various varieties of *appam* which are prepared in front of the customers are served along with *kurumas* and curries of different tastes both veg and non- veg and it has become the most preferred food of the health conscious food lovers. Soups made of meat and vegetables are also major attractions. Toasts made of various ingredients with bread as the base is one of the cheapest and the most sold out street food. Sauces mainly tomato sauce, chili sauce and chutneys green or red are the usual accompaniments to the delicacies. *Chaats* of different flavours which are a mix of fried dough, boiled potatoes, chickpeas, coriander leaves, spices and watery sauces with mixed tastes are also available in plenty. Its variants *gol gappa* in Delhi, *pani puri* in Mumbai which have originated from North India are well acclaimed across the world. Steamed *momos* filled with meat or vegetables often served with spicy sauces attract the youngsters. It originated in Tibet and became popular across India. Food is mainly cooked upon kerosene or gas stoves. Fire wood and charcoal are also used whenever possible.

Stalls that provide steaming coffee and tea are a common sight to see. *Nimbu pani* or lemon juice and mint juice top the list of freshly made juices. Tender coconut water which is a great source of vitamins and minerals are also of great demand. *Lassi* or cold yogurt is best suited to beat the heat. It is either sweet or salty and is mixed with fruit pulps according to one`s taste. Freshly pressed sugarcane juice is of high demand during the scorching summers.

Indian street food industry offers a wide range of sweet delicacies too. Of these crispy yellow and orange *jalebis* oozing with sugary syrup that have travelled all the way from Arabia to India during the 14th or 15th the century remain as a delicious choice. Sweet *kulfis* with its pyramid shape attract children and the grownups alike. Seasonal fruits and vegetables like cucumber, carrots, radishes, mango, pineapple, and water melon are sliced, spiced and served in stalls. It is estimated that in India alone, there are more than 10 million street vendors (Colleen Taylor Sen xxi).

A journey through the world of taste of the major metropolitan cities of India reveal that street food vendors have carved a niche for themselves in every city. To begin with let us have a look at Delhi, the capital city of India, renowned as the "food capital" The street food stalls of Delhi buzz with a variety of immensely popular and tasty food items. *Kebabs,* juicy *golgappas*, sugary *jalebis*, crunchy *chaats*, *chole bhatura*, *rajma chawal*, butter chicken, *parathas*, *lassi* etc are to name a few. Roadsides of places like Chandni Chowk, Connaught Place, Purani Dilli, Karol Bagh are furnished with an array of stalls which offer sumptuous dishes and have become food heavens for foodies. The Mughal empire left its imprints on many of Delhi`s signature cuisines.

Kolkata, "the City of Joy" is renowned for its relishing culinary delights. The city provides tasty and wholesome street food at a cheaper rate. Kolkata has several cuisines to mark its presence in the world. According to the survey "Taste

of Travel" mentioned in a report in the Times of India, Kolkata won the title of India`s Best Street Food Hub.The sweet delicacies like *rasgullas, sondesh, thandai/kulfi*, the spicy *chanachur, jhaalmuri*, cheese *kebabs*, mutton chops, cutlets, *kathi* rolls, *ghugni* ; the fish varieties *bhakti, macher jhol* all add to the tasty menu of the food lovers of Kolkata. The streets of the city like Park Street or New Market, North Kolkata will introduce you to the most tasty food hubs of the city.

Lucknow brings forth an overwhelming list of food varieties which carry over a legacy of the Nawabs who ruled the land centuries ago. The city is known for the Awadhi cuisine. *Galouti kebabs, tunday kebab, kormas, parathas, sheermaal, Lucknawi biriyani, nihari* and *kulcha, malaaidar kulfis* take the foodie on a celestial tour. In Lucknow street food is very cheap. The lanes of Hazratganj, Old Lucknow or Aminabad are filled with umpteen eateries where the customers visit again and again.

Mumbai known as "the city of dreams" is the most populous city in India. It is a veritable heaven for foodies and offers exciting varieties of street food. *Vada pav* and masala tea, *pav Bhaji, misal pav,* Bombay sandwich, *panipuri, bhelpuri, sevpuri, dahipuri*, ice *golas* and *kulfis* are the typical Mumbai street food. Juhu Chowpatty Beach, Nariman Point and Bhendi Bazar are well-known for its plethora of food vendors.

Hyderabad offers limitless treat to the non-vegetarian foodie. The cuisines are a blend of the Mughul, Turkish and Andhra cuisine. Hyderabadi biriyani and Hyderabadi *haleem* which are rich in flavour and spices are world famous. *Bolti kebab, seekh kebabs* Hyderabadi chicken 65, *lukhmi, nihari, gosht pasinde* are some of the dishes exclusive to Hyderabad. Irani tea and Osmania biscuits form a great combination.

Ahmedabad is a vegetarian`s favourite place. *Khakhras, fafdas, theplas, mathari, dhoklas, basundi, chaats, khamans, gotas or pakoras, jalebi* are some of the delicacies which attract the people to come and savour these repeatedly. The old Ahmedabad caters to the needs of the non-vegetarians and offers tandoori chicken, roasted mutton, *nihari* and amazing mutton samosas.

Indore is considered as "the food capital of central India". *Gulab jamuns, rabdi, kalakand* and *malpuas, poha* with *namkeen, jalebis, kachoris, tikkis*, and *bhutte ka kees* are the much sought after delicacies in Indore. Stalls at Chappan Dukan, old Sarafa Bazar offer authentic Indore cuisines.

Chennai provides an array of South India`s signature dishes of which *Idli, dosa* along with sambhar and varieties of chutneys top the list. *Uthappam* a thick dosa with vegetables toppings, masala *dosa* with a thick gravy of potato masala inside the wrap are the variations of *dosa*. Poori masal, *vada, samosa, atho*- a Burmese dish consisting of noodles with vegetables, *bhajis* of different vegetables, *puttu, sundal , idiyappam* are some of the must try street food. *Kothu porotta*, different *murukkus, kulfi, jalebis* etc. attract people towards the stalls. Fish varieties are available at the famous Marina Beach.

Kerala known as "God`s Own Country" offers a wide variety of spicy and tasty food items that satisfy any food lover. *Puttu* biriyani, *kappa* biriyani, *neypathal, appam, idiyappam, pathiri, dosa* along with roasts of beef, chicken, duck, mutton, mussels or vegetable *kuruma* is the main food combination that attract the youth. The lush green backwaters of Aleppy is known for the fish varieties and the dishes made out of it. Crab fries, *karimeen* fry, squid roast, grilled prawns etc are the masterpieces made of fish. Malabari cuisines offer an extravaganza of dishes that are rich in aroma and taste. *Chattipathiri, arikadukka, mutta mala, mutta appam*, chicken *pola, samosa* etc are to name a few.

Bangaluru city offers a wide variety of cuisines from all over the world. Variety of *chaats, pav bhaji, vada pav,* different varieties of masala *dosa,* paneer sweet corn *dosa*, butter masala *dosa*, gobi Manchurian, tikka roll, banana bun, bobbatlu or *puran poli , idli vada* and crispy dosas, chicken *kathi* wrap, mutton *bhuna*, mutton *tikka* and *reshmi kebab* are some of the main attractions, Food stalls at V V Puram Food Street, Shivaji Nagar, Frazer town etc provide the best of Bangalore`s street food.

Street food was initially meant to be served to the factory workers who did not have proper spaces to cook and to those who could not afford restaurant food daily. Now, it has become a part of the popular culture. The consumers enjoy a vicarious pleasure while eating street food which is much cheaper compared to the other food points; one could eat to one`s full and still pay a very small amount.

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Crossing Boundaries of Body and Mind: A Close Reading of Rituparno Ghosh's *Chitrangada*: The Crowning Wish

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Abstract

The socially constructed binary gender structure which normalizes heteronormativity fails to give space for those who deviate from this structure to follow their own psychic and sexual orientations. This structure acts as an apparatus of marginalization and subjection. The decriminalization of homosexuality in September 2018 liberated the LGBTQ community from the socially existing taboos. At a time when homosexuals and the LGBTQ community were looked upon as criminals Rithuparno Ghosh, an Indian film director, actor and dancer who is widely acclaimed as an icon of the LGBTQ community of India gave expression to the mental turmoil and anguish of the people caught in the in-between space of minds and bodies. His film, Chitrangada, The Crowning Wish [2012] addresses gender, gender reassignment, crossing bodies and boundaries of mind socially, physically, psychologically and emotionally. The barriers created by the conventional social norms about one's sexual orientation are challenged in the film. The film portrays the dilemma faced by the central character Rudra Chatterjee who undergoes a sex reassignment surgery in order to find fulfillment in his relationship with Partho, his lover and co-worker. The anxieties of his parents and their inhibition to accept their son's feminine behavioral traits, their conflict in choosing between society and their child's happiness, the loneliness of those who are stamped by the society as sexually abnormal are discussed in the film. The film underscores the fluidity of gender identity and exemplifies Goethe`s words "I am what I am, so take me as I am" which epitomizes one`s freedom to be oneself. Including such works in the curricula would help to inculcate a sense of tolerance towards the LGBTQ and give them space in the society notwithstanding their sexual orientation and to accept them as normal human beings.

The boundaries of body and mind are often determined by a set of rules and regulations prescribed by society which forces the individuals to conform to a strict pattern and system. An individual is conditioned to be either a man or a woman. The choice of an identity is never that of the child. As Judith Butler observes:

When a child is born the medical discourse identifies /declares/enunciates it as "male" or "female. This names the child, but also identifies the role s/he will have to play. It constructs the child in the very act of saying 'it's a girl' or 'it's a boy'.... All subsequent discourses are repetitions of this first enunciation. The role of 'male' or 'female' that the child has to play out later is already, therefore, determined (as cited in Nayar 191).

The training begins even before the child can think for himself/ herself. Culture encompasses certain codes and society imposes them on the individual. The identity and individuality are at stake here whereby

a deviance from these puts the individuals in a state of seclusion and alienation. The socially constructed binary gender structure which normalizes heteronormativity fails to give space for those who deviate from this structure to follow their own psychic and sexual orientations. This structure acts as an apparatus of marginalization and subjection.

Social constructionists look upon sexual difference as pre-ordained and unchangeable. According to them, only procreative sexual activity is proper. Neither man nor woman owns his/her body. Sexuality outside any of these discourses was considered deviant. However, Queer theory argues that heterosexuality bestows certain privileges and a hierarchy of sexual values is constructed through discourses (Nayar 188). A conflict arises in the mind of people who are caught in the in-between space and they suffer incessant denials, criticisms and marginalization which push them into a state of vulnerability and they are incapacitated to assert an identity of their own. This paper attempts to look at how the creation of identity and subjectivity of individuals are influenced by the societal norms and underscores the fluidity of gender by analyzing Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish written, directed and acted by Rituparno Ghosh.

The quest for self/identity has been a perennial theme of literary works and art forms from time immemorial. Indian epics, puranas and histories abound in such themes. The story of Chitrangada in Mahabharata and her quest to discover her gender identity has inspired many writers including the Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore. His Chitrangada based on this myth has been the motivating force behind Rituparno Ghosh`s Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish (2012). Ghosh uses Tagore`s Chitrangada as a pre-text for projecting the duality of self within him and his identity as that of a female trapped in a male body. Chitrangada is the story of a Manipuri princess who is brought up as a boy by the king. Contrary to the boon the king has received from Lord Shiva that he will have only male progeny, his wife gives birth to a girl child, Chitrangada and the king brings her up like a man giving training in hunting and warfare. The princess who embarks on a hunting expedition falls in love with Arjuna and wishes for the love to be reciprocated. Bereft of feminine charms due to the rigorous training in warfare and hunting expeditions, Arjuna dismisses her mistaking her for a young man. The princess prays to God Madana to bestow upon her the feminine charm and transform her into a beautiful lady so as to attract Arjuna towards her. This theme of Tagore`s dance-drama functions as a backdrop to Ghosh`s film Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish.

