



*An Annual Publication of the
Journalism Club*
AUXILIUM COLLEGE
(Autonomous)
VELLORE - 632 006

Sibyline
An Annual Literary Journal
XVIII Edition

By
The Journalism Club
&
The PG & Research Department of English

AUXILIUM COLLEGE (Autonomous)
Vellore-632006

2018-19

From the Editor's Desk

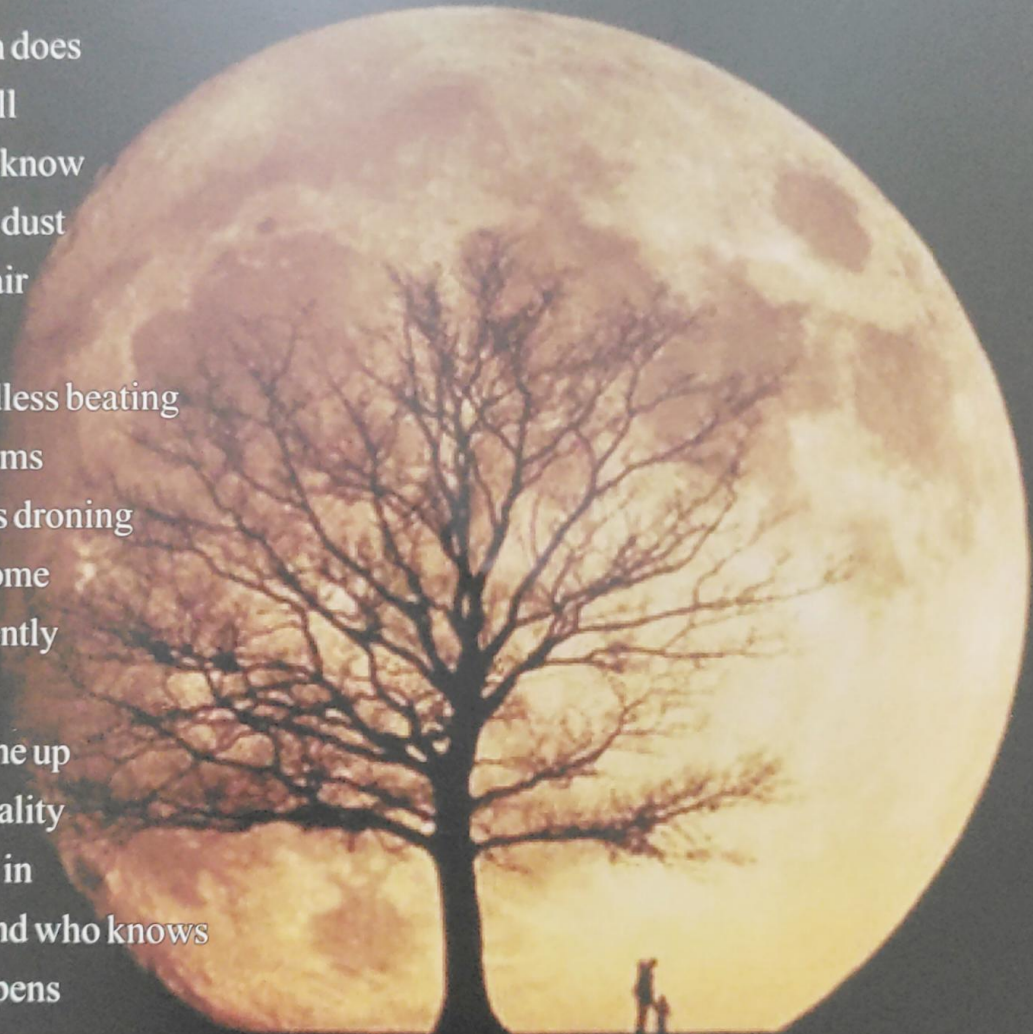
Then and Now
As the echoes of songs
We sang yesterday
Fall on deaf ears
Their lyrics wasted
Without a care

For whom does
the bell toll
we do not know
All one in dust
And thin air

When endless beating
Of the drums
Or endless droning
Sounds come
Intermittently

Waking one up
To punctuality
Who goes in
And out and who knows
What happens
In between

But in some remote
Edge of a moonbeam
Lies the desperate longing
for articulation
Rejuvenating Sibylline!



Dr. VERNUM CECILIA P.A.A.
Associate Professor & Head,

KISSES

With a mouth teeming with songs and stories,
A tongue bearing scars
From dragging it against rugged thorns,
To dipping it into the palms of roses,
I have left a thousand kisses in my time,
So that you could remember me
At least by one.

The human-sized hole

Look out
And you'll see a figure.
A coat with a hat and shoes
Walking amongst the trees,
Drifting like a passing fog,
Looking and not looking,
Seeing and not seeing,
Fleeing and not fleeing,
Keeling and not keeling,
Look
As they walk with uncertain steps
With the absolute certainty;
As they shiver in their still bodies.
Watch,
As they rub their heels
On the shells of time,
On the shards of their past selves,
Balancing,
Slipping like a shattering daydream,
On the cold fingertips of their morality

Look out
And see that figure,
Travelling in secret,
Quite openly.
Look out,
There's me.

Fog shifting

As you drift away like a dream
That I would soon blink awake from,
I wished that I could stud our way
With lamps lit
From the fumes of the love
And laughter
That we made,
So that I could
Show the world and myself
That you came.
And we would gaze after you
For another day.

-Uzma Fathima
I.M.A. English

ORDINARILY EXTRAORDINARY

She sat at the same bench

She has sat on for the past 8years

She dreamt dreams that turned into reality

She loved him infinitely

She longed to hold him silently

She sighed at the thought of his name

She took in deep breaths at a glance

Of a man so beautifully moulded

By the Creator of the universe

To her he was not only SIGHT but a Taste of everything

That she had ever imagined love should be

They danced at the sound of the chirping birds

Under a mistletoe Tree ,there first kiss bloomed in forever and a day

How she loved without a limit

Nor a question Tag!

Attached to what she so willingly felt within her inner self

Her expressiveness for what she came to Embrace in the

Silence of his smile was all that made her live everyday

The World as she moved in her sky blue dress every morning

Whispered into her ears ,that she had all that she had ever wanted

The wind blow from north to south ,east to west

Singing to the Genre in her soul

A genre so unique

That no instrument would ever be required for it to be played

It was a sweet song to those who saw her face glow with radiant beauty

Reflected from the inside

What a love she possessed for that gentle soul who heart had only known

Mathematics!!

But yet he solved the riddle of his own heart and found the answer

To be equal to her Love, forever knit in the most beautiful fabric

Called Eternity

To be without him would be like suicide but yet she had to Let him go

Even if it meant ,her Losing her own life

Pain is now what lingers in her heart but she is glad she had all the time

Only spent with him

Every moment blossomed with sparkles of unconditional love

And this she has to carry her all through the rest of her life

TO LOVE HIM FOREVER

BUT LETING HIM GO IS THE HARDEST DECISION SHE HAD EVER MADE

FOR THE BOTH OF THEM

But what an Ordinary Extraordinary feeling....

Poem by:Tonga Tamara .p(iii English A)

The Voyage Of Self-Discovery And Feminist Shades In Shashi Deshpande's

The Dark Holds No Terror

Abstract:

The paper intends to explore the theme of self discovery and identity in Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. Woman is Quest for equality, autonomy, self realization, independence and individual actualization become significant .The pursuit is triggered off by the crisis in their lives, which make them to strive heroically to overcome their cultural barriers created by society. The study also attempts an enquiry into the intense sufferings of Indian womanhood who has got estranged from self due to conventions and rituals. Patriarchal society, which have inbound stereotype of how a women should follow the norms of hierarchal society. The novel depicts societal temperaments of gender equality indistinctive and different shades.

TDHNT narrates the story of a marriage on the rocks. The protagonist Saritha is a successful lady doctor. The discord and the disillusionment of the educated woman in a tradition bound Patriarchal and typical Indian Society is the theme of the novel. There is the ultimate realization at the end. She undergoes a stretched mental predicament and a long drawn introspection. Women's quest for self exploration is the principal theme of this novel.

Keywords:

Patriarchy, Oppression, Self-Realization, gender discrimination.