The lead role of the film is enacted by the auteur-director-actor Rituparno Ghosh and the celluloid is illuminated by his role as an effeminate choreographer and dancer. This role play on the reel provides him with an opportunity to project his subconscious desire to be a female and allows him to cross-dress as a graceful dancer with all the paraphernalia of jewelry, makeup, gestures and performance which are the hallmarks of femininity. Judith Butler aptly comments that these deliberate acts reveal that gender is itself an act. Drag-men in women's dress and vice versa shows how another gender is being mimicked and performed. There is a gap or dissonance between the body (male) and the performed gender (Nayar 191).

Ghosh`s projection of self in Chitrangada:The Crowning Wish is a milestone in Indian film industry as it established his position as an icon of the LGBTQ community. At a time when this community was looked upon as criminals or as mere aberrations in society, Rituparno Ghosh gave expression to the mental turmoil and anguish of these people who are caught in

the in-between spaces. He closely looks at the conventional social norms which hinder the freedom of same sex lovers in order to establish heteronormative life as the accepted code of society. The film captures his politics of desire and portrays the intense trauma and conflict faced by the central character Rudra Chatterjee. The film opens up in a post-operation theatre ward where Rudra Chatterjee is going through a convalescing period after the initial processes of sex reassignment surgery. The film moves through a series of flashbacks wherein Rudra endearingly recollects the memories of his courtship with Partho. Partho, a percussionist and a member of the dance group of Rudra is picturized as a drug addict and a bisexual who falls passionately in love with the effeminate Rudra. The film showcases the troubles they had to undergo in an intensely homosexual relationship which is considered a taboo in the society. Rudra is torn between two worlds: the one fulfilling the dreams of his parents and the other to follow his own passion and find fulfillment in his love towards Partho. Of these, Rudra chooses a life with Partho. When the question of adoption of a child comes to the fore during a conversation with Partho, Rudra decides to conform to the stereotypical heteronormative structure of a family and to undergo sex reassignment surgery. However, Partho dissuades Rudie (Rudra) from this and educates him on the repercussions of sex change surgery. He cautions him that it will tamper his body; his only instrument for pursuing his dream career of a dancer cum choreographer. Rudra responds:

"I don`t dance with my body Partho. It comes from within. Fortunately, my art form is not gender bound. My dance is not limited to my gender Partho. And neither is my identity" (01:6:36-01:07:18).

Rudra considers sex change only as a technical necessity in order to adopt a child. He just needs a certificate stating that he is a female since the law doesn't allow two males to adopt a child in India and he conforms to the decision.

Rudra discloses the decision to his parents during a casual dinner at home. The parents are quite alarmed at this and they try to persuade him to consult a doctor and cure his weird thoughts. Rudra decides to move away from home as he believes himself to be a perennial embarrassment and as a "weird creature landed at the door step". He regrets his inability to fulfill any of his parents` wishes. The parents are more worried about the questions that they may have to answer. There is a strong bond between the mother and the son and she openly admits that the blame is to fall upon them too for not acknowledging the difference visible in him despite knowing the fact that he cannot conform to the strict binary classification of gender. They always wanted him to be someone who would fit in to the roles prescribed by the society. The familial and societal norms force him to enact various roles that suit the identity of a male.

Rudra confronts severe identity crisis after going through the initial process of reassignment surgery; he was not able to reconcile with his own self. He ponders over the question of permanence and temporality of human life. The question of changing his name after becoming a transwoman was quite traumatic as he may have to part with an identity with which he has been associated throughout his life. His parents, hitherto oblivious to the plight of their son began to realize his actual state. His father who tried his best to dissuade him from becoming a woman began to sympathise with him and started showing concern and love. The bond with his mother became stronger and he began to experience a sense of belonging. The acute identity crisis commingled with the promising words of his parents deter him from completing the surgery. Paradoxically enough, the very purpose of going

through a sex change surgery was defeated when Partho began to move away from him. Partho rejects Rudra and explicitly shows his disinterst in his transfigured body with breast implants. He says,

"If I have to have a woman, I would rather have a real woman, not this synthetic one". Realizations start to fall on Rudra when such incidents happen. His talks with the counsellor or his alter ego- Shubho persuades him to think rationally. He wonders about what must have happened for real in the case of Chitrangada after her transition into a female. Did her father accept her new identity? Or did she suffer like him? Rudra feels that he could not capture the soul of neither Chitrangada nor Partho.

Shubho acts as an extension of Rudra`s self. Rudra realizes that true fulfilment comes only with a complete acceptance of the self. He calls off the surgery at the last moment. He decides to crown his own wish. He requests the doctor not to conduct the vaginal reconstruction surgery and asks him to take away the breast implants from his body leaving forever a scar on his chest. The scar left on the body after the removal can be considered as a metaphor of his desire to transgress the boundaries of body and mind. He decides to go back home. Home, here stands for a state of mind where one accepts oneself and is accepted by others. His mind was ripe enough to accept his identity.

Ghosh reinforces Judith Butler`s argument that gender is "a free-floating artifice" – a mere social construct which occurs as a result of the social conditioning. He tries to break the conventional status quo by questioning the permanence of gender and gender identity. Ghosh repudiates the notion that gender is a fixed entity. He opines that it is something that is in transition and this process of transition is never complete. Rudra aptly comments: "Tell me what is permanent. This body? Is this permanent?" (01:13:14 - 01:13:19) The film underscores the fluidity of gender identity and exemplifies Goethe`s words "I am what I am, so take me as I am" which epitomizes one`s freedom to be oneself.

The film is autobiographical and is a projection of Ghosh`s own sexuality and desire. He draws the pathos of his own life and subverts accepted norms of gender. He has paved a way for the non- conforming citizens to find a place for themselves and to accept themselves as they are. The film challenges the stereotyping of sexualities and problematizes gender identity and emphasizes that it`s your wish to choose your gender.

The decriminalization of homosexuality in September 2018 liberated the LGBTQ community from the socially existing taboos and this has opened up new vistas to the hitherto ostracized group. Including works like Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish in the curricula would help to inculcate a sense of tolerance towards the LGBTQ and give them space in the society notwithstanding their sexual orientation and to accept them as normal human beings.

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RE-INVENTING IDENTITY IN GLORIA ANZALDUA`S BORDERLANDS/LA FRONTERA

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ABSTRACT

A constant mixing and merging of different races, cultures, languages and religion has led to a reconfiguration of identities and this identity is continuously invented and re-invented in accordance with the changing cultural context. Migration and crossing of borders also play a significant role in the formation of identity. Borders are the places where the crossing over takes place and therefore these borderlands are in a constant state of transition. On the borderlands different cultures overlap and this results in a gentle coming together of cultures. People who reside in such borderlands create an identity of their own; they accept, reject and form new identities and this gives rise to a new group of hybrid people which engenders a new hybrid culture. This paper attempts to look into how Gloria Anzaldua, a scholar of Chicana cultural theory, feminist theory and queer theory has introduced the concept of mestiza consciousness to position herself and Chicana/o as borderlanders and to create a new consciousness of the borderlands. In her semi-autobiographical work Borderlands /La Frontera she envisages the creation of a new culture, a new consciousness - a mestiza consciousness along with her discussion of borders and borderlands.
Key words: identity, border landers, mestiza consciousness, hybridity.

A constant mixing and merging of different races, cultures, languages and religion has led to a reconfiguration of identities and this identity is continuously invented and re-invented in accordance with the changing cultural context. Migration and crossing of borders also play a significant role in the formation of identity. Borders are the places where the crossing over takes place and therefore these borderlands are in a constant state of transition. On the borderlands different cultures overlap and this results in a gentle coming together of cultures. People who reside in such borderlands create an identity of their own; they accept, reject and form new identities and this gives rise to a new group of hybrid people which engenders a new hybrid culture.

This paper attempts to look into how Gloria Anzaldua, a scholar of Chicana cultural theory, feminist theory and queer theory has introduced the concept of mestiza consciousness to position herself and Chicana/o as borderlanders and to create a new consciousness of the borderlands. In her semi-autobiographical work Borderlands /La Frontera she envisages the creation of a new culture, a new consciousness - a mestiza consciousness along with her discussion of borders and borderlands. It is a consciousness of the borderlands. *La mestiza*, an Aztec word meaning 'torn between ways' is a product of the transfer of the cultural and spiritual values of one group to another. She deals not just with the physical borders but with the invisible psychological,

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spiritual, sexual and linguistic borders that exist between the binaries like: man / woman, heterosexual / homosexual, white/ non-white, Latino / non- Latino etc.

Borders are important thresholds; bridges that connect as well as divide places and people. Borders have become a much debated topic of the day as we witness people engaged in clashes and fights in the name of nationalism, religion, caste, ethnicity, race and language. The growing intolerance among people strengthens the divisions and cracks. Border studies as a discipline emerges at this juncture with its focus on cultural, symbolic and other types of social boundaries. A global shift in focus is perceivable in the actual geographical boundaries as it has gone beyond the geography to cover a variety of forms and types of social boundaries, both in their material and symbolic dimensions.

Anzaldua, being a border lander herself could capture the true feelings of the people residing at the borders. She gives a detailed account of the life at the borders. The tortures and the ill-treatments that she has suffered in her life moulded her into a rebel. She grew up into a strong lady, who is capable of creating an identity of her own despite the misgivings of her life. Anzaldua is very critical about the life at the borders as it promotes an erosion of identity. To her, border is a place where overlapping takes place, where new cultures are created, deconstructed and constructed. Anzaldua considers the U. S Mexican border as the place where the third world grates against the first and bleeds. A historical outline of how the Anglos migrated illegally into Texas in the 1800s and how they gradually drove the Tejanos (native Texans of Mexican descent) from their lands is included in order to give a brief account of the mixing, merging and the migration that has taken place.

Anzaldua captures the inner turmoils of *la mestiza* and clearly depicts the position of *la mestiza* in the borderlands. "Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all the three cultures and their value systems, *la mestiza* undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war."(78) A cultural collision takes place here and a disengagement from the dominant culture becomes visible in the attempt to cross the border. *La mestiza* constantly has to shift out of habitual formations from convergent thinking and analytical reasoning to a divergent thinking characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals and toward a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes. The new *mestiza* copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. The collision of multiple cultures gives rise to the formation of an altogether new culture which is unique in itself and even more stronger than the cultures from which it has emerged. In this formative process, nothing is thrust out, the good, the bad and the ugly. At the juncture where the *mestiza* stands there is the possibility of uniting all that is separate. A synthesis of different cultures takes place here and the self adds a third element which is greater than the sum of its severed parts. That third element is a new consciousness, a *mestiza* consciousness which dismantles the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner and attempts to transcend the duality. In transcending the binary, a massive uprooting of dualistic thinking takes place in the individual as well as collective consciousness.

Gloria Anzaldua cites her own life experiences as an example for elaborating the *mestiza* consciousness. Being a border lander she has no homeland, but she considers all countries as her own. She is against the biased stand of the culture as well as religion. She considers herself cultureless because, as a feminist she has challenged the collective cultural/ religious male derived believes of Indo- Hispanics and Anglos. Yet she is cultured because she participates in the creation of yet another all-inclusive culture.

Anzaldua out rightly rejects the hitherto existing culture; a culture made by those in power – especially males who believe that women are lower beings, carnal, animal and closer to the un divine and are to be protected and subjugated. The culture expects women to show greater acceptance of and commitment to the value system than men. She believes in an all-inclusive culture with its own value systems, images and symbols that connect people together.

Anzaldua brings in the imagery of corn to highlight how mestiza is designed for preservation under a variety of conditions. *Mestiza* is tenacious and tightly wrapped in the husks of her culture. Like kernels she clings to the cob; with thick stalks and strong brace roots, she holds tight to the Earth- she will survive the crossroads. The imagery exemplifies how the mestiza is designed to withstand the odds in life with a firm determination

In the *mestiza* way – a conscious rupture with all the oppressive traditions of all cultures and religions takes place. She communicates that rupture and documents the struggle that the Mexicanos have undergone to survive. She reinterprets history and, using new symbols, she shapes new myths. Anzaldua claims that the first inhabitants of the land were Chicanos who were the ancient Indian ancestors found in Texas. She argues against the Anglo notion that the land belongs to the descendants of European families. Furthermore, she goes on to explain how the Anglos deprived the indigenous people of their land; their culture and community. They were considered transgressors and aliens in their own land. They used the notion of 'White Superiority' legitimizing only those who are white as owners of the land. This illegal invasion into their life and the severe oppression that they have suffered forced the Mexicanos to fight a war to keep their boundary, life and culture. Many Chicanos lost their life in the U S – Mexico war, many of them had to flee their land. This led to 'la crisis' which was aggravated by the devaluation of the peso and Mexico's dependency on the U S increased. '*La crisis*' led to '*la travesia*' and for many Mexicanos the choice was to stay in Mexico and starve or move North and live. In their illegal crossing into the U S, they had to withstand many challenging situations and sometimes it may be at the risk of their own life. The migration of women is more dangerous as they are at the risk of being abused and raped as well as deported. Some of them have to work as a live- in maid for the white, Chicanos or Latino households under inhuman conditions.

Anzaldua gives an account of homophobia and accepts the meaning given to it as "the fear of going home after a residency" and of not being taken in. She validates it by her explanation as a fear possessed by those who are afraid of being abandoned by the mother, the culture, *la raza*, for being unacceptable, faulty or damaged. To avoid the rejection that comes as a result of this, some are ready to conform to the values of the culture and push their 'unacceptable' aspects into shadows and remain in the dark for the rest of their lives.

Anzaldua challenges the social norms of her culture in various ways. She was the first one in six generations to leave her family, yet she took with her many aspects of her home. She says, "I am a turtle, wherever I go I carry home on my back". She abhors her culture which cripples its women; they are denied the freedom to carve and find a place of their own. A woman who breaks the shackles and moves on her own is branded as a bad woman, a 'mujer mala' (17). She criticizes how her culture makes macho caricatures of its men. For men like her father, 'macho' meant being strong enough to protect and support the family, yet being able to show love. But today's macho has doubts about his ability to protect, feed and love. What they have now is a false machismo which leads them to look down upon women and even to brutalize them. They are the victims of hierarchical male dominance. Anzaldua aims to bring about an end to the oppression meted out to the females by these false machismos.

Anzaldua discusses the cultural practices followed by the Chicanos. She describes the symbolism of the snake "*la vibhora*" which is one of the main symbols of Mexican mythological culture. The *Coatlalopeuh* is the Indian name of *La Virgen de Guadalupe* , one of Catholicism's pagan entity. *Coatlalopeuh* is descended from earlier Mesoamerican Fertility and Earth Goddess. The earliest is *Coatlicue* or "Serpent Skirt". *Coatl* is the Nahuatl word for serpents and *Lopeuh* means one who has dominion over serpents. In the *Coatlicue* state there is a fusion of the opposites: eagle and serpent, heaven and underworld, life and death, mobility and immobility, beauty and horror. She describes the Coatlicue state as having duality in life, a synthesis of duality, and a third perspective, something more than mere duality or a synthesis of duality. The serpent represents a woman's ability to hold power and property, and also, the view that royal blood is passed through the maternal line. She is the incarnation of cosmic processes. However, the

male- dominated Azteca- Mexican culture drove the powerful female deities underground by giving them monstrous attributes and by substituting male deities in their place, thus splitting the female self and the female deities much in the same way as Indian Kali was disempowered.

Anzaldua, lived through the difficulties for not having a home language. In the absence of an exclusive language to be claimed as their own, to express themselves or to communicate within their group, the Chicanos developed a border tongue which was a combination of several languages and dialects. It is a language with which they can connect to their identity, a language they can call 'home'; a language with terms that are neither *espanol ni ingles* – neither Spanish nor English but both. But, the Chicanos were ashamed of speaking Chicano Spanish language as they considered it an illegitimate bastard language even though it is their home language. Anzaldua herself is a multilingual personality who is capable of speaking a variety of languages and dialects. But at the same time the absence of a language of one's own has created a frustration in her to such an extent that she expresses it in her writings. She has used both English and Spanish to express the frustration that she herself has felt for having a confused language and identity. She dreamed of making Chicano Spanish a legitimate language because it is from the language one speaks that his/ her identity is revealed and it plays a pivotal role in framing the personality and selfhood of an individual. She wanted literatures to be written in their language in order to identify them as a distinct people and to make them feel connected to each other. The publishing of *I am Joaquin* and the formation of *la Raza Unida party* were real milestones in the Mexican history. The fragmented pieces began to fall together; they started to get a feeling of togetherness.

Through her work, Anzaldua aims to bring about a new cosmic race, *"una raza mestiza"*, a fifth race embracing the four major races of the world. The inspiration provided by Jose Vascocelos' concept *"una raza mestiza"* has persuaded her to work towards such a goal which could eventually bring harmony and peace to this divided world and voice to the people of the borderlands. Both the physical borders as well as the invisible ones are discussed here. She explores her own homosexuality and male/ female identity. She inspires us to overcome the struggles of borderland and come to terms with our own selves and to accept people as they are despite the colour of skin, religion, nationality, caste or gender.

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Crossing the Threshold of Liminality: A Study on *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and *Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story*

Abstract

The term 'liminal' developed by the anthropologist Victor Turner describes the in-between state experienced by the individuals who have left behind one settled condition and have not yet entered into another. Liminality is characterized by disorientation, discomfort, and a destabilizing of the settled order. A liminal space is rich in potential for new orderings of experience, understanding and transformation. Homi K. Bhabha opines that "liminal" space is a "hybrid" site that witnesses the production--rather than just the reflection--of cultural meaning. Individuals who are caught in-between two stages of development, who do not hold clearly defined positions within their social system, feel marginal and excluded without any identity. This paper attempts to focus on transgenders who have no space of their own in the male/ female binary and aims to look upon the ways in which they strive to establish their identity as a human being.

An exploration of Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and A Revathi's *Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story* reveals the trauma experienced by the marginalized people.

Roy makes an attempt to voice the protest of the minority group through Anjum, born Aftab and a hijra. A Revathi's autobiography is a direct narrative of her own experiences as a hijra and the hardships that she has undergone throughout her life. Both the fictional character Anjum and the real character Revathi move towards the same goal; to create a space of their own and to get themselves integrated into a society, which has refused to acknowledge their identity and existence.

Keywords: Liminality, Identity, Marginalization, Transgender.

Introduction:

Liminality refers to moments or periods of transition. The concept 'liminality' was developed by the ethnographer and folklorist Arnold van Gennep in 1909 in his "*Rites de Passage*" and was revived by Victor Turner, the British anthropologist in 1963. Bjorn Thomassen in his seminal work *Liminality and the Modern* opines that liminality involves a peculiar kind of unsettling situation in which nothing really matters, in which hierarchies and standing norms disappear, . . . authority in any form is questioned, taken apart and subverted (Intro 1). Liminality is the in-between state experienced by the individuals who have left behind one-settled condition and have not yet entered into another. Liminality is characterized by disorientation, discomfort and a destabilizing of the settled order. A liminal space is rich in potential for new orderings of experience, understanding and transformation. It is not a place of permanent existence. However, there are situations in the lives of people in which transition from an old situation to a new one, one social position to another are hampered, or cannot be completed successfully. Homi K. Bhabha observes that liminal space is an interstitial passage between fixed identifications, which opens up

the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy (Location 5). Individuals who are caught in-between two stages of development, who do not hold clearly defined positions within their social system, feel marginal and excluded without any identity. This paper attempts to focus on transgenders who have no space of their own in the male/ female binary and aims to look upon the ways in which they strive to establish their identity as a human being.

Transcending the liminal space:

An exploration of Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and A Revathi's *Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story* reveals the trauma experienced by those who have been sidelined for a major portion of their life. Roy makes an attempt to voice the protest of the minority group through Anjum who was born a hermaphrodite. A Revathi's autobiography is a direct narrative of her own experiences as a hijra and the hardships that she has undergone throughout her life. Both the fictional character Anjum and the real character Revathi move towards the same goal; to create a space of their own and to get themselves integrated into a society which has refused to acknowledge their identity and existence.

The characteristic features of liminality are traceable in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness.* Roy expresses her remorse and protest against the social and political injustice meted out to the deprived and the dispossessed people of India. Her mission is to crack down the repressive and exploitative policies prevalent in contemporary India with her powerful language. In a world fraught with corruption, where competing power structures determine political agenda, the vibrant and authentic voice of writers like Arundhati Roy reverberate the literary arena to fight against the injustice and oppression. Her promising ideologies expressed through her works have the potential to disrupt the established value system and expedite the birth of a new social order.

The strategies that she has used to bring about this social change are many and varied. In her choice of characters who inhabit a liminal space, Roy makes an attempt to voice the protest of the minority group. Most of the characters in the novel hail from the marginalized and dispossessed group who are trifled and swept to the periphery by those who wield power.

Anjum was born a hermaphrodite with both male and female characteristics and reproductive organs. She was named Aftab by her parents. They wanted to raise her as a boy and made arrangements for a sex reassignment surgery so as to seal the girl-part; but she always wanted to be a girl and felt a sense of alienation at home. At school, she had to face the snickering and teasing from children: "He`s a She. He`s not a He or a She. He`s a He and a She. She-He, He-She Hee! Hee! Hee!" (Ministry 12). She represents the community of hijras and the sexual minorities who have been sidelined throughout the ages and are not integrated either into family or society. They had to undergo a long struggle to escape discrimination and associated violence, poverty and segregation to find a place of their own in the society. Arundhati Roy captures the inner turmoil of Anjum in the novel. Through the movement of Anjum who leaves home as a girl to live among the community of hijras at Khwabgah and then to the graveyard, Arundhati Roy shows the various ways in which Anjum is trying to cope with an antagonistic world. She sets up a home named Jannath Guest House for herself as well as for many other like ones in the graveyard.

With dauntless courage and determination Anjum resolves to cross the liminal space and tries to create an identity for the community of the third gender including herself. In the "ministry of utmost happiness" Roy paints an ideal world where each and every inmate is free to live their life. Jannat Guest House becomes home to an array of the excluded: untouchables, Muslim converts, addicts, hijras, an abandoned baby, Zainab and other similar destitutes. Roy deals with a whole lot of people who are trying their best to transcend the liminal space they are trapped in.

Anjum has broken the shackles of confinement to establish her identity. Here, Roy talks not about a fixed identity but an identity which transgresses all the boundaries and artificial borders.