The author reveals that all her characters are concerned with their 'selves' and they learn to be honest to themselves. The novels of Shashi Deshpande are about women's self quest and struggle to free themselves from the restrictions imposed by

society, culture and nature. The masculine and feminine roles are not biologically fixed but socially constructed. It is the story of Saritha, a doctor who is disappointed as a daughter and wife. She has the rapport between her husband and her mother but a little constrained. She is unable to identify herself as a beloved daughter to her mother and a loving wife to her husband. She is guilt stricken and afraid to be an independent woman. When she grows up she is unable to get the true affection of her mother, since she is born as female typically treated inferiorly by his brother, mother. She is treated all the more vulnerable, When she has fallen love and married to an outcast person.

She realizes that women were treated as mere parasites in a patriarchal society. She regrets that she has fallen in love for a forged egoistic man. Manohar, husband of Saru has got less financial outcome than his wife. He tortures saru every night with the physical abuse and mental torments because he can't accept the real growth of a woman, since he is a male chauvinistic person. Women were treated as an object of sex. She understands the identity for women is captivated in the norms of male prejudiced society. She realizes that women always become a puppet in the hands of men. Saritha has become a prey to his husband Manohar everyday. She becomes the victim of Marital-Rape. If truth be told, saritha earns a higher status than her husband. Manohar is an egoist and dogmatic person who couldn't tolerate the development and progression of his wife. He tortures her physically and mentally to prove that he has the vulnerable traits of male bigotry. Violence against women takes many forms and shapes in social, political cultural and it has diverse forms.

Saru in her gloomy life undergoes the difficult journey into her and learns to free herself of guilt, shame, humiliation and she is also initiated into the mystery of

human existence. The epigraph of the novel, "You are your own refuge There is no other refuge this refuge is hard parental home cannot be a refuge".

She understands that neither her father nor her husband Manohar can be her refuge. She is her own refuge. She has to overcome herself; she has to kill the ghosts of guilt, inferiority complex that haunt her; she has to find her own way to salvation. These women have intense wounds in their heart and mind which makes their life a never ending trauma. They are imposed to vulnerability and brutal violence. Saru becomes the voice for these oppressed victims who can verbally articulate but they become emotionally numb because of the tragic life situations.

It is to be noted that Saru, at the end of the novel, has come to realize that her profession as a doctor is her own and she will decide what to do with it. She will no longer be a puppet. Her marriage is a shadow. She held on to the marriage because she did not want to prove her mother right. Only she can be her refuge. Everyone is lonely and that there is no cause for despair. Saru's character can be truly understood only in the light of psychological precepts. First, she carries within her the sad effects of gender discrimination. Social psychology deals with the stereotypes about the two genders. Saru's feminism springs out as a reaction to this discriminatory psychological set up of society and her parents in particular. Secondly, Saru also has the deep-rooted mentality of an unwanted child. Psychologists have dealt in detail with the mental makeup of an unwanted child. Thirdly and most tragically, Saru suffers the bruises of a terrible physical trauma on her psyche. Shashi Deshpande's major concern is to depict the anguish and conflict of the modern educated Indian women caught between patriarchy and tradition on the one hand, and self-expression, individuality and dependence for the women on the other. The novel explores the quest of the women to fulfill herself as a human being, independent of her traditional role as daughter, wife

and mother. She has examined a variety of common domestic crisis, which trigger off the search. Deshpande's concern and sympathy are primarily for the woman. But on the social level, these women who have been struggling since ages to assert themselves, are still being heckled by their male counterparts and forced to remain silent.

Saru's character can be truly understood only in the light of psychological precepts. First, she carries within her the sad effects of gender discrimination. Social psychology deals with the stereotypes about the two genders. Saru's feminism springs out as a reaction to this discriminatory psychological set up of society and her parents, husband in particular.

The novel outlines the lack of humanity and kindness and about the need of women rights in typical Indian countries. These women have intense wounds in their heart and mind which makes their lives as never ending trauma. They are imposed to vulnerability and brutal violence. Saritha becomes the voice for these oppressed victims who can verbally articulate but they become emotionally numb because of the tragic life situations. The voice of this newly emerged class of woman, who have the same education as the men. A voice of protest against the marginalized condition of women as a class is also audible in Sashi Deshpandey's works. The bold heroines, having moral courage necessary for self-assertion replace the meek and submissive heroines who were accepted as the standard women characters.

In Shashi Deshpande's novels, we find a variety of characters too. In Deshpande's literary world there are characters taken from almost all the sections of life. They are medical practitioners and writers, educated housewives, uneducated ones and maidservants. Besides poverty, bereavement and such other common adversities,

there are some causes of suffering exclusively for the female. While analyzing her novels, we can realize that a similar progress in the protagonists' life is portrayed throughout the novel. The protagonist Saru is shown in a state of confusion at the beginning. Gradually as the novel unfolds, they go through a process of redemption, introspection, self-analysis and self-realization. At the end, they emerge as more vibrant, confident, more organized of themselves, and significantly more hopeful. The men who are arrogant and aggressive toward women are the one who have the worst inferiority complexes. Simone de Beauvoir says that, the problem of women has always been a problem of men. Men dominate culture, which women reflected as a prey that caused a double consciousness:

To the dispersed, contingent, and multiple existence of *women*, mythic thinking opposes the Eternal Feminine, unique and fixed; if the definition given is contradicted by the behavior of real flesh-and-blood women, it is women who are wrong: it is said not that Femininity is an entity but that women are not feminine. It's true! One of us exclaimed. (Delve 16/7)

Women have been submissive in a patriarchal society from the early ages to the contemporary period. The removal of the systemic, universal devaluing of women is the fundamental step to eradicate the male chauvinism in the society. It would be dynamic if women give equal opportunities to succeed. Women empowerment develops a sense of social awakening, autonomy and self confidence that would liberate and enhance women in all walks of life.

The novel gives light and hope to women who were suppressed. The society is full of paradoxes and contradictions. Here a female is considered a peripheral member of the family. As the daughter is closest to the mother, this insecurity is rubbed on to

her too. Saritha haven't received true love neither from her husband nor from her mother. Saritha have been isolated and The role of a daughter and looks forward to the role of a wife with the hope that her new role will help her in winning their freedom. Saritha in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* too, under goes similar trauma, confronts reality. At the end, realizes that the dark no longer holds any terrors to her. She survives in a male dominated world that offers no easy outs to women. She neither surrenders nor does escape from the problems. She accepts the harsh realities with great strength accept the challenge of her own responsibility. Her feminity being brutally crushed, she loses forever the dreams of sentiment and passion. Love, Romance, both, she knew too well, were illusions and not relevant to my life.

One may put forth a word about Saru's dual life. For the world, she is a scared, tortured woman. She is going through quite an abnormal pattern of life, which in the daytime wore a white coat and an air of confidence and knowing and at night became a terrified, trapped animal.

Simon de Beauvoir concludes her text by arguing that genuine equality between the sexes has not yet been achieved in her society, however women would be beneficial if, there is a good balance and equality for both genders. She describes how the independent woman, still faces greater challenges than men, because traditional values regarding marriage, reproduction, and femininity continue to marginalize her still today. However, she ends on the optimistic note that if women are given equal opportunities, they can achieve just as much as men can.

In the recent era women in society were largely enhanced by women activists and supported by the feminist movements that have grant them greated rights. These rights make women liberated in society with equal rights.

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R.MONISHA

M.Phil. English

The Marginalisation of Women In Mahasweta Devi's *Rudali*

Abstract:

This paper is about how socially and economically backward women are and their sufferings for survival. Sanichari worked hard to build her household and almost she was the bread winner of the family. She was directed by Dulan, a high class money lender, in all her bad times into a right path. Her life was filled with sorrows, sufferings, tragedies and she was the victim ill-treatment throughout the novella. Sanichari was left alone in certain point by her companions but it was replaced by another, she never had a constant companion. The only person who helped and supported Sanichari was Dulan who had major role as Sanichari. Only Sanichari and Dulan constantly travel till the end of the novella. By the end, it was Dulan who advised Sanichari to become a *Rudali*.