A Revathi, a prominent hijra activist discloses the sordid experiences that she has undergone in her life through her autobiography *Truth about Me: A Hijra Life Story*. Through this work Revathi dismantles gender oppression which has become a curse of our society. She challenges the binary gender system and implores the society to accept, include and acknowledge the presence of sexual minorities in the society. The actual trauma experienced by a human being when one realizes that he/she is neither a boy nor a girl is graphically portrayed in this work. Revathi who was named Doraiswamy by her parents began to show a female orientation at a very young age and felt that her feelings and emotions are not in harmony with the apparent physical features of a male. She was a child full of doubts and anxieties because of the sexual difference; a female trapped in a male body. An intense longing to become a woman became prominent in her in the process of growing up. Revathi wanted to bring her body in line with her feelings and emotions and to live the rest of her life as a woman. This tendency was out rightly rejected by her siblings who began to inflict severe physical violence upon her. She was insulted and teased by her neighbours and friends and was addressed as: "Hey, Number Nine!", "female thing", female boy"... "Aren`t you a boy? Why do you walk like a girl? Why do you wear girl`s clothes?" (Truth 4). Her rendezvous with some gay men helped to lessen the burden of her mind. She came to know from them about the presence of hijra community at Dindigul, Erode, Mumbai and Delhi. Unable to withstand atrocities at home Doraiswamy resolves to flee to Delhi where he can meet his Guru and undergo a sex reassignment surgery to fulfill his dream of becoming a woman.

Contrary to her expectations, the transformation from male to female pushes her more vehemently in to a whirlpool of difficulties, problems and sufferings. Revathi recollects a terrible

instance she had to face from the policemen when she lost her way home in the night. Despite being labelled as the law enforcement officers and protectors of human rights they derived a sadistic pleasure in persecuting the helpless hijras. He kicked her with his boots and stripped her naked. Revathi recalls:

> When I was standing naked, he stuck his lathi where I'd had my operation and demanded that I stand with my legs apart, like a woman would. He repeatedly struck at that part with his lathi and said, "So, can it go in there? Or is it a field one can't enter? How do you have sex then? (206).

The torturous life that they have lived and the humiliations that they have suffered on a daily basis while earning their livelihood underscore the deprived state of the transgender. The lack of other opportunities force them to engage either in begging or sex work. These sex workers are treated as mere objects for sexual gratification and the same group who approaches them in the night insults and chides them in the daylight. It is always the sex workers who are blamed while their male counterparts remain unaffected and this reveals the double standard of our society.

Conclusion:

Both Anjum and Revathi are the representatives of the sexual minorities who are always marginalized and manipulated. They are excluded from the binary and relegated to a grey area or a liminal space which is characterized by "discomfort and disorientation". They are not aligned to the norms of the heteronormativity. Both of them become aware of the sexual incongruities of their lives where a feeling of uncertainty as well as insecurity persist. They are trapped in a pathetic state where both liminality and marginality coincide. Short-lived transition periods or liminal spaces occur in the life of all human beings, but in the case of Anjum and Revathi this period is rather a prolonged one which makes the possibility to escape all the more difficult.

Anjum and Revathi after their strenuous effort try to find a space for themselves in the society. Revathi works with the activists of a Non-Government Organisation who works for the upliftment of sexual minorities. She found a job to escape the brutal life of a sex worker. She began to attend meetings and started reading to educate herself about the plight of the fellow hijras. Revathi created a niche for herself by transcending the liminal space; she was not ready to be caved in by the odds of life. She resolves to be a writer to confess the harrowing situations of her life with a view to bring about drastic and positive changes in the life of the Hijra community. Roy's fictional character Anjum feels at home in "the ministry of utmost happiness" that is formed at the Jannat House along with some like-minded people who are rejected by the mainstream society. She finds happiness in their company at the graveyard. This make-belief home which is a miniature secular world entertains all the destitute of the area and they live there peacefully with unity and love. Roy envisages a world which accepts the differences and offers respect to all human beings.

The mission of both Arundhati Roy and A Revathi is to bring about favourable changes in the attitude of the society towards sexual minorities. Certain changes are noticeable these days with regard to laws and regulations. The law which was hitherto inconsiderate towards them has become more lenient. Specific changes are brought about in the application forms where special columns are added to mark sexual minorities or transgender. Queer pride marches are organized every year which enables them to meet and feel a sense of togetherness. Section 377 of Indian Penal Code (IPC) which denied human rights to these sexual minorities has been declared unconstitutional and right to sexuality and right to sexual autonomy and right to choose a sexual partner have become a part of right to life. In this context, Supreme Court Judge Indu Malhotra observes:

"History owes an apology to the members of this community and their families, for the delay in providing redressal for the ignominy and ostracism that they have suffered through the centuries. The members of this community were compelled to live a life full of fear of reprisal and persecution"

The alienation due to stigma and threat is getting diluted and Indian Constitution has been favorably amended to protect and safeguard the rights of the sexual minorities.

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The Syllabus for Sympathy: A Critique of the Ableist Versions of Disability

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Can the Subaltern speak?
"No, they are to be represented."
But who can represent them accurately?
"Don't get worried. We will do it."
Oh, that's great. But may I express my genuine concern sir? How can you represent us when you have never walked in our shoes?
"Oh, that's so easy. We can envisage all your problems and their possible solutions too."
It's amazing. How can you imagine something that you have never experienced?
"I told you that's very easy for us. We are raised by knowledge. We don't just consume knowledge; we also produce it."
Are you God?
"We are omniscient, but not god. We are the "elite" "upper caste" "men" blessed with the ability to empathize with the realities of those inferior to us."
Yes sir, you are right. I have heard you speaking so vehemently for people like me on several occasions. In literature, film, and various public settings, I observed your resolute presence standing up for us. However, may I ask you a simple question? Have you ever asked us what we really want? One of a person's fundamental rights, in my opinion, is to have one's opinion sought after. You have never consulted us on our needs. You were not only representing us for our needs but you were shaping our world. Hence what you consider to be our realities are merely your own versions of it. The fact (if there is something to be called so) is at times above or beyond what you believe.

Let me take a simple example from my own experience. I am Mani K P, a visually impaired person working as an Assistant Professor at the Department of English, Payyanur college, Payyanur. It was, I think, in the academic year 2019-2020 when the revised syllabus for the undergraduate students under Kannur university was released. I spotted an instance of your excellence in it. It is a piece of writing in which one of you tries to demonstrate the depth of your magnanimity. The chapter in question is "School for Sympathy"by E.V. Lucas, which is part of the textbook, Readings on Philosophy, prescribed for the fourth semester UG students as a part of their common course in English. According to the chapter, a new system of education is introduced where students are guided to a certain "thoughtfulness rather than mere thoughts" and to this end, they are instructed to pretend to have different kinds of impairments over the course of a week. What a fantastic idea, isn't it? You are right. The chapter was warmly received by the students, and your goal of fostering empathy in students through the curriculum has been accomplished. Although the chapter evokes some emotional response at first reading, for me and my community who live the life portrayed in your story, it offers a misguided ideology based on the ignorance of privileged able bodies.

The chapter seems to suggest that becoming blind is akin to being blindfolded. Dear sir, even Gandhari, the epic character, cannot be called 'blind' as she too, like the children at the school in this story, had the choice of unfolding her eyes whenever she preferred. What people perceive when they close their eyes is darkness, which cannot be equated to the realities of blindness. One is exposed to both the realities of light and darkness through their eyesight. So, when one's eyesight is lost, one gets disconnected not only from the light, but also from the darkness. Blindness is an experience that may be located, not necessarily

at the middle of the binary, but perhaps away from it. Don't you feel it's ludicrous? Yes, it is. Because it is my experience.

Nevertheless, I would appreciate your capacity of imagination in the story. Although you narrate a foolish, at times unreal, philosophy, you have done it in a most appealing manner that conquers one's emotions. Some of your observations are also worth noting. Statements such as: "The blind day is, of course, really the worst, but some of the children tell me that the dumb day is the most frightening" and "But I'd no idea it was so awful to be blind. You can't see a thing. One feels one is going to be hit by something every moment. Sitting down is such a relief".

I too had the same feeling when I became blind. But your teacher might not have taught you a possibility for adaptation or reacclimatisation. Dear sir, if one loses his or her sight or any other bodily faculty there is always a chance for him or her to get adapted with the new environment. That's how we live. We are not always weeping over our inabilities. Propagating such a terrible image on blindness may cause developing a kind of phobia among people towards blindness. "Fear of blindness leads naturally to fear of the blind" (Klege 21). In another instance in the story, while engaging in a conversation with the author, a child says, "Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun". Yes indeed. It's fun for you, as you always retain the chance to be otherwise. For us, it's really difficult, but we try to manage. There is a huge difference between your voluntary poverty and our reality.

This insight that you often use in literature to shape our sentiments has recently inspired me to hunt for similar instances in stories, novels, and even movies. But what I found interesting was that many of your great findings and conclusions appear to me to be nothing more than a pile of poop.

Though I immediately reported the authorities amongst you to withdraw the chapter from the text as it contaminates the budding hearts, I realised it was not very easy. Even from 2009 to 2014, it was covered on the same university's course syllabus. Additionally, our state's schools also teach the same chapter. However, it does not restrict to the syllabus alone. As Julia Daniels, researcher and critique puts it "Schools are designed with a non-disabled learner in mind. And narrowing forms of assessment assume a particular kind of learner (Goodley 28). This may be the important reason behind why the concept of inclusive education still remains on the horizon. "We have inherited a failed project of inclusive education in which we are (i) obsessed with individual achievement and attainment and (ii) infatuated with disability diagnoses." (30)

But don't think you have won the battle. One of my Payyanur College students, Haritha Challan, from the previous academic year called me the other day, and we had discussions on different things. One of those is relevant here. She told me that one of her B.Ed. course classmates had to teach "School for Sympathy" in a high school classroom as a part of the training session. It caused my student to remember the discussions we had during her 4th semester when I taught that chapter. She continued by saying that she had enlightened her friend about my observations on the chapter. Yes sir, you know what I did? I taught them two versions of the same story. One for the university exam and the other for the critical understanding of the great philosophy discussed in it. I am extremely happy now. She had attentively listened to me and found my points relevant. She has now imparted it to yet another. This will go on. You know, I will go on speaking through my students.

This intervention is paramount important, not because it places me at the center, but it springs from one person to a few who may, in future at least, impart it to the various fields they engage. The very structure of the society must transform in order to accommodate the sentiments of disabled people. Disability is a socially constructed reality inflicted on the impaired bodies. Watson and Vehmas thus argue that "They are no longer the problem – it is society that is at fault." (Watson 4)

Similar to the construction of 'black' against White and 'feminine' against 'masculine', disability should also be well defined in order

to usher the 'abled' bodies into the privileged positions in the social mainstream. Rigid binary is therefore inevitable to retain such a superior position. According to Anne Waldschmidt, the ideas of the disabled and the non disabled were interpreted within a framework of dichotomous bodily differences. "Healthy, complete and normal versus diseased, deficient, and deviating. It exists only when and insofar as certain (bodily and embodied) differences can be distinguished and thought of as 'relevant for health' within a given cultural and historical order of knowledge" (Waldschmidt 16).

The imagination of the well-defined "Abled self" against the "disabled other" has been creeping into our public consciousness through various mediums such as literature, film, religion and indeed language. One gets indoctrinated into the already prevailing public consciousness through the process of the so-called social conditioning. This is how you get the idea of not only the disabled realities but also other subjugated sentiments such as Dalit, trans people and so on. Although you haven't been directly exposed to these people, you believe that 'the other' that has been constructed and inherited to you through cultural institutions is true and enduring.

Dear sir, this notion of a hypothetical disabled person completely disconnected from the affairs of the abled majority has to be reconsidered. It has to be demolished through disseminating rational understanding among students at the early age itself. This is why the academic curriculum and syllabus becomes so significant.

Thanks to Kannur university for their intervention into the matter discussed above. The chapter concerned has been replaced now with a piece of writing by Helen Keller titled "Why I Become a Socialist". It is an appreciable effort because, autobiographical narratives, though often subjective, may serve the task of integrating disabled sentiments with the social mainstream.

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Analyzing Dreams of the Visually Impaired

Mani K. P.

Dream or what the most celebrated psychologist Sigmund Freud rightly called “a message in disguise,” (Jenkins 10) remains to be a mysterious realm to its interpreters. Though there have been enormous efforts by the best minds in the world to decode and unravel the secrets and to elucidate the complexities of dream, a detailed, convincing record is arguably yet to be presented. Nevertheless, we have come to a consensus that dream is an unconscious activity of human mind which is directly or indirectly rooted in the repressed desires of an individual.

An individual, whether he/she is aware of it or not, therefore possesses the complete authority over his/her dreams or more specifically, on the manipulation of his/her day-to-day affairs into colourful, and at times, fearful fantasies. But it seems a little hard to understand the roots of dreams if they are presented in such a way that the individual has nothing to directly link with it from

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Construction Of 'Tradition' Through Narratives: Reflections On Early Malayalam Novels

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ABSTRACT

The present article attempts to explore into the dynamics of constructing 'tradition' through narratives as a foil to 'modernity' which has been effected on the foundations of the rationality of the colonial enterprise. Drawing parallels with certain historical/official records, it focuses on how the early Malayalam novels have been instrumental in this discursive construction. Two 19th century Malayalam novels – *Indulekha* (1889) by O. Chandu Menon, and *Meenakshi* (1890) by Cheruvalathu Chathu Nair – are taken as referral points for analysis here. How the colonial masters and the subjectified natives speak the 'same language' with respect to tradition and modernity is also exposed in the article with due illustrations from the afore-said novels.

Key words: tradition, modernity, Kerala, novel, subjectification.

Knowledge has been a leverage employed in the game of power to construct, contain, and control the other. For such purposes, one might appropriate any branch of the existing system of knowledge or device a new genre of discourse. This system of knowledge and genre of discourse will have meaning only in relation to the existing milieu. They can take root, by and large, by positioning them against practices in that milieu which can be posited as the 'other'. Empirical evidences from history about this 'othering' would enable us to substantiate this notion. Genealogical table in Indian Puranas, argues Romila Thapar, served as legitimizing mechanism of the "lowborn" ancient Indian rulers by linking them either with the *Sooryavamsa* or *Chandravamsa*, thereby qualifying them as fit to rule the land (36). Scholars have identified

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Transgender Subjectivity of Ludovic in *Ma Vie en Rose* as Re-articulation of Gender Dysphoria and Narcissism

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Abstract

This article examines the subjectivity of Ludovic (Georges du Fresne), the transgender protagonist in the 1997 Belgian film *Ma Vie en Rose* (*My Life in Pink*), directed by Alain Berliner. It argues that Ludovic's exploration of the transgender persona in him is essentially narcissistic and subversive of the general notion of gender dysphoria. Ludovic's obsession with the Pam and Ben show on TV, his fantasies of gender transformation, and cross-dressing are suggested as pathological by other characters in the film, but he uses them for potential reversal of the heterosexual normativity. Gender norms in the society and the notion of gender dysphoria are treated by Ludovic as jokes, as evidently suggested by his father in the exposition scene, when he calls Ludovic a "joker" in the family.

Key Words

Transgender, Narcissism, Gender Dysphoria, Fantasy, Subjectivity, Heterosexuality, Cross-dressing.

This article attempts at locating the transgender subjectivity at the crossroads of gender dysphoria and narcissism, focusing on the character of Ludovic (Georges du Fresne), the transgender protagonist in the Belgian film *Ma Vie en Rose* (*My Life in Pink*) directed by Alain Berliner. As an extension, it also argues that transgender subjectivity is essentially narcissistic, without subscribing to the notion of personality disorder. The article identifies the film as a negotiation and, consequently, the subversion of the notion that children with gender confusion are pathological and need clinical treatment. Though scholars deal with the subjectivity of Ludovic on many grounds like gender trouble, fantasy, abjection, homosexuality, and transsexuality, they focus less on this subversion as a process that needs attention. For instance, Keith Reader focuses on the specific fantasies and cross-dressing in "'If I were a Girl- and I am not': Cross-dressing in Alain Berliner's *Ma Vie en Rose* and Jean Renoir's *La Grande Illusion*." Michael R. Schiavi's "A 'Girlboy's' Own Story: Non-Masculine Narrativity in *Ma Vie en Rose*" suggests that Ludovic may develop a homosexual identity as "Ludo's relationship to his sexuality … does not constitute recognizable coming-out narrative" (5). Nick Rees-Robert suggests that the childhood fantasies in the film affect

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THE POSTCOLONIAL TURN IN ENGLISH STUDIES IN INDIA

Research Paper

ABSTRACT

This article attempts to explore the position of English language in the postcolonial and globalised era, the conflicting trope of reception and resistance offered to this language during the colonial as well as the postcolonial periods, and the attempts at delegitimising and nativising the language by the Indian academia of late. It exemplifies how English becomes a 'lingua franca' as well as a 'lingus frankensteinia' in the contemporary scenario; and proceeds to an explanation of the Indian attitude to English and English Studies in the past, especially in the post-independence period. The article also highlights the attempts made by the Indian universities to delegitimise the Anglo English through various strategies of abrogation and appropriation.

Key Words : Postcolonial, English Studies, Delegitimising, Nativising.

Introduction

Though English is not the language spoken by maximum number of people in the world, the privilege, authority, and legitimacy that this language enjoys even in the post-war, post-imperial period demand serious enquiry into its political dynamics throughout the world. English language has been received by various societies and nations in various ways. English has made inroads into different communities through different strategies, enjoying reception as well as resistance simultaneously. The domination of English language and the attempts to subvert it have been usual phenomena in the spread of this language across the globe. This tension assumes greater magnitude when nations got liberated from the British imperial control. How such nations have responded to the position of English in the postcolonial period is a trope of significant academic enquiry. This article attempts to explore into that area by taking the twists and turns in English education, especially higher education, in post-independence India as referral points. It highlights the efforts of postcolonial appropriation of English language and English studies by the Indian academia. As we know, the formidable position that English has been enjoying is not the result any natural event; rather, it has been the offshoot of many political, economic, military, cultural, and linguistic manoeuvres that were planned and implemented at various locations, in varying degrees, at different time, in multiple forms.

The rise of poststructuralist and postcolonial discourses triggered an interrogation of the legitimacy of a monolithic Anglo English (British/American) that holds hegemonic powers throughout the world and opened up vistas for a celebration of linguistic pluralism, extending even into serious debates on the variety of English suitable for different societies. This line of thought assumes greater significance when we understand that English is now spoken more by the non-native speakers than by the native speakers. Before we enter into the discussion on delegitimising the status of English in postcolonial societies, let us have a quick look at the position of English in the present world which is highly globalised.

English across Continents

English language has been playing a confusingly contradictory role in the contemporary world scenario. On the one hand, it is held high and with some degree of adoration as the lingua franca which will enable us to be citizens of the global village and empower us to earn our bread and butter by performing effectively in the international job market; on the other, it is seen as a lingua frankensteinia, to use Robert Phillipson's term, that stifles all other languages, including European languages, into a slow death and retains its hegemony even after decades of the physical process of

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CONFLUENCE OF WATER AND FEMININE NARRATIVES IN SARAH JOSEPH'S AATHI [GIFT IN GREEN]

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Abstract: Sarah Joseph's Aathi tells the 'Aathi-way of life' — the water-life — which merits the intrinsic value of life that has been built upon the interdependence between the constitutive elements of nature. The indigenous people of Aathi are bound to nature by the cognizance they have constructed through the need-based sharing of the resources of the land. It is the harmonious relation that they sustain with nature all through the cultural life of adaptability which has been destroyed by the ideology of material development. This article is an exploration into how this fictional narrative inscribes the fluid potential of water-life to resist the concrete structures of developmental prescriptions as well as into the efficacy of this fluidity/flexibility which can be identified as the attribute of the feminine resistance against the masculine principle of invasion and domination.

Keywords: water-life, interdependence, invasion of nature, material development, feminine adaptability and resistance

Article History

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Introduction

Gift in Green, penned by Sarah Joseph in Malayalam and proclaimed by critics as the first 'green fiction' in the language, narrates the water-life of the people of Aathi, the land named after the novel's original title. Picturizing the conflicts between the capital powers which project developmental activities and the common people who urge to preserve the pristine life of the land, the novel highlights the importance of interdependence for sustenance of life on our planet. In Aathi, life has been seen enrooted deep into the earth of which evokes the entangled and inseparable bond between nature and its inhabitants. Published in 2011, the narrative brings out the nightmarish impact of ecology-blind developmental activities on the green life of the indigenous community and projects water-life as a counter-force to resist the destructive forces.

The narrative assumes a mythical stature through the harmonious interrelation between human beings themselves and the other natural elements in Aathi. Among the imageries that spread over the narrative of *Gift*, a fabled status has been endowed on water. That is, in resonance with the theme of 'water-life', the novel carries the image of water as a political symbol of identity, life, adaptability and survival. Water remains as the over-arching metaphor from the beginning note of discord to the closing note of harmony in the narrative, the physical presence of which has been felt in the water-life of the people (*Gift* 18). They have been living in this water from time unknown, having water as the witness — 'Jalam saakshi' — and their body and spirit rippling with its waves.

In "The Making of Aathi", appended to the novel, the author speaks of Aathi, a lagoon, that "lies, cool and serene, in the womb of an inviolate purity. In a world where the water, the air, the food and even breast milk are polluted by lethal radiation, I, too, need a fountain-spring of life in which to remain submerged.... This novel is my quest for such a haven". The indigenous imageries on nature in its abundance make the novel a political legend of egalitarian utopia with its roots deep in water-life. Joseph continues that *Gift in Green* (hereafter abbreviated as *Gift*) presents the saga of "Aathi-like places of primeval purity. Like the last of the trees, like the last of the residual streams, a few minds, a few slivers of the earth's surface, still hold their own".