Key Words: Main stream, Subalternity, Right patriarchal society, Oppressions and suppressions faced by socio-economically weak women, Women marginalization.

Introduction

Mahasweta Devi was an Indian Bengali fiction writer and social activist. She worked for the rights and empowerment of the tribal people. She was honoured with various literary awards such as the Sahitya Akademi Awards (in Bengali), Jnanpith Award and Ramon Magsaysa Award along with Indian civilian awards Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan. Mahasweta Devi in her fiction, depicted the brutal oppressions by upper caste landlords. She fought for the marginalized. This novella *Rudali* was later made into a Hindi movie released in 1993 and was directed by Kalpana Lajmi.

This film was selected as the Indian entry for the best foreign language film at the 66th academy awards, but was not accepted as a nominee.

The title is a reference to a custom practiced in certain areas of India where women of lower caste are hired as professional mourners upon the death of upper castes. These women are referred to as *Rudali* literally translated as “female weeper” or “weeping women”. Their job is to cry and wail over the corpses, to express the grief of family members who won’t display their emotion due to their social status.

The Indian constitution recognized that the culture of the majority influences the way in which society and government might express themselves. In such a case, size can be disadvantage and lead to the marginalization of the relatively smaller communities. Feminism argues that women are marginalized due to the patriarchal structure of society. Women experience marginalization in terms of gender, class and age. Unfortunately, many women over the years have become prisoners of the stereotyping which men have imposed on them. In case of genders, the stereotypes are blindly accepted. This works against women because they voluntarily exclude themselves from roles in society. Men use this stereotyping cleverly to keep women out of socially influential jobs.

The plot tells the story of a woman named Sanichari, who was abandoned by her mother after the death of her father. Throughout her life she only faces misfortune but she never shed tears. This creates great difficulty in her later life once when she was called to become a *Rudali*.

Rudali is a powerful indictment of the socio-economic system in India. It is ironical that women have been a victim of dichotomy where women is worshipped as goddess and whipped as a slave, explicit and marginalized by the upper class. *Rudali*

shows the transformation of Sanichari from suffer into an empowered being. Sanichari, the protagonist is a ganju by caste representing the gender subalternity who is of both low caste and woman simultaneously. Mahasweta Devi depicted the life of Sanichari in such a way to show the social status and condition of a woman in the existing rigid patriarchal society. Sanichari with other villagers of the same community suffers desperate poverty. *Rudali* is set against the rigid patriarchal society and the exploitative system, the issue of survival being socio-economically poor women.

Literally “subaltern” refers to any person or group of inferior rank and station, whether because of race, class, gender or religion. Subalternity is subordination, inferiority, exploitation of the inferior by the superior which became inevitable in the present capitalist society. It emphasizes that the life of a person as a women solely depends on the economic and social status of her family. Women are doubly marginalized first being born in lower caste and secondly born as women and they are forced to abide all rules and regulation.

The novella begins with Sanichari was cursed by her mother-in-law. Sanichari did not cry when her mother-in-law was died even if she had tried too she was unable to wring out tears. Her mother-in-law was died in great pain crying out “Food, give me food!” (71-72). This implies that they were suffering for food even once a day. At that time her husband and brother-in-law were away in prison, Sanichari as a single woman without the help of men folk had to carry out the necessary rituals and cremation dusk was ascending. Following the death of Sanichari’s mother-in-law, her brother-in-law and sister-in-law were died. Sanichari never cried for the death of anyone in her family instead after each one’s death she felt appeased that the stomach of other might be filled enough. The recurring deaths in her family threatened

Sanichari of the rituals and funeral ceremony that they had to find the neighbours. Sanichari did not know whether to worry for the dead or for the rituals that had to be carried out.

As all her family members passed away, Sanichari had to live an insecure life throughout her life time. She herself without losing her dignity fought against the patriarchal society and worked hard for survival. This novella lets out the sufferings and exploitations of poor. The upper class landlords, Malik-mahajans users their power to keep the suppressed, more suppressed.

After the death of Sanichari's brother-in-law, they inherited a piece of land where Sanichari and her husband erected a hut. Leaving her six years old son Budhua, she worked shoulder to shoulder with her husband in order to build her household. She earned in all the ways that she could. Sanichari's husband was died of cholera drinking the milk used for bathing Shiva idol. There she was exploited by the priest Mohanlal. In order to appease Mohanlal, Sanichari was forced into debt to Ramavatar Singh where she received only Rs.20 but put her thumbprint on a bond paper that she would repay Rs.50 through bonded labour on his field for next 5 years. Here, it was shown that Sanichari was exploited by both the men, Mohanlal and Ramavatar Singh. Even at this time also Sanichari did not cry, she was busy in thinking of her son and survival in the rest of her life.

After the death of her husband Sanichari was accompanied by her son Budhua. Budhua was a sensitive, thoughtful, gentle, and caring both towards his mother and his wife. He understood both these different women and was capable of being compassionate and not judgemental. Sanichari's daughter-in-law was a plump, always in hungry, she would never be content with an ailing husband, a poverty stricken

existence. Sanichari's daughter-in-law was a whore, interested in working in Lachman's field and was allowed by her husband, as a means of an extra earning and to indulge her unappeased appetite, Sanichari valued her son much that she got upset when she came to experience of losing of him. Sanichari found her son dead and her crying grandson Haroa deserted by her daughter-in-law. By this occasion also Sanichari did not cry, she was hard pressed of her grandson. After sometimes Sanichari learnt that her daughter-in-law had become whore. This indicated that she could not learn much even if she worked hard too and for her survival she opts to become a whore.

Dulan provided Sanichari with a job at railway line. After Budhua's death, Sanichari experienced the support and bonding offered by her community members. Sanichari herself was fully aware of the necessity to survive with community. "In order to survive, the poor and the oppressed need the support of the other poor and oppressed" (16). This shows that in bad times the community members helped and supported Sanichari. Mahasweta Devi here emphasized one's survival in community. Soon after sometime Sanichari felt normal again, she brought up Haroa as best as she could. When Haroa was fourteen, Sanichari was able to get a job for Haroa. Gradually, Haroa grew bored and restless, he ran away. Sanichari did not let it go, she went on searching for Haroa from one market to another and in other places, and unfortunately she couldn't find Haroa. But she didn't cry for Haroa. Once again Sanichari was isolated, throughout her life she was left alone and was none to accompany her.

Sanichari was depressed searching for Haroa. Sanichari met Bikhni. The relationship between Sanichari and Bikhni rediscovered each other as aging, lonely woman and decided to team up. These women were not related but they were sailing

in the same boat that both had been abandoned by their family members and struggling to find the means of survival. Sanichari invites Bikhni to share her little house and it will be a company for her, a place for Bikhni to stay. In return, Bikhni offers her nest-egg and Rs.20, they proved that community coheres irrespective of family and blood-ties. After spending the money Sanichari and Bikhni went to meet Dulan to get advised for their further step in their life.

It was Dulan who contributed much to the growing empowerment of Sanichari and he presented her with survival strategies. Dulan guided Sanichari in all her bad times and gave her his moral support and taught her to adapt and survive with the situation. Dulan's role in this novella was to condemn and criticize the upper class landlords, their society, their greed, their corruption and their hypocrisy. Dulan made turning point in the lives of many women who were suffering in their life like Sanichari and helped them to take their first step towards their empowerment.

Rajya Sabha chairman Hamid Ansari joined members in expressing concern that still women are facing inequality and marginalization in education, job opportunities and health. Women are still haunted by crime and violence directed against them including female infanticide, demand for dowry, child abuse, and female harassment.

Dulan suggested Sanichari and Bikhni to take their job as *Rudalis* because upper class people hire rituals to wail over the corpse that they were busy in money settlement, they had no time to cry. It was the habit of the upper class who won't care for a person when they were alive but once when they die they make a huge display of it. It was shocking to Sanichari to become a *Rudali* that never cried in her lifetime even for the death of her husband or for her son. Later, Sanichari decided to become a

Rudali that she shed tears only for her livelihood. Suddenly Bikhni informed Sanichari of her wish to go a brief visit to Ranchi in the hope that she will find her son. After Bikhni's departure Sanichari felt quite loneliness, companionless situation again. Few days later there came a news to Sanichari that Bikhni was dead, she was devastated. But Sanichari did not cry that money, rice, new clothes without getting in return, tears are useless luxury.