Water Narratives

The novel opens with the water-origin of God, who came on the ripples of water to reach the land of Aathi and to get consecrated by the people as Thampuran — a regional name for God. Thereafter, "The glory of God moved over the waters" so that people has doubled along with fish, mussels and the harvest at the

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Owning Muthappan: The Lumpen Thiyya and Negotiations of Modernity

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Abstract

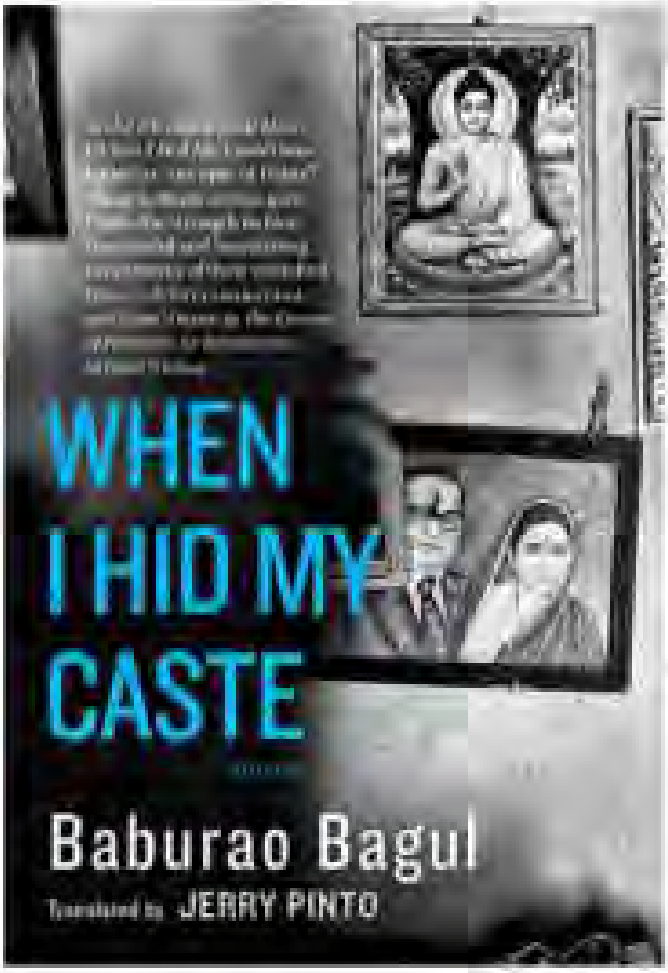
The historicized Thiyyas of North Malabar are elite, English educated and beneficiaries of British patronage in various ways. This paper argues how such a homogenized concept of Thiyya community is part of a mainstream discourse of modernity which is modeled on colonial concepts of progress, belief and rationality. It tries to look at how the community of devouts of Muthappan Theyyam, especially in Parassini Madappura, facilitates an understanding of the lumpen sections of the Thiyya community. This community of Thiyyas have been absent in the discourses of modernity of nationalism as well as the Ezhava community exhorted by Narayana Guru. Muthappan, the deity of several communities was appropriated by the lumpen sections of the Thiyya community as part of social mobility. The communist movement of the 1930s appropriated the Thiyya Muthappan as Communist Deivam, through which it legitimized Thiyya Muthappan as the real Muthappan. The desire for mobility of a caste community is made possible, but at the cost of other lower caste/tribe histories and presents.

***Keywords*:** Muthappan, Theyyam, Community of Devouts, lumpen Thiyyas, Narayana Guru, Nationalist movement, Communist movement, Modernity.

Introduction

Muthappan Theyyam has been integral to the economic and social mobility of the Thiyya backward caste community in North Malabar.[1] Muthappan was co-opted by the lumpen sections of the Thiyya community, who quite different from the elite Thiyya subject of the discourse of modernity, resorted to believe in Theyyam rather than forms of worship legitimized and disseminated by Narayana guru, which was pivotal to guru's concept of a modern caste community. The Thiyya community which finds mention in various studies pertaining to the modernity of Thiyyas in/and North Malabar is quite often the elite sections of the respective community who benefited from modern education and British patronage. This section of Thiyyas became the representatives of the Thiyya caste and the proponents of a modern backward caste community as defined by Narayana guru. Theyyam, according to guru's philosophy, was one of the various symbols of primitiveness which ought to be eschewed for a caste community's transition to modernity. Muthappan Theyyam and the community of Thiyyas which evolved in and around Parassini Madappura, the

Baburao Bagul. *When I Hid My Caste*, Trans. Jerry Pinto. New Delhi: Speaking Tiger Publishing Pvt., 2018. 135 pp. ISBN 978-93-86702-92-0.



Marathi literature has contributed immensely to the making of a Dalit literary tradition in India. Baburao Bagul's collection of short stories, *Jevha Mi Jat Chorali* (*When I Hid My Caste*), is one of the earliest anthologies of Dalit short stories to be published as part of this tradition. This collection of Marathi stories was published originally in 1963. It upended the sanitised imaginary worlds of mainstream Marathi literature by documenting the segregated lives of outcastes in Maharashtra and the everyday forms of violence such communities had to undergo. Practices of motherhood, sex work, child abuse, child labour, illiteracy, unemployment, social alienation, and manual scavenging are salvaged from their condescending Savarna interpretations and retold from a Dalit male perspective. Bagul's stories impart legitimacy to Dalit articulations, condemn the pasts and presents of caste violence and ensure vitality to the anti-caste cause. Its singular narration of practices of untouchability along with stories of

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Of Hunting and the Hunted: Vayanattukulavan *Theyyam* and the Enunciation of Being 'Backward.'

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The Thiyyas are a prominent backward caste community in Kerala. The contributions of the heterogeneously constituted Thiyya community towards the modernization of the north Malabar region are noteworthy. However, the assertion of modern forms of visibility on the part of the community has prompted modes of reprisal from the dominant caste in disparate forms. This paper focuses on the discourse over the ban on the ritual of hunting in the worship of Vayanattukulavan Theyyam, believed to be the tutelary deity of the Thiyya community. The hunting ritual is often associated with offering meat to the Kulavan Theyyam as a gesture of respect and gratitude for the protection that the deity is believed to bestow on the devotees and people in general. The paper analyses how the demand for a ban centres on an association drawn between the primitive nature of the ritual and the backward status of the Thiyya community. The backward caste status of the community is identified as inherent to the community than as an infirmity effected by an unequal, savarna social order. The tools of environmentalism and animal protection are mobilized to supplant modern, politicised forms of mobility aspired and achieved by the Thiyya backward caste community .

Thiyya, Caste, Modernity, Ritual, Environmentalism

Introduction

Vayanattukulavan *Theyyam* is revered as the *kuladeivam* (or tutelary deity) of the Thiyya[1] backward caste community[2] in the north Malabar region.[3] The deity is worshipped in disparate forms across the region extending from *Kodagu* district in Karnataka to *Kasaragod* district in Kerala. The Kulavan deity also called *Thondachan* (or the eldest one) is invoked and then performed by men from the Vannan[4] community, in *Theyyattam* festivals, mostly, but not exclusively, in Thiyya tharavadus.[5] The oral liturgy and the staging of the Vayanattukulavan

[1] Thiyyas are a backward caste community located in the northernmost region of Kerala, which extends northwards from Korapuzha, or the Elathur River that flows through Calicut district. Though their numerical supremacy has given them an edge over cultural visibility in the region, this hasn't translated into political representation in the state. Their presence in the various domains of the public sector remains minimal despite an abundance of political leaders from the community.

[2] OBC or the Other Backward Class is used to classify socially and educationally backward caste and religious communities.

[3] North Malabar, along with south Malabar was an administrative unit of British India under Madras Presidency till 1947 and later a part of Madras State till 1956. On 1st November 1956, following the States Re-organization Act, the region, along with the Kasaragod taluk of south Kanara district was merged with the erstwhile princely states of Cochin and Travancore to form the modern state of Kerala. Today, North Malabar refers to that region of Kerala that covers the districts of Kasaragod, Kannur, Mananthavady taluk of Wayanad district, Koyilandy, Vatakara taluks of Kozhikode district and Mahe.

[4] Vannan refers to the person traditionally associated with the caste occupation of washing. They are enlisted as a Scheduled Caste community in Kerala.

[5] Thiyya families invoke the deity as acknowledgement of vows taken, or gratitude for prosperities showered on the family members. It pre-supposes cooperation from the whole village in collecting and offering services from

Article

The Caste of Casting: Thilakan and 'Backward' Articulations in Malayalam Cinema

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Shyma P.

Abstract

The invisibility of the modern backward caste presence is fundamental in validating *Nair* dominance in Malayalam cinema. This article analyses how cast–caste contingency operates as a mode of erasure to ensure the invisibility of 'backwardness' in Malayalam cinema. The mechanisms of erasure are described with reference to the multiple forms of proscription imposed on the *Ezhava* actor Thilakan following his enunciation of caste-based discrimination in the workspace. The insistence on verisimilitude while casting a lower caste body is substituted by a desire to camouflage in the case of a backward caste actor. The backward caste body is assigned *savarna* or Dalit roles in an attempt to render backward caste presence in Malayalam cinema inconsequential and invisible. OBC visibility in (Malayalam) cinema is marked by multiple forms of encounters with the mechanism of invisibility in place, eventuating interruptions in the constituted structure of the cinematic (public) in various ways. Thilakan's engagement with the vocabulary of caste occasions a disturbance in the projected image of a progressive film industry, the manifestations of which are analysed in this article.

Keywords

Malayalam cinema, Thilakan, *Ezhava*, backward caste male, residual masculinity, cast–caste contingency, hegemonic Nair male.

In 2010, the veteran South Indian actor Thilakan based in the Malayalam film industry was banned from AMMA, the Association of Malayali Movie Artists, on charges of defaming the Association and its members in the print and visual media on various occasions.[1] Thilakan's request to specify the nature and circumstance of the defamatory statements was disregarded even as the executive committee of AMMA went ahead with the disciplinary action. Thilakan was out of work for almost a year and half before being recalled to act by some film makers. The national and state award winner was cast in guest and other oddly insignificant roles in the ten or so films released

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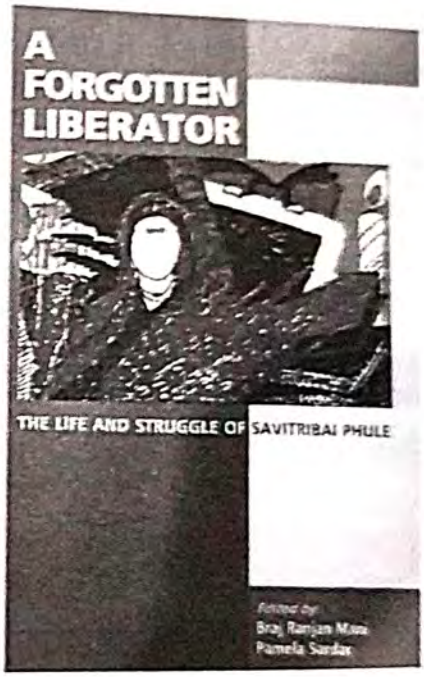
Remembering A Forgotten Liberator: Savitribai Phule and The Bahujan Culture of Dissent

A Forgotten Liberator: The Life and Struggle of Savitribai Phule, is an edited volume of articles which recollects and asserts Savitribai Phule's interventions as a poet, educationist and reformer in the anti-caste discourse of modern India. Given that very little is published in English on Savitribai Phule, compared to Pandita Ramabai or Urmila Pawar, *A Forgotten Liberator*, is an apposite historicization of a life of dissent and social reformation of a woman, born in the backward caste Mali community in Maharashtra in the 19th century. This book on Savitribai is much less about her than about those, with whom she carried forward the inclusive bahujan counter culture of dissent and self-respect. Jotiba Phule, her partner and comrade, Sagunabai Kshirsagar, the mentor of Jotiba and Savitribai Phule, Fatima Sheikh, who joined Savitribai in spreading education among the downtrodden, Tatya Saheb Bhide, who gave away his house to function as a school and Muktabai, Savitribai's student, all are duly remembered in this book, which also qualifies as the history of an Indian modernity based on anti-caste movements and had as its objective, social equality.



A Forgotten Liberator: The Life and Struggle of Savitribai Phule, Edited by Braj Ranjan Mani and Pamela Sardar. Mountain Peak Publishers.

Savitribai was born in Naigaon in 1831, a period when Maharashtra, especially Pune, was going through various socio-political transformations. With the colonial takeover of the Peshwa dynasty in 1818, Western ways of

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Story

Keetuvaanghara

Srikandan Karikkakam
Translated by Shyma P.

"Croak...croak." The father frog was sure it was Keetuvanghara, his youngest, who was bawling as though a laterite hill was unloaded into his gullet. He wouldn't be able to recline in the warmth of his mother's love, counting months of Kanni and Karkidakam for long without seeing his father. [1] His feet were longing to leap along with his father to hunt bugs and dream of dragon flies with sixlet eyes through the wild bushes of reed creepers and pits of slime where crickets squeal in reverence. It was during those stealthy hikes that his father taught him, without textbooks, how to pad on the rhythms of the earth noiseless as a quagmire while passing thickets ambushing coiled snakes with stripes and how to hold

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Empowering Learners: The Dogme Approach's Impact on Autonomy and Communication Skills

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Abstract
This paper delves into the transformative potential of the Dogme approach in the realm of English Language Teaching (ELT). By dissecting its fundamental principles, benefits, challenges, and broader implications, the study aims to shed light on the approach's compatibility with contemporary educational trends. Through its emphasis on conversation-driven learning, emergent language, and learner autonomy, the Dogme approach emerges as a beacon of innovation in ELT. The paper investigates its alignment with task-based learning, learner-centered instruction, and technology integration, highlighting its capacity to cultivate authentic communication skills and foster autonomous language learners. In navigating the challenges associated with implementation, the paper underscores the approach's power to reshape ELT practices and enhance language learning outcomes. As ELT continues to evolve, the Dogme approach stands as a promising avenue for ushering in a new era of effective communicators and lifelong language enthusiasts.

I. Introduction

English Language Teaching (ELT) has evolved significantly, transitioning from conventional textbook-centered methodologies to more progressive and learner-centered approaches. This shift has been driven by recognizing that authentic communication and personalized learning experiences best facilitate effective language acquisition. Among the emerging methodologies, the Dogme approach has garnered attention for its commitment to conversation-driven learning, emergent language development, and learner autonomy. This paper delves into the core tenets of the Dogme approach, explores its associated advantages and hurdles, and considers its broader implications within the realm of ELT.

Principles of the Dogme Approach:

The Dogme approach distinguishes itself through its core principles, each of which resonates with contemporary pedagogical philosophies. The emphasis on conversation-driven learning acknowledges that language is most effectively acquired when learners engage in meaningful interactions. This principle aligns with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) paradigm, where communication is viewed as the primary goal of language learning.

Emergent language, another key component, underscores the belief that language acquisition occurs organically as learners engage in authentic conversations. Rather than relying solely on pre-designed materials, the Dogme approach encourages instructors to facilitate discussions that naturally elicit new language structures, vocabulary, and expressions. This philosophy reflects constructivist theories of learning, which posit that learners actively construct knowledge based on their experiences.

Moreover, the materials-light teaching philosophy promotes adaptability and innovation. This principle encourages educators to rely less on commercial textbooks and more on learners' interests and needs, fostering a dynamic and flexible learning environment. In line with constructivist and sociocultural theories, this approach acknowledges that learners' individual contexts play a significant role in shaping their language development.

The principle of learner autonomy places students at the center of their learning journey. By encouraging learners to take ownership of their progress, the Dogme approach aligns with humanistic theories of education that emphasize personal agency, intrinsic motivation, and self-directed learning.

Benefits of the Dogme Approach:

The Dogme approach offers a plethora of benefits in ELT settings. By prioritizing conversation-driven learning, students are immersed in authentic language use, exposed to various registers, accents, and styles of communication. This enhances their ability to function effectively in real-life language scenarios, ultimately bridging the gap between classroom instruction and practical language use.

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THE ROLE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN READERS' CONNECTION WITH CHARACTERS

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigates mirror neurons' role in literary analysis, exploring how these neural mechanisms contribute to readers' cognitive and emotional engagement with literary texts. By examining the interaction between mirror neurons, empathy, and interpreting characters and narratives, the paper aims to shed light on the intricate connections between neuroscience and literary studies. The paper delves into mirror neurons' functioning, relevance to literary analysis, and potential applications in understanding readers' responses to fiction.

INTRODUCTION

The rationale for studying the role of mirror neurons in literary analysis is rooted in the profound impact that literature has on human cognition, emotions, and empathy. Literary texts create immersive fictional worlds populated by characters with diverse experiences, emotions, and motives. Readers often report feeling emotionally connected to these characters, forming bonds that transcend the boundary between reality and fiction. This phenomenon raises intriguing questions about the neural mechanisms that underlie such emotional and cognitive engagement.

Mirror neurons offer a promising lens through which to examine this phenomenon. By investigating whether and how mirror neuron activation occurs during readers' encounters with literary characters, we can potentially uncover the neurological basis of readers' emotional and cognitive resonance with fictional narratives. Understanding how mirror neurons contribute to readers' empathy, identification with characters, and comprehension of their motives can illuminate the neural processes that foster the immersive experience of literary analysis.

The paper also motivated by the growing interest in interdisciplinary studies that bridge the gap between the humanities and sciences. Integrating neuroscientific insights with literary analysis can enrich our understanding of the complex interactions between art and the human brain. Furthermore, uncovering the neural mechanisms underlying readers' engagement can have practical implications for literature-based education, as educators can leverage these insights to design more effective teaching strategies that enhance students' comprehension, empathy, and critical thinking skills.

The theoretical connection between mirror neurons and readers' identification with fictional characters and their experiences:

The theoretical connection between mirror neurons and readers' identification with fictional characters and their experiences lies in the neural mechanisms that facilitate empathy, emotional resonance, and cognitive processing. Mirror neurons, originally discovered in the context of motor imitation, play a pivotal role in understanding and interpreting others' actions, emotions, and intentions. This mechanism extends beyond the realm of physical actions and can be extended to emotional and cognitive processes, including readers' interactions with fictional characters.

1. **Empathy and Emotional Resonance:** Mirror neurons enable individuals to vicariously experience the emotions of others by simulating those emotions in their own neural circuitry. When readers encounter a character's emotional state in a literary text, mirror neurons may activate, allowing readers to "mirror" the character's emotions. This process fosters a sense of emotional resonance, where readers experience similar emotions as the characters. Readers might feel joy, sorrow, fear, or excitement alongside the characters, enhancing their empathetic connection.

2. **Character Imitation and Understanding:** Readers' identification with characters goes beyond emotional resonance. Mirror neurons could also be involved in simulating characters' actions, motivations, and thought processes. As readers follow characters' journeys and experiences, mirror neurons may trigger the simulation of these experiences in the readers' minds. This process aids in understanding characters' motives, decisions, and reactions. Readers may find themselves intuitively "putting themselves in the characters' shoes," leading to a deeper cognitive engagement.

3. **Embodied Simulation:** The concept of embodied simulation suggests that when readers read about characters' physical actions, emotions, or sensory experiences, their mirror neurons simulate those experiences to some extent. This simulation can contribute to the vividness of the reading experience and facilitate readers' immersion into the narrative world. It aligns with the idea that the brain's mirroring mechanisms allow readers to mentally "live through" the characters' experiences, strengthening the identification.

4. **Neurological Basis of Imagination:** The interaction between mirror neurons and imagination is crucial for readers' identification with characters. Imagination involves the activation of neural circuits to create mental simulations. Mirror neurons may contribute to this process by aiding in the construction of mental scenarios that parallel the characters' situations. This shared neural circuitry could explain why readers can vividly imagine and emotionally engage with fictional scenarios.

In summary, the theoretical connection between mirror neurons and readers' identification with fictional characters emerges from the mirror neurons' ability to facilitate empathy, emotional resonance, character imitation, and cognitive processing. The activation of these neurons during the reading process might lead to readers experiencing emotions and actions as if they were occurring within their own minds. This connection between neural mechanisms and literary engagement highlights the potential of mirror neuron research to shed light on the complex interplay between neuroscience, empathy, and the immersive experience of identifying with characters and their experiences in literary analysis.

An example of a short passage from a literary text and analyze how mirror neurons might come into play in readers' engagement with the characters and their experiences. For this illustration, let's consider a passage from F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby":

"Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter—tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . And one fine morning—So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."

Analysis:

1. **Emotional Resonance:** Readers may mirror Gatsby's belief in the "green light" as a symbol of hope and the pursuit of a brighter future. Mirror neurons might activate as readers simulate the sense of optimism and yearning that Gatsby experiences. This emotional resonance allows readers to empathize with Gatsby's ambitions and feel a connection to his desires.

2. **Empathetic Imagination:** Mirror neurons could be engaged as readers imagine Gatsby's pursuit of the "orgastic future." Readers might simulate Gatsby's emotions, envisioning his determination to overcome obstacles. This empathetic imagination allows readers to understand Gatsby's mindset and motivations, strengthening their identification with his character.

3. **Shared Experiences:** Readers might mirror the characters' desire for a better future. The idea of "running faster" and "stretching out our arms farther" resonates with readers who also seek personal growth and advancement. This shared experience activates mirror neurons, facilitating a sense of connection between readers and characters.

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4. **Cognitive Understanding:** Mirror neurons could contribute to readers' cognitive understanding of Gatsby's aspiration to overcome the past. Readers might simulate Gatsby's thought processes, comprehending his belief in pursuing dreams despite challenges. This simulation enhances readers' comprehension of Gatsby's motivations and decisions.

5. **Emotional Simulation:** The passage's emotive language might trigger mirror neurons, allowing readers to simulate the emotions conveyed. As readers "beat on, boats against the current," mirror neurons may simulate the emotional struggle, helping readers experience the tension and determination felt by the characters.

6. **Visualization:** Mirror neurons might activate as readers visualize the green light and Gatsby's persistent pursuit. Readers can mentally simulate the characters' actions, enhancing the immersive quality of the passage and deepening their connection to the characters' experiences.

7. **Embodied Simulation:** Mirror neurons could simulate the physical sensations associated with Gatsby's actions. As readers engage with the characters' struggles, mirror neurons might simulate the feelings of effort and determination, making the characters' experiences more visceral and relatable.

In this analysis, we can see how mirror neurons play a role in readers' emotional resonance, empathetic imagination, shared experiences, cognitive understanding, emotional simulation, visualization, and even embodied simulation. The activation of these neural mechanisms contributes to readers' engagement with the characters and their experiences, enhancing the immersive and emotional impact of the literary text.

In conclusion, the potential for pedagogical applications and the development of reading strategies that leverage mirror neuron mechanisms is vast. By capitalizing on the neural processes that facilitate emotional resonance, empathy, and identification with characters, educators can create learning environments that promote deeper comprehension, emotional intelligence, and a more profound connection with literary content. These strategies hold promise in fostering engaged and empathetic readers, enriching the educational journey and nurturing a lifelong appreciation for literature.

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Body as a Site of Memory: An Analysis of Hiroko Tanaka from Burnt Shadows

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Abstract:
Pierre Nora developed the sites of memory" (lieu de memoire) in his monumental seven-part work Les Lieux de Memoire, which refers to any significant entity, whether material or non-material, which by dint of human will or the result of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage. The burnt image of three cranes on the back of Hiroko Tanaka in Burnt Shadows by Kamila Shamsie, formed as a result of the atomic bomb explosion in Nagasaki, which she survived, crystallizes the memories of the war and acts as a site of memory that memorializes the dangers of nationalist politics and war.

Keywords: Site of memory, the burnt image of three cranes, Hiroko Tanaka, Second World War, dangers of nationalist politics.

Kamila Shamsie is obsessed with history and politics, as already mentioned. This provides good material for her fiction. In her recent novel A God in Every Stone, she states," That is what I want for my life. I want to go to Peshawar [...] because there is more past than Two and a half thousand years of history beneath its soil. How long a list of reasons do you need?"(A God in Every Stone 42)

One of the most influential concepts in "new cultural memory" was developed by French Historian Pierre Nora. In his monumental seven-part work Les Lieux de Memoire, he introduced the concept of "the sites of memory" (lieu de memoire) or places of space. It is a concept related to collective memory and refers to places, objects, and people that have special significance related to a group's remembrance. "A lieu de mémoire is any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community (in this case, the French community)" (Nora xvii). On the other hand, the interplay of memory and history, the interaction of both factors, makes them a memory site.