Again Sanichari went to meet Dulan. She was advised by Dulan to offer service garnered from the whore bazaar where she could get many as *Rudalis*. As directed by Dulan, Sanichari forms a group and offered to empower themselves as she herself had. These women found an identity for themselves in the society. Sanichari dauntlessly confronted her social superiors manipulating the situation cunningly to trap them in their own hypocrisy. Death, to all was a mournful occasion but for *Rudalis* it was jubilant occasion that they could earn only during that time alone.

Rudali is a powerful story which covers so many important topics. This story challenges the reader of their ideas on poverty and feminism. The reality of poverty is retained throughout the novella. It remained that attitude and community are the keys to surviving lives hardship like Sanichari. Usually, the rich won't spend even a penny for the sick. It is seen that it was an important aspect for the rich to give the deceased person a good funeral so that in death their status is elevated.

Conclusion

|*Rudali* can also be considered as woman's text where women played their roles against the rigid patriarchal society. Sanichari courageously faced the problems and succeeded in her life. Sanichari was exploited by the feudal lords and with the guidance of Dulan she discovers a new identity, her social role in her real life.

Although, Mahasweta Devi exposes the sufferings of the women and exploitations by the rich, Mahasweta Devi character of Sanichari implementing that women can live a successful even in challenging life if they worked hard without losing their dignity.

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Nithya D
M.Phil. English

Sociology In Aravind Adiga's *Last Man In Tower*

Abstract

Literature and art is a reflection of society and social life. Society is a place where human behaviorism is seen. The study of human behaviorism which takes place in a society systemically is known as sociology. Sociology is known for its perspective. Every individual perspective is different. The society abides with the elements like anthropocentric habits, political science, economics, culture, race, caste, technology and materials. The study of these elements in a society has been theorized in collaboration with literature by many theorists. According to theorist Frederick Engels, the sociological approach became a scientific method of literary interpretation. Frederick Engels focused on economics and social class of a society. The economic condition with social class in human behaviorism is viewed by Aravind Adiga in the novel *Last Man in Tower*.

Keywords

Social class, economic condition, power and powerless, human behaviors, capitalism, urbanization.

Last Man in Tower is a work published in 2011 by HarperCollins India and it is a second novel of Adiga. The micro observation in *Last man in Tower* describes the economic status of the people live in Vishram society, Mumbai. Mumbai is a place carries over with economic status of life. It shines with human behaviorisms, practices, habits in social class. In Adiga's *Last Man in Tower* social mobility, social class, materialism, technology, urbanization, consumerism, political deprivation,

economic exploitation, social marginalization and spiritual subjugation of poor are projected.

The research paper concentrates on all these elements in *Last Man in Tower*. As Engels argues, in the economic factor Adiga shows how people become greedy and materialists which differentiates people from social class. Especially Indian people struggle behind economic, infrastructure, politics, social class and technology. In this novel Dharman Shah wants to lift his economic status. He acquires the flat which named Tower A and Tower B. the residents are forced to move away from the flat by offering them their needs. The flat has been credited with decoration of politics and economics with the word urbanization. By using the note of urbanization the politics of a single person extracts the life of many people in the society. The capitalist assumption of Dharman Shah is seen in the novel. He is the antagonist in reality but people think Masterji is the antagonist who does not want to leave the flat which brings political and economic essence present in the novel,

A dirty business, construction and he had come up through its dirtiest part. Redevelopment. If you enjoy fish, you have to swallow a few bones. He made no apology for what he had had to do to get here.
(LMT 288)

In describing the residential place the status of tower A and tower B has difference in description. Here starts the process of discrimination. The social class of Tower A is higher while comparing to Tower B residents. In the residential place the discrimination over social class occurs. There is no equality between each other in accordance to economics and social status. The political actions in the society dwell on the human behaviorism.

Dharman Shah, who has power, withdraws the powerless residents from the flat by providing amount of money as offers. The power of higher class people and powerless of the middle class people is projected by Adiga.

The city of wealth was playing its usual cat-and-mouse games with migrants: gives them a sniff of success and money in one breath, and makes them wonder about the value of success and the point of money in the next.(LMT 322)

The power attains through social class and economic level. Humans are born equally. But class differ each other. Especially in Indian background class is taken into note for the development of country. It results in the economic status of the country. Such economic status divides the class of the people in a society. Due to division of the social class the variation between people arose. The variation results in the difference in human behaviorism. The human behaviorism in contemporary life fades away from culture, traditional practices and morality due to the rising of modernism.

In Last Man in Tower Masterji is a person stands for tradition, morality and simplicity.

“...tears reached Vishram Society like echoes from a distant battlefield.”(LMT 38) He is the only person who does not want to leave the flat. He is very much attached to the flat because of the memories of his wife and daughter which are in his house. He simply cannot move away by leaving his memories, “Masterji walked behind the marching band towards VT, and felt for the first time since his wife had died – that he was not alone in the world.” (LMT 302)

Though his son, who is rich, asks him to join his family, he denies his son's offer. The harmony between his presence and his memories over his wife and daughter is the reason for not leaving the flat. He saves money for nothing and possess idea of saving money throughout his life is imbedded in his mind. The characteristic of Masterji in society shows the social behavior of human society's concern over money.

Except Masterji others from the flat have become greedy over money which satisfies their needs from the offerings and some residents have satisfied with needed materials. The others from the flat leave that flat when they gain specific amount of money according to their status level except Masterji. 'I have lesson for you old man: if you don't leave the flat, there will be trouble for you.' (LMT 233) This shows the political affairs in the society. The people have been bounded with money and materials. As they wish the materials and money have been offered. The offerings made them blind. The originality has been lost. The political activities in the society are the boundary for the people and it is an activist.

The powerful politics turns moral people to be immoral and materialists. Mrs. Puri the good and helping neighbor of Masterji who flirts with him once, now turns as an enemy and life killer. The politics and materialism diverts her to be antagonist and finally she became a murderer. The money made her antagonist in the novel. At the same time the political role behind her satisfactory takes her and other neighbors to the extreme level of hunger for money. The money and materials are deriving from the political issues. The politics in the society is the main role. It leads the society. It is the reason for change in society. Changes in society deal with the human behaviorism. The power of capitalism attains through economic status of the specific person:

...in this world, there is a line: on one side are the men who cannot get things done, and on the other side are the men who can. And not one in a hundred will cross that line.(LMT 229)

The power played a role of a weapon to threaten Masterji. The pitiful situation turned to an end for his life. He has been murdered with the help of his neighbors. The sense of belongings has been lost. The social realism and materialism in the novel play a vital role which takes to the place of migration, displacement and identity crisis.

The struggle for money and economic status between the power and powerless people ends at the cost of life of the powerless. The situation of economic condition and behavior of humans in attaining the needy and worldly pleasure throw the people in dangerous surroundings. The social class and economic condition throw people to lawless, corruption, greed, immoral, disintegration, amassed wealth, misery and predators as triumph people of integrity in the context of change of human behaviors.

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S. Porkodi
M.Phil. English

A Critical Study On Chiyo Kitahara's *The Key holes and Playful Wind*: An
Ecological Perspective

Abstract

This presentation primarily focuses on man's relation with nature. It is an observation between the romantic writers and the contemporary writers who used nature's signification according to their own interpretation and assumption of life. This study concentrates on how the poets used escapism from the trails of life through their different modes of expression. And, it also encompasses on poet's feelings, emotions and symbols to understand their viewpoint of life.

Key words

Ecology, eco-criticism, perception, emotion

Ecocriticism which appraised as the result of romantic movement, concerns about man's connection with nature. It appreciates the aesthetic, the sense of uncertainty and the impulses of human emotions with the elements of nature. Just like the human impulses which arise as an immediate force on appreciation of a feeling or an emotion. McDougall says emotion as a "Complex state involving heightened perception of an object or situation as a wide spread bodily change, an appraisal of felt attraction or repulsion, and behaviour organised for approach" (POLH 42). In the same manner poets approached nature and connected their emotions with environment through their emotional impulse.

Wordsworth and Robert Frost personified nature as a being. They objectified nature so that they could find their inner man resting on the womb of mother nature. In such a manner they found comfort and meaning of life as a second born child to

nature. Because they found life being weaved by fate. As Victor Frankl found his existence saying to the readers that “live as if you were living for the second time and had acted as if you were living for the second time and acted as wrongly the first time as you are about to act now” (MSFM151).

Similarly, these poets found nature being driving force from worldly desires. They found nature being a path finder, a moral influencer, a nurturer and a spiritual guide for finding the meaning of inner self. By which they found another man or the insight or another self through the mirror of nature with which they found body and mind being modified by the elements of nature. As Rabindranath Tagore says another man is:

not a physical but the personal man; which has its likes and dislikes, and wants to find something to fulfil its needs of love. This personal man is found in the region where we are free from all necessity- above the needs, both of body and mind- above the expedient and useful. It is the highest in man- this personal man. And it has personal relation of its own with the great world and comes to it for something to satisfy personality.(P2)

In such a way, nature poets used their impulses to appreciate nature by connecting their own personal self with that of nature's force. Some writers worshipped nature as paving way to drive their emotion while some used nature's force as a disposition to find an order within themselves. They found peace and healing effect in environment while modernist writers express their connection with nature as a threat against the rapid under changing order in the society.

Modernist Japanese poetess Chiyo Kitahara has started publishing her poetry from 2005. From then, her work started accentuating influence among local readers. Most of her works are originally written in Japanese and is later been translated into English language. In General, her themes revolve around memories and soul connection with nature. This Modernist writer communicates her elevated temperaments with that of nature. Similarly, her poem *the keyholes* begins with the annihilate meaning,

Destruction may be the result- A silver key, Put to a dark place.

. Though the perception in this poetry begins with the destruction of overwhelming consciousness of mind with its repetitive, continuing and tedious habits. She finds her existence being confused and continuous reoccurrence of things as absurd, as the bible verse says

So, I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem;
Also, my wisdom remained with me. Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for my toil. Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it, and again, all was vanity and a chasing after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun. (ECC 700)

While the verse talks about escapism from earthly desires through toil, Chiyo Kitahara in her poem *playful wind* confesses her nostalgic toil of life being insensitive. She desires to escape like a wind which has no path or a direction. She uses the symbol of wind expressing her inner personality quest to vanish from the torments of life without confronting trails of life. Eventually she uses wind as an

animate thing to illustrate her expression, as psychologist Sigmund Freud also says in his work *Totem and Taboo* that,

The technique of animism clearly and unmistakably shows the tendency of forcing the laws of psychic life upon the reality of things under the conditions where the spirits did not yet have to play any role and could still be taken as objects of magic treatment (51).

The second symbol used by the poet is "vanity" which is not clearly stated. In western art peacock symbolises vanity. In renaissance period vanity represents seven deadly sins. And vanity talks about women using mirror to comb which tells about allowing the gratification of human nature to exist, while forgetting the confrontation to find the inner self. And Samuel Johnson in his poetry *the vanity of human wish* talks about the schemes to escape from reality saying that,

remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
and watched the busy scenes of crowded life;
then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
o'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
where wavering man, betrayed by venturous pride, (120)

Instead of allowing fate to predesignate life the poet finds a path to find a way to escape from turmoil. Unlike the romantic poets who used nature as a healing source while contemporary nature poets use nature as an avenging desire. Through which the poet finds a fathomable meaning of human life and existence of self in this universe.

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Priscilla.A

M.Phil. English

Abstract

To analyse the Ecocritical view in Rabindranath Tagore's two poems *Breezy April* and *Palm Tree* is the focus of this article. During 19th and 20th century Bengali Literature, music and Indian art is reshaped and highly dominated by a well known versatile writer called Rabindranath Tagore, famously remembered for National Anthem of India. He is often referred to as 'the Bard of Bengal'. At the age of sixteen, he released his first substantial poems, which were seized upon by literary authorities as long- lost classics. Most of his works borrow mostly from the lives of common people. And he is well known as a Poet. Poetry, the genre itself has deep connection with nature. 'Ecocriticism', the emerging theory which mainly focuses on the study of Literature and Physical Environment; celebrates, values and creates awareness and humanity of making this world equal for human being and Nature. How Ecocritical concepts are presented in the selected poems of Tagore is primarily discussed here.

Key Words: Nature, Ecocriticism and Poetry

INTRODUCTION

Rabindranath Tagore(1861- 1941) is considered to be Asia's first Nobel Laureate, who is the first non- European to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.He is the son of Debendranath Tagore and Sarada Devi. He is the fourteenth of fifteen children but grew up as the youngest member in the household as his siblings died earlier. His sister Swanakumari Devi was one of the first woman novelists in Bengal, and the entire family displayed such talent in Literature, music, art, philosophy and mathematics. The family members run their own journal in which Tagore's first poem was published. Tagore excelled in many genres no doubt to

mention him primarily as a poet. Tagore's creative output includes more than 1000 poems, over 2000 songs, eight novels and nearly two dozen plays, eight and more volumes of short fiction, twelve volumes of travel writings, and a mass of prose on literary, social, religious, political and cultural issues. Tagore's patriotism for India is unquestionable and our 'National Anthem' owes itself to his skills. He is sometimes referred to as "the Bard of Bengal".

ECOCRITICISM

During the 19th and 20th century a new theory of reading nature writing emerged, came as a reaction to man's selfish anthropocentric attitudes. Environment as a whole now turn as a great threat to human society as well as the mother earth because of man's irresponsible behaviours. To warn and spread awareness among people 'Ecocriticism' as a theory plays its major role in the field of Literature.

NATURE AND TAGORE

As a poet, Tagore preferred Nature which is carved with beautiful imagination in his poems. His poems recollect the beauty of Natural elements in a single spot with fantastic word descriptions, describing the beauty of nature in a different light. Here, the focus is on two poems of Tagore *Breezy April* and *Palm Tree*. "To him Nature is not only a store - house of beauty – of colour, form, smell and rhythm but also the veritable symbol of the emotional and conceptual truth"(Cordelia 1).

BREEZY APRIL

Breezy April, vagrant April,

Rock me in your swing of music(1-2).

The title of this poem itself gives a thrilling effect, as the imagination flows with the spring season's Breeze, which is more pleasant than other Seasons. 'April' comes

under the season of Spring. It is considered to be the season of new generation, where seeds take root and new buds blossom. In this poem, Tagore wonderfully presents the beauty of nature in a Romantic way, giving a majestic view of considering Tree as the Lover and the Breeze as its Lady love. As the tree speaks with the breeze, a spontaneous series of images arises, where the tree sees the breeze in various forms and moods. The tree which feels lonely by the wayside is thrilled with the arrival and sweet touching surprises of breeze which is vagrant. Tagore also considers the April breeze as the lullaby of a mother.

I know all your fitful fancies,

Leafy Language, flitting footsteps,-(11- 12)

The tree is very proud and confident in knowing each move of its beloved that is, the breeze's language, footsteps and fitful fancies. It expresses the burst of blossom because of the whisper of Breeze.

All my leaves break into tumult

Of surrender at your kisses(15- 16).

Here, the incorporation of naturalistic elements presents the Ecocritical point of view in literature of comparing nature with human characteristics, which presents the unnoticeable truth that both human and nature are equal in this world and none of them has the rights to cross their limits. Here, the tree and breeze are with ultimate reflection of human love, giving a transparent view of Literature's incorporation of nature to present the human characteristics with a high level of imagination.

PALM TREE

Palm- tree: single- legged giant,

topping other trees, (1- 2)

Here Tagore describes the description of a Palm tree, which is tall enough to peer through the clouds and feels superior, which is compared with the human nature of pride; that the palm tree is showing arrogance of being tall. The palm tree has the desire to fly and thinks of its leaves as wings to fly. When the wind shakes the tree, it just seems to express its wish through tossing of its head. Palm tree with the human qualities of arrogance, superiority and overconfidence creates an illusion of thinking itself superior. And as soon as the wind dies down the mind of the tree returns to reality where it recalls earth as its mother and again comes back to its earthly corner which gives us the message that whatever heights one reaches, we should not forget the roots, which is real, others are just illusion.