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When the Canker Turns Inward: Remembering and Forgetting in *Kartography*

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Abstract: Kamila Shamsie's novel Kartography parallels the war of 1971, which led to the formation of Bangladesh and ethnic violence that swept all over Karachi in 1995, to portray how the virus of ethnic othering spreads through the country if unchecked. The 'civil war' of 1971 is more or less absent in the national rhetoric of Pakistan. The collective amnesia about the event stems from the guilt and shame associated with it. Shamsie, in her novel, points out the dangers of such deliberate "forgetting" and discusses the need to acknowledge and accept past injustices of the nation to stop them from repeating in the future.

Keywords: Kartography, the civil war of 1971, ethnic violence, remembering, forgetting, acknowledging past mistakes.

> "What happens when you work so hard to forget a horror that you also forget that you have forgotten it? It does not disappear — the canker turns inwards and mutates into something else" (Shamsie 305)

Kamila Shamsie's novels, often revolving around history and politics, use memory to achieve different ends. In the novel *Kartography*, Shamsie parallels the war of 1971 with the ethnic violence that tormented Karachi in 1995 to signify how important it is to remember and acknowledge past injustices for a better future. The story on intimate personal relationships is built around an incident of fiancé swap in1971, which is a result of the political insecurities of the period. The conflict of 1971, known as the "Liberation war" in Bangladesh, is celebrated as the historical moment of attaining independence from Pakistan after long years of subjugated existence of the Bengalis. On the other hand, the"civil war" for Pakistan destroyed the dream of Pakistan as a religiously united country. It marks an excellent defeat for Pakistan, not only in front of the "rebellious," "unIslamic" Bengalis but their greatest enemy, India. The wartime atrocities committed by the Pakistan army were criticized widely and were a reason for shame and guilt at the international level. This might be why such a historical moment is not a part of popular political rhetoric in Pakistan. The 'civil war memories are always shrouded by a veil of silence, so much so that we can rarely

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World of Porous Borders: Global refugee crisis and Transnationalism in Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*

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Abstract
The contemporary world is brimming with an unexpected number of refugees and other displaced individuals. Global refugee crisis and migration is one of the greatest problems faced by the world today. At the same time, xenophobia and hostility towards migrants are promoted by most of "privileged first world countries", who takes different measures to keep them away. Pakistani Transnationalism novelist Mohsin Hamid's fourth novel *Exit West* tries to portray the global refugee crisis and its terrifying consequences. Post 9/11 scenario is characterized by an increasing importance for nation, nationality and purity which results in the exile and death of hundreds and thousands of people. *Exit West* discuss these issues in detail and provides a transnational solution of magical doors which can lead people to anywhere in the world. Hamid hopes for a world without or with porous borders that protects migration as a human right.

Keywords: global refugee crisis, migration, exit west, nation, nationality, magical doors, transnationalism

Introduction

Global refugee crisis is one of the greatest problems faced by the world today. The contemporary world is brimming with an unexpected number of refugees and other displaced individuals. Scores of people are moving from one place to another, from one country to another. People from war prone countries like Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan and Myanmar migrate in search of security, food, shelter; life in every sense. Behind the statistics are human beings with their own unique life experiences and dreams for the future, struggling to fulfill basic needs to live. At the same time, xenophobia and hostility towards migrants are promoted by most of "privileged first world countries", who takes different measures to keep them away.

Pakistani Transnationalism novelist Mohsin Hamid's fourth novel *Exit West* tries to portray the global refugee crisis and its terrifying consequences. Hamid himself has spent his life in different countries as an immigrant and considers himself to be a "mongrel", a hybrid. He had spent parts of his life in Lahore, America and London. He considers himself to have a part of all these places within him which makes him a hybrid rather than a Pakistani, an American or a British citizen. He feels home at all these places, but at the same time, foreign. And he considers the feeling of foreign to be common for everyone in life. But his transnational views are threatened by the growing sense of nationalism and purity all over the world which creates different kind of conflicts. "As a mongrelized human being I don't find the world around us satisfactory."(Milo) In his novel *Exit West* he is discussing these issues faced by the migrants through a love story set in an unnamed city.

The novel begins with Saeed and Nadia meeting each other in a city " swollen by refugees but still mostly at peace or at least not yet openly at war" (Hamid 1). They meet at an evening class on "corporate identity and product branding".

It might seem odd that in cities teetering on the edge of the abyss, young people still go to class [...] but that is the way of things, with cities as with life, for one moment we are pottering about our errands as usual and the next we are dying, and our eternally impending ending does not put a stop to our transient beginnings and middles until the instant when it does. (1)

Saeed is an independent educated young man working for an advertising firm and lives with his parents. Nadia, who always wears a black robe works for a company and lives alone, a very rare thing in their traditional and religious country. Saeed and Nadia falls in love as their city falls prey to terror and violence. In between they lose their jobs, lose all contacts for a while, but still manage to get together and face the difficult times. After Saeed's mother's death with a stray bullet, Nadia move into Saeed's flat, where he lived with his parents. Both of them try to find a way out of the country. They hear about the magical black doors that could suddenly appear anywhere and lead them to other parts of the world. They manage to find an exit through one of them with the help of an agent. But Saeed's father refuses to leave and decides to remain with the memories of his wife. Saeed and Nadia, with great distress, finally leave the country and reaches Mykonos in Greece. They live in the refugee camp, in their made up tent for a while. Life is not easy and during the time their relationship slowly turns bitter. They later leave with the help of a girl from the hospital who had a special attachment towards Nadia. Now they reach London where they are constantly threatened by the natives for a long period. They live in the large house they entered through the doors until the government decides to build in rehabilitation settlements for the refugees outside the city. Both of them work at the camps for construction of settlements but later decides to leave in an attempt to save their relationship which has turned bad over the time. They reach Marin in California, an island city, where

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Resetting borders: Transnationalism, identity and home in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

Suhana PA

Abstract
Transnationalism refers to the heightened interconnectivity between people and the receding economic and social boundaries among nations. Is the effect of creation of multicultural societies formed as a result of increased immigration and new global economic policies. America often celebrated the transnational nature of its society which invited talents from all over the world and helped them in becoming the most powerful nation. America was home for a lot of immigrants irrespective of their national, racial, religious or ethnic backgrounds. But things suddenly changed with the 9/11 attacks which rebuilt the imaginary borders of nation and nationality. There was increased hostility towards the "Others", especially the Muslim Other. Pakistani novelist Mohsin Hamid portrays this sudden change in the attitude of America and the identity crisis and trauma experienced by the Muslim immigrants in the Post 9/11 scenario in his renowned novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. This paper analyses the portrayal of ideas of Transnationalism, identity and home in the novel with reference to the protagonist Changez.

Keywords: Transnationalism, America, post 9/11 scenario, the Muslim other, identity crisis, belongingness, home

Introduction
Transnationalism, popularized in the Twentieth Century by the American writer Randolph Bourne, introduced a new way of thinking about relationship between cultures. It speaks about the heightened interconnectivity between people and the receding economic and social significance of boundaries among nations. Multicultural societies created as a result of increased immigration caused by new global economic policies, resulted in receding importance of nation and nationality. Randolph Bourne in his renowned essay titled "Transnational America" rejected the then popular idea of America as a "melting pot" where in immigrants from all over the world was expected to assimilate into the so called American culture and tradition. Bourne argued instead that America offers a unique liberty of opportunity and traditional isolation for people from different cultures to hold on to their native ideals, which he believed would lead to a cosmopolitan enterprise. This idea of America as a transnational community surpassing all national, cultural, racial, religious and ethnic differences was very popular and promoted by the country to bring in talent from different parts of the world and thereby become the most powerful country in the world. But things suddenly changed with the attack on the World Trade Center which caused massive destruction and created immense traumatic experiences for the citizens of the country.
After the attack on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001 there was a great shift in the attitude of American society towards its immigrants, especially the Muslim Others. It revealed then cracks and fissures in the grand narrative of globalization. The ideas of nation and nationality were suddenly reestablished with vigour and there was a general hostility towards the Muslim immigrant in the US. It also officially triggered the war against terror which went on to create massive destruction in Middle East and South West Asian Countries. The post 9/11 scenario has been a subject of discussion in literature for a long time. Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* provides a different take on the issue narrating the story through the "Other" and represents the tension between the dominant forces and the minorities in the neo avatar of colonization.

The Paranoid Existence: The Muslim Diaspora in Britain with reference to Kamila Shamsie's Home Fire

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Abstract: The Muslim Diaspora in the west suffers greatly from the Islamophobia and xenophobia in the dominant culture, especially after 9/11. The hatred and prejudice with which they are treated causes a lack of feeling of belongingness in their home country. *Home Fire* by Pakistani British novelist Kamila Shamsie portraits the life of Muslim Diaspora in Britain revolving around the law that permits to revoke citizenship of dual nationals suspected of anti national activities. The paranoia of being under surveillance and lack of acceptance make their lives miserable. They are often vilified for their inability to integrate, neglecting the fact that if the receiving society is hostile the mere act of migration will not act as a catalyst for integrative change

Keywords: Muslim Diaspora, Islamophobia, xenophobia, lack of belongingness, extremism, paranoia

" It is estimated that the number of people of Muslim faith has reached 15 million in Europe, making Islam the continent's second largest religion after Christianity (Hunter 2002)" (Moghissi XIV). There was a huge influx of Muslim migrants and refugees in Europe in the last two decades due to various reasons. However circumstances in the last decades, especially after 9/11 have critically influenced the way in which Muslims are treated in their host countries. There was not even the term 'Muslim Diaspora' thirty years before. It was nationality, ethnicity or colour that defined people and not religion. But today in spite of being different in a hundred ways all immigrants from Islamic countries or of Muslim faith is considered primarily the Muslim Diaspora. People began to look at these groups as Muslims rather than anything else and as a result they began to identify themselves so. As Doug Sanders in his talk on Muslim Diaspora suggests "discussions are not impartial anymore"(Agha Khan) . The prejudice, fear and hatred towards the community is so much so that the Republican candidate in USA runs the election claiming to ban all Muslims and wins. Many Brits are ready to migrate in view of the narrative claiming a flood of Muslim immigrants in Britain in the future.

The contemporary concerns and grievances that they experience in relation to the host countries they live in have created a sense of group identity and solidarity among the Muslim immigrants from very different backgrounds." The dominant stereotypes in the west, the legacies of the Orientalist and colonial perspectives that consider Muslims as essentially different and a homogenous group have made all people from Islamic cultures guilty by association and cast them as potential terrorists" (Saeed 23). The prejudice and hatred have reached such dynamics that even basic human rights of the group are being questioned at times. They are often vilified for their inability to integrate, neglecting the fact that if the receiving society is hostile the mere act of migration will not act as a catalyst for integrative change. The younger generations of these migrants are expected to be more integrative than their parents as they are open to the culture from an early age. But Heigdi Moghissi in her work suggests that a large number of them actually seem to move away from their predecessors attempts in filling in due to the hostile experiences they have witnessed. They celebrate their distinctness through religious exhibitionism as a means of resistance and in very rare cases even end up in radicalism.

Home Fire by British Pakistani writer Kamila Shamsie is a modern reworking of Sophocles's great play *Antigone* and revolves around the lives of three British Muslim siblings of Pakistani descent. It is a story of familial