The tree seems to express its wish

In the tossing of its head(7- 8)

Conclusion

An ecological perspective in the Literary field creates a number of new perspectives. Indian literature and philosophy has a deep connection with Nature and Natural resources. It is marked from ancient to cyber age that Indian Literature is thronged in environmental concerns. Even regional literature has the representation of nature. They teach us how to live peacefully sharing this world both for human beings and nature. "The common message is to keep nature in her pristine beauty; let's not destroy what we cannot create" (Mishra 170).

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V. S. Nandhini Devi,

MPhil English

Difficult Daughters

Abstract

This research paper elucidates the self - discovery of women in the patriarchal society. The novel *Difficult Daughters* is written by Manju Kapur. It was published in 1996 and it received a great response from the readers. She is the winner of Commonwealth Writer's prize for this novel, which was recognized as the best first book in Eurasian region (1998). The setting of the novel is placed in the 1940s which is the time of Independence of India as well as World War II. Virmati is the protagonist of this novel, who struggles for her liberation against traditional threshold. Kapur narrates the clash of tradition and modernity through Virmati's struggle in the male - dominated and patriarchal society.

KEY WORDS

Male dominance, Patriarchal society, Identity crisis

Literature is considered to be a reflection of life. The plight of Indian women is reflected by Manju Kapur through the novel *Difficult Daughters*. Manju Kapur throws a light on feminism. She portrays about the confident, ambitious, enterprising and individualized women through her novels. The novel emphasizes on the struggles of women who are searching for strength and identity. It also analyses the Psyche of Indian women who live in joint family under male domination. The protagonist of the novel Virmati is an educated middle class girl expounding her rebellious ideas against the male-dominated society and tries to gain her identity. She experiences a journey to her inner self. Dr. Ashok Kumar says,

A major preoccupation in recent Indian women's writing has been a delineation of inner life and subtle interpersonal relationships. In a culture where individualism and protest have often remained alien ideas and marital bliss and the women's role at home in central focus, it is interesting to see the emergence of not just essential Indian sensibility but an expression of cultural displacement. Manju Kapur has joined the growing number of writers from India on whom the image of suffering but stoic woman eventually breaking traditional boundaries has had a significant impact. (Kumar 48)

Kapur has taken the account of different structures and values of socio-politicals and culture of the Era, through the portrayal of the three different generations of women, Kasturi, Virmati and Ida. These characters elaborate about on transitional condition. Kasturi is the mother Virmati and Ida is the daughter of Virmati. Kasturi accepts the male dominance; Virmati discards to accept the patriarchal values and protests against her suppression by the society to emerge as an independent human being. The novel covers three generations of daughters starting from Virmati's mother, Kasturi, Virmati and ending with Ida. Each of these daughters never shares a happy relationship with their respective mothers and always remains alienate. Their daughters have spelt dooms for their mother.

The two female characters in this novel deserve attention. One is Shakuntala (Virmati's cousin) and other is Swarnalatha (her roommate). Both represent the emerging new woman in Indian Literature. Shakuntala appears as an example of modern and liberated woman. She teaches and takes part in the political-Gandhian movement. She shares her lifestyle with a group of friends, and she explains those activities, to her cousin, "We travel entertain ourselves in the evenings, follow each

other's work, read papers attend seminars." (DD 15) On the other hand Swarnalatha, an ultra-committed activist, wants to live a life without compromising too much. In the Punjab women's student conference she shines as an orator, "Heavy applause broke out as Swarna finished speaking" (DD 145) She also continues to take an active part in political activities even after her marriage. Both these characters are quite opposite to Kasturi.

Virmati's mother, Kasturi represents the traditional Indian woman, who serves her family and accepts her fate as a wife, a mother and a daughter-in-law. She gives birth to her children, do all the household works perfectly and also follows her traditional values laid by the patriarchal society though she is an educated woman she totally depends upon her husband for an identity. She believes that basic education for girls is needed only to take care of house and children. Though she is an educated woman, she doesn't like Virmati to continue her further studies. She does not allow her to live her life alone, without get married. She says,

"If you cannot consider your duty to us, at least consider yourself.

There is a time in the cycle of life for everything. If you willfully ignore like this, what will happen to you? A woman without her home and family is a woman without moorings" (DD 102)

The novel focuses on the sufferings of women in Indian society in 1940s through the portrayal of the character Kasturi. She has always been facing the unwanted pregnancies, resulting in her continuous illness. "Her life seemed to be such a burden her body so difficult to carry. Her sister-in-law's words echoed in her ears 'Breeding like cats and dogs Harvest time again.'" (DD 7)

Traditionally, it is taken for granted that a girl's duty is to marry, take care of her husband and produce children and take care of them, while all the other works should be done by man. Kapur throws light on the mentality of the Indian families where a daughter's education is taken for granted. Though Kasturi is an educated woman, she doesn't give any importance to Virmati's studies. Manju Kapur reflects conventional thinking of women in India, through Kasturi's following remarks, "Hai re beti; what is the need to do a job? A woman's shaan is her home. Now you have studied and worked enough. shaadi" (DD 16)

In Indian culture, mothers force their daughters to adopt the social values, prevailing in the society. They themselves become the cause of their daughter's sufferings. They grow up in an environment where they cannot develop confidence and qualities, equal to the male members. As Simon-de-Beauvoir comments,

"The mother secretly hostile to her daughter's liberation and she takes to bullying her more or less deliberately, but the boys effort to become a man is respected and he is granted for much liberty. The girl is required to stay at home, her comings and goings are watched she is not encouraged to make change on her amusement and pleasures. It is unusual to see woman organize by themselves a long hike or an excursion on foots or by bicycle or devote themselves to games such as billiards or bowling." (Beauvoir 358)

The novel highlights that, in our country, women are not provided with the liberty to take decisions and she has to do everything according to the choice of the man. They are expected not to have their own choices and have to move according to the desires and instructions of others. For instance, Ganga, is not allowed to wear

things of her favourite colour. Virmati suggests Ganga to buy blue bangles but Ganga says "He doesn't like blue. I wear nothing blue" (DD 42) her indication is that she has to wear, whatever her husband likes.

Kapur brings the impact of patriarchy on women, who are brought up in an environment of compromise and adjustment. In the case of restricted education of women, they completely depend on men for their economic and social status and they are forced to compromise them. Ganga's mother-in-law Kishori Devi reminded her about her duties and morals to be a good mother and an obedient and loyal daughter-in-law as if she has no emotions. But the duty she performed in Harish's second marriage shatters and humiliates her badly. Even after such devotions of Harish and his family, she fails to think about her own life and standards.

Generally, the Indian woman feels her salvation is in serving her husband. "A woman's happiness lies in giving her husband happiness" (DD 227) in every possible way, in return, what she usually gets is disgust, humiliation and contempt as Ganga gets. After the marriage of Virmati with Harish, Virmati gradually knows the reality. She wonders how Ganga is managing to do so much of work and even then gets no reward for her education.

The psychological annihilation of Virmati, at the hands of her own family and her husband's should not be read as fatal, What happens to Virmati is no doubt, the most representative destiny of Indian woman (even if educated) quantitatively or statistically. The novel emphasizes the efforts made by numerous women those who are demanding for the equal opportunities and going beyond the conventions. The pages of *Difficult Daughters* speak not only about Virmati, but also about other

'difficult daughters' who succeed better than she did in their parallel struggles for independence in their lives.

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Dhivya k.

M.Phil. English

The Environmental Crisis In Manjushree Thapa's: *Seasons of Flight*

Abstract

Environmental crisis has become a more important thing to be noticed in today's world. In Indian literature, there is a wide range of works, on ecology and Ecocriticism. Human misbehavior with nature becomes the basic reason for an environmental crisis. Cheryll Glotfelty's *The Eco criticism readers* says, "Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment". The Eco criticism theory began to enter into the field of literature in 1990s. This study deals with the destruction of the environment due to the changes that happen in culture, economic, industry and materialization. In this novel "seasons of flight", Prema is the protagonist. She studies about the forestry and protects the endangered species. The paper tries to portray human feelings and emotions that are interconnected with environmental issues.

Key Words: Environment, Endangered species, Ecology, Conservation.

Manjushree Thapa is a highly acclaimed writer in Nepal, born in Kathmandu, is a Canadian author. In her works she tries to portray the admirable archetypal Nepali villages.

Ecocriticism is also known as the "green theory" It talks about the inter connection between human and nature. Cheryll Glotfelty is a pioneer and the father of this theory. Ecocriticism is the term derived from Greek "Oikos" means "household," a nexus of humans, nature and the spirit. "kritis" means judge, "the arbiter of taste who wants the house kept in good order". In the works of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Milton and Thoreau's nature has been given more

important. This shows that "environment" has been used as an eminent aspect in writing. It is a part of the society which cannot be removed from it. Thus Cheryl Glotfelty says that:

An ecologically focused criticism is a worthy enterprise primarily because it directs our attention to matters about which we need to be thinking. Consciousness rising is its most important task. Eco critics encourage others to think seriously about the relationship of humans to nature, about the ethical and aesthetic dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis, and about how language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications (Glotfelty 7)

This novel describes the first generations from Nepal who migrate to America. Few chapters in this novel explain about Prema's life in Nepal where she joins a non-government organization to instruct the rural bazaar dwellers to use minimum amount of fuels which will help to protect the forests from deforestation. As forests are the reasons for many natural resources. At certain point human does violent acts against the same natural resource. War is also the destruction on nature, thus it becomes a challenge for the people to re-construct nature. To escape from this unfair war and its destruction Prema moves to America. Where ever she has goes she keeps herself close with nature. Here nature plays the role of a Mother in order to make her feel comfortable and to be in the presence of nature. As she says that "She did not know enough about the natural sciences-botany, bio geography-or about the interconnections, dependencies and linkages of the natural world, to have much of a feel for it" (SOF38).

Joseph meeker in his *The comedy of survival* says that paradise is a "state of mind", an attempt to change nature to suit man. In this novel Prema adapts herself with nature. Even in land of holocaust she visits sea to admire its color, sound and motion. She engaged herself with nature to feel the presence of her deceased mother, her lost young sister and an uncared father in Nepal. She adopts nature as a remedy for all her problems. As Sandip Kumar Mishra says that:

In ecology, man's tragic flaw is his anthropocentric as opposed to bio centric vision, and his compulsion to conquer, humanize, domesticate, violate andexploitevery natural thing. Anthropocentric assumes the primacy of humans, who either sentimentalize or dominate the environment. On the other hand, biocentrism decenters humanities importance explores the complex interrelationships between the human and nonhuman.

Humans cannot act by themselves without the boundaries of nature. Each and everything in the world depends on nature. According to Barry commoner's law of ecology, "Everything is connected to everything else (TER 19). From the point of Bio centricthis talks about the relationship between human and nonhuman. Prema throughout her life moves with accompany of sea shore, wind and trees. She keeps her close with nature. But the metropolitan country is totally different from her native place Kathmandu. When she visited the shore in Americathe sewage pipe line breaks and spoils the shore which is not considered to be a disaster according to them. But this is also a kind of disaster to the ecology 'To her, this metropolis seemed defenseless against the sun and the wind, the dust' (SOF46). Human destroy the beauty of nature and justifies it. Her native place Nepal beside Himalayas is known

for its beautiful green scenery. She thinks and talks about the greatness of her place. As a forester she instructs the people to use less fuel even though the people in Nepal are using less. In America people waste their resources even they have forests less.

There is an interconnection between nature and culture where human being become the bridge between environment and culture. So Prema realizes that America is not like her own native Nepal and she is no more an American to fit into this culture and environment. She leaves behind her passionate love for Luis and spends her time alone. So to escape from this unfair situation she spends her time in admiring the sea. There she meets Fiona, a conservationist and decides to join her troop. Prema introduces herself as "I am working as a home care attendant. Then she asked, 'how can I find work in conservation'? Realizing-of course. She had found her place. Not in America, and not in Nepal, but in the wilderness at the heart of human habitation" (SOF224).

'Ecocide', refers to the destruction of nature caused by human beings. To terminate this destruction human beings have to act in favor of Mother Nature. So to act on it Prema joins as conservationist and searches for the rare species of butterflies, EL Segundo blues. She makes a detail study of it to protect it from extinction. During her research on it she finds that butterflies too migrate from place to place for the fertilization process and at once it gets over a new one to come out of the eggs and takes its flight. This study touches her inner feelings to think about her native place. So she makes a visit to Nepal after so many years. The fragile out of this EL Segundo blues Prema says "I breathed in the aroma of the grasses, the wind fragrant through the stems and stalks. She took in the sighing of the earth. Felt out her

wounds, the relics below the adamantine deposits felt that ancient, familiar shivering in the marrow, and waited for it to pass. It always did pass” (SOF220).

When Prema works as a conservationist her mind gets refreshed by the nature. She feels satisfied to work with the sound, fragment of flowers, breeze and the very touch of ecology. She feels that preserving forests in Nepal are not a much bigger task than working as a conservationist in metropolitan country. In metropolitan countries people never cared for environment and the extinctive species in their own place.

The Environment crisis is clearly depicted in this novel. The protagonist Prema is exposed to different kinds of places. One is the greenish hilly village and the other is the metropolitan country. The human is responsible for ecology and society. Some people are consuming less products of nature in order to save it from destruction.

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D.Regina.,

M.Phil English

Analysis of Richard Flanagan's *The Narrow Step to the Deep North* as a Postmodern Novel

Abstract

Fragmentation, loose association of ideas, pastiche, intertextuality, non-linear narration are the characteristics of the literature during the post-modern era. Richard Flanagan is one of the finest writers in the contemporary era whose works can be categorised under this Postmodernist works since it incorporates all of the above mentioned postmodern characteristics. This paper is an attempt to explore these in his book *The Narrow Step to the Deep North*.

Keywords : Contemporariness, identity crisis, intertextuality, memory

The term “post-modern” situates the movement historically and philosophically against Modernism. Stephen R.C Hicks in his book *Explaining Postmodernism* says,

“Postmodernism’s essentials are opposite of modernisms. Instead of natural reality- anti-realism. Instead of experience and reason – linguistic social subjectivism. Instead of individual identity and autonomy –various race, sex and class group-isms. Instead of human interests as fundamentally harmonious and tending toward mutually-beneficial-interaction – conflict and opression”(21).

Richard Flanagan is a Contemporary Australian novelist born in Tasmania. *The Narrow Step to the Deep North* (2013) is his sixth novel which has won the Man Booker Prize in the year 2014 for its realistic portrayal of the cruel behavior and

atrocities during Second World War. He deals with the conflict and oppression of the past to highlight the present day realities of the world which is in a brink of war everywhere. Lyotard, a postmodern theorist in his work *Defining the Postmodern* says, "postmodernity does not mean a process of coming back or flashing back, feeding back, but of ana-lysing, ana-mnesing, of reflecting"(4). Flanagan does the same, he re-writes the history of the past to explore and reflect the present which is the major aspect of contemporariness in the novel. Flanagan's work explores crucial phases in the history of the country which are at the core of its contemporary tensions. He tries to show how the world is in a brink of war. Flanagan's novels are all the more challenging and disturbing because they bring out the inescapable truths about the contemporary world and specifically about the present and future of Australia and Tasmania. His novels deal with uncomfortable realities, violence, war, death and history's dark secrets. His novels often take a particular issue in Tasmania as the subject. In *Sound of one hand clapping* (2000) Flanagan deals with the historical past of the year 1954 when there was a construction camp for a hydroelectric dam in the remote Tasmanian Highlands. His *The Unknown Terrorist*(2006) gives a devastating picture of a contemporary disoriented society with terror and fear.

The Narrow Step to the Deep North is the book Richard Flanagan was born to write, tells Philosopher and Judge of Man Booker Prize awards A.C Grayling. This novel tells the horrific story of what it was like to be a prisoner of war. Flanagan gives a picture of atrocities and sufferings of slaves. These cruelties and sufferings exist in every war. Recent wars like Iraq war (2003), North American war (2006), Syrian war (2011) are some wars in the contemporary world filled with horrors, plight of human sufferings, family disintegration and alienation. Flanagan gives a picture of all these by taking the subject of war which was a past history in the year 1943 during the end

of Second World War. The story centers on the building up of the Burma Death Railway by the empire of Japan in order to support its forces in the Burma campaign during the war. Forced labor was used in the construction. Many lakhs of people and Allied prisoners of war (POWs) worked on the Railway. Many died a pathetic death in these camps. The dead POWs were British, Americans, Australians, Dutch and many other Malayan Tamil laborers. Flanagan's own father was a Pow during the war. His Father's experience influenced him to write the book. Flanagan's realistic depictions provide information about what had happened in the Pow camp. War is seen and not represented, as a fight between abstract life and death. Through the Japanese officers Major Nakamura, Colonel Kota Flanagan tries to show the savagery and violence of war. The "Near-naked prisoners" who are beaten up and threatened are the victims of war. Through the unbearably prolonged beating to death of the character Darky Gardiner in the novel Flanagan emphasizes the world,

It was as if man existed only to transmit violence to ensure its domain is eternal. For the world did not change, this violence would never be eradicated, men would die under the boot and fists and horror of other men until the end of time, and all human history was a history of violence. (Flanagan 295).

Apart from war and love the novel consists of postmodern elements. Identity is a significant post-modern element in the novel. Postmodern is an individualist philosophy. It encourages every human to exercise or practice his or her own identity. There is loss of identity and thirst for identity in the novel. The protagonist Dorrigo Evans fails to be a successful doctor in the war camp and also a failure in love life with Amy. He was a doctor with almost none of the necessities a doctor needed to cure his patients (Flanagan 238). He is portrayed as an unhappy man from his

childhood. His marriage with Ella is a profound solitude. Another character Amy Mulvaney longs to seek solitude and isolation after losing her unborn baby. She craves to create her own identity as a wife to Evans leaving her husband Keith. She takes her own steps to proceed further, sleeps with men and enjoys with friend but nothing satisfies her expect the happiness of living with Evans which never happens. Thus Amy is a person who lives a life of unfulfilled dreams. The Japanese officer Major Nakamura who has killed many POWs in the camp finds his new identity as a good man.

He made time to see others who were even sicker than he; and even did some work with a charity that took meals to the old. He was kinder and more thoughtful about one and all: his family, his friends, his neighbours, even strangers. Tenji Nakamura was stunned by this discovery of such goodness in himself. I am, he decided, a good man.”(378).

Intertextuality is a concept associated with postmodernism. It is the inter-relation of previous literary texts with another literary work. The word was coined by Julia Kristeva in the year 1966. The theory of intertextuality insists that a text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole. A Researcher Adolphe Haberer in his article “Intertextuality in theory and practice” quotes Umberto Eco’s concept of Intertextuality, where he says, “It is not true that works are created by their authors. Works are created by works, texts are created by texts”. (4). So no text exists on its own, It is always connected to other texts.

In *The Narrow Step to the Deep North* Flanagan inter-relates Japanese poems. He depicts the essence of Japanese culture by referring to works of Japanese literature

and also from other literary texts. The very title of the novel is a translation of Japanese poet Matsuo Basho's work *Oku no Hosomichi* which is translated alternatively as *The Narrow Step towards the deep north*. This work is one of the major texts in Japanese literature. It deals with the dangerous journey on foot through Edo Japan of late seventeenth century.

A memorable passage from the book is quoted in the novel, "every day is a journey and the journey itself home" (176). The poet's travel in the journey has inspired many people to follow his journey of determination. In the same way Flanagan tries to trace the journey of the characters in the novel where each one is on a journey facing hardships in life. The roads Flanagan describes are narrow indeed. His purpose is to highlight the narrowness of human lives, the difficulty, impossibility in life. He uses epigraphs at the beginning of each part of sections, from the works of Issa who is another renowned Japanese poet. For example in the beginning of the second part there is a passage from the poem which says, "A world of dew and within every dewdrop a world of struggle" (175). He uses this epigraph to give an idea of how this part of the novel is going to portray the struggles and hardships of the prisoners. Again in another epigraph, he quotes Issa's work where he says, "In this world we walk on the roof of hell gazing at flowers"(89) which tells about Dorrigo Evans who has lived his life.

Flanagan also refers to *Ulysses*, a poem by Tennyson who is a Victorian poet. He inter-relates the character Ulysses to refer to the protagonist Dorrigo Evans from the beginning and throughout in many places of the novel. The narrator says, "He had followed knowledge like a sinking star beyond the utmost bound of human thought." (76). Other reference from Haiku poetry and reference to Hitler's autobiography *Mein Kampf* when a character Rooster Macniece memorizes lines from the work.

References from *Umi Yukaba* which is again another ancient poem from which Colonel Kota, the Japanese officer would often recite some passages when he is about to chop the heads of the Prisoners. He also draws in Greek philosophers when he compares Evans with Socrates, He says "Like Socrates discovering the underlying soul as he drinks hemlock, Dorrigo discovered the true object of his love where it was always absent: with other women who were not Amy." (385). Flanagan therefore inter-relates texts in order to give a message on life.

Memory plays a major role in postmodernism. Stephen R.C Hicks talks about Hegel's contribution to postmodernism where Hegel has four institutionalized theses. One significant statement is "the collective, not the individual is the operative unit" (51). Flanagan uses this concept of collective memory to explore individuals' plight in the world. The writers of Postmodernism use memory as a basic tool to explore the past. For this they make use of the stream of consciousness technique and project into the interior rather than depicting the external reality. Postmodernism is an attempt to rediscover the past and history that is buried deep in the memory of people. This is what Flanagan has done in the novel. He has reconstructed the past history. He uses third person narration, flashback and the associative memory of the past. Memory slips back and forth from past to the present and present to the past.

The foremost memory begins with the opening of the novel where Dorrigo Evans, the protagonist is an aged old man of seventy-seven remembering his childhood. Often objects are associated with memories. For example when Evan sees dust notes on one of his letters from Ella, in the war camp he remembers the past of seeing Amy for the first time while having a book of dust notes in hand also when he sees a necklace he associates the memory of Amy in his past. He remembers the objects but not the person; the narrator says "Even now he could see the necklace but

of her face nothing" (244). This shows the fading of memories in the life of humans. Again Jodie Bigelow, the daughter of a POW Jimmy Bigelow remember her father when she sees his bugle which is the flute with which he used to play mourning songs during the cremation of the dead POWS in the camp. Another character Choi Sang-min, the Korean guard's interior monologue reflects his unhappy past. He is in isolation while seated in a death-row to be punished as a war criminal. He is frustrated so much that he goes back to the memory of how he suffered for a crumb of bread while he worked for a Japanese family. He brings before his eyes the memory of brutally killing the family dog with a brick since he saw the dog to be treated with sophisticated comforts in the family. He longs to kill people as he feels that it satisfies him a lot by giving him pleasure.

How he longed for that feeling again, to know that exhilarating moment of strange power and freedom that had come with the killing of another living thing. But there was nothing in his cell that he could kill to recover that feeling, and it was others who would soon take pleasure in his death, as he once had in his killing of the Japanese engineer's dog.(Flanagan 350).

This is a disorder of the mind which is termed as Post-traumatic stress disorder in the recent years. It is anxiety disorder caused by very stressful, frightening or distressing events. People with this disorder tend to relive the traumatic event through nightmares and flashbacks and may experience feelings of isolation, irritability and guilt. Flanagan has brought out this for the purpose of depicting human alienation in the frustrated world. Choi Sang-min is seen to be representing this PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder more than other characters. He is driven mad when he sees a cockroach in the cell and he madly thrashes it.

Memory of love and affection too plays a significant role. Amy wonders if Dorrigo would have a strong memory of her and Evans lives with the cherished memories of Amy. He goes back from present to past whenever he associates memory. In his present life he is an old man and his mind slowly distills now and then to the POW camps. The POW camp is a frozen memory in his mind and he often goes back to it.

With all these important elements of postmodernism like Identity, Fragmentation, Intertextuality and Memory, *The Narrow step to the deep north* stands as an example of a postmodern novel in the contemporary twenty-first century it serves all the purpose Flanagan seeks to give.

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Bernadette Monica.S

M.Phil English