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HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES ON SUCHITRA BHATTACHARYA'S THE BURNING

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ABSTRACT

Indian writing in English literature refers to the body of work by writers in India who write in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. Ram Mohan Roy is a pioneer of Indian writing in English. Suchitra Bhattacharya is a famous Indian novelist. She has written her novels in Bengali language. Other writers have translated her novels into many Indian languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi and English. She has received many awards such as the Katha Award and Bharat Nirman Award. Human rights issues such as racism, torture, lack of freedom, gang rape, marital rape and violence. Her popular novel is Dahan and published in 2001. Mahua Mitra translates Dahan in English. In English Dahan named as The Burning. The Burning is the story of two women's search for justice in a man's world. This novel deals with the girl Romita who molested by the gang. Therefore, she suffers by her husband (Palash). Jhinuk is a woman who works as a school teacher. She tries to help Romita but her family and fiancée (Tunir) never accept it. He is working under the gang. This paper is about the human rights issues in the novel.

Keywords: body of work, Indian writing, novelist, racism, school teacher

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We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. The issue that against the human right is called as a human rights issue. There are many human rights issues such as democracy, racism, discrimination, male chauvinism, humanitarian, slavery, terrorism, traffic, rape, torture, poverty, inequality and violence.

Peace is a good medicine for human rights issue. According to Malala Yousafzai is one of the Pakistani education activists, utter some words about human rights issue, "Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world." We can change the world from the human rights issues by the book that reads and follow the words of teacher and great leaders. In some time, our own ideas and opinion can alter these kinds of human rights issues. However, we have to fight against human rights issue until we have a solution. Suchitra Bhattacharya is a famous Indian novelist. She has written her novels in the Bengali language. Other writers have translated her novels into many Indian languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi and English. She has written about 24 novels and a large number of short stories and published in different leading Bengali literary magazines.

Bhattacharyaworks such as Kachher Manush (Close toMe), Dahan (The Burning), Kacher Dewal (The Wall Of Glass), Hemonter Pakhi (Bird of Autumn),Neel Ghurni, Aleek Shukh (Heavenly happiness),Uro Megh (Flying Cloud) andAnyo Basanto (Another Spring).

Bhattacharya is writing focuses on contemporary social issues and her novels and stories thirst for writing about children. She has received many awards such as the Katha Award, Sahitya Setu Award, and Bharat Nirman Award. She died on May 12, 2015, at 10.45pm at her home in Dhakuria, Kolkata due to a Heart attack.

The Burning is a popular novel by Suchitra Bhattacharya. In this novel, the word 'Burning' refers to burn is the eternal anguish of every woman who dares to step outside the narrow path specified for her by society.

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Mahua Mitra translates Dahan in English. In English Dahan named The Burning. This novel describes the sufferings of two girls, Romita and Jhinuk. This novel published in 2001. This novel deals with the story of two women's search for justice. This novel has received an award, Rituparno Ghosh who made a film in this novel. This story is a real-life incident that rocked Kolkata in the early 1990s.

The story of this novel, Romita Choudhury a beautiful girl who marries a young man Palash. One evening, they went outside joyfully, Romita stands near Metro Station. Palash wants to buy something need for his family.

Unfortunately, the young men who belong to aristocrat family molested Romita. She suffers a lot and her husband tries to stop but he could not help her. Palash also injures by the four men. After a few hours, Jhinuk Sarkar is a social worker tries to help Romita and Palash. The generous girl, Jhinuk hospitalized both Romita and Palash. Jhinuk's family reads the newspaper, 'braver woman: Jhinuk '. Jhinuk is a woman's name familiarize to the society. Jhinuk is a girl who loves Tunir.

Palash is the lovable man who becomes brutal after the gang rapes his wife. He gives torture for her wife by marital rape. His friends begin to tease and mock him, which make his tension increase. He cannot bear the words of others and his mind changes and he shows is sour things towards his wife. Later, he punishes her wife.

Jhinuk tries to help Romita but her family and fiancée (Tunir) never accept it. Hence, he is working under the gang. Jhinuk has a thirst for true comfort and love from others. Her grandmother gives true love and compassion to her. Romita becomes alone but her sister in Canada supports her. At the end of the story, Romita and Jhinuk search for freedom and justice.

The human rights issues in the novel such as democracy, racism, discrimination, male chauvinism, gang rape, torture, class struggle, marital-rape, oppression, rebellion, and slavery.

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‘Gang rape’ is one of the human rights issues that affect the family of Romita and Jhinuk. This issue made more changes happens in the life of Romita and it affects the life of Jhinuk. This issue only creates or initiates the problem between Palash and Romita and Tunir and Jhinuk. This is the first human rights issue in this novel. This issue only gives suffering to Romita physically and emotionally. The four men sexually attacked Romita. Even Romita's husband could not help her.

The second human rights issue in this novel is ‘Marital Rape’. After the gang rape, the words of his friends, relatives, and society disturb Palash mind. He initiates to scolds her daily and she takes this as a torture. He suffers daily from raping.

The third human rights issue in this novel is ‘Oppression’. Romita is oppressing by her husband and public people. Her fiancée, mother-in-law, and father-in-law also suppress Jhinuk. They also avoid her decisions and their aim is to fulfill their wishes.

The fourth human rights issue in this novel is ‘democracy’. Democracy means the power of the people or power is in the human being. There is no freedom for Romita and Jhinuk. Any one character in the novel does not accept their decisions.

The fourth human rights issue in this novel is ‘Male Chauvinism’. Male Chauvinism is a big issue in the society that revolves around the novel. In this novel, Romita and Jhinuk are facing this problem only. Throughout the novel, the writer clearly portrays the domination of men in the family and society. Romita suffers from both internal and external, gang rape and marital rape, assaults from the public and father-in-law's torture. Jhinuk also suffers from her family and her fiancée.

The fifth human rights issue of this novel is ‘class struggle’. ‘Class struggle’ is one of the issues between upper and lower class people. Romita is a young middle-class woman who suffers from a gang rape (belongs to the upper class). The writer gives the class difference by the characters like Romita, Jhinuk, Four men, Palash and Tunir. Jhinuk cannot help Romita because the four wicked boys are high-class society who can destroy Romita and Jhinuk's family or change judgment in the court by their mighty and money.

The fifth human rights issue in this novel is ‘slavery’. Slavery is the issue makes the mind of the people depressed. Romita and Jhinuk is slave towards their husband. They are under the control of the husbands.

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Some of the major symbols of the novel are the balcony, old age home, toy, and letter. The society, relatives, and husband treat Romita and Jhinukas a toy. Thus the novel deals with the many different human right issues. We have discussed, some of the human rights issues in detail. These human rights issues may be solved only by the peace, ideas related to the particular issue and ready to face or fight against any problem in our life.

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BLACK FEMINISM ON ALICE WALKER'S THE COLOUR PURPLE

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Abstract

The word 'Feminism' is one of the movements, initiated in 1880. There is a clash between white and black people. So, 'Feminism' movement renamed as a 'Black Feminism'. The white people rule over blacks. Blacks are not having rights in anything even to write in literature. Later, 'Black Feminism' becomes a school of thought, which argues that sexism, class oppression, gender identity and racism, inextricably bound together. One of the black feminist's writers is Alice Walker. She is an award-winning author of novels, stories, essays, and poetry. She is the first African-American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. She won in 1983 for her novel *The Color Purple*, also a National Book Award winner. Her own feelings and emotions expressed in her third novel, *The Color Purple*. This novel deals with the classic tale of Celie, a young black girl born into poverty and segregation. She has been raped repeatedly by the man. However, she calls him as a father. She has two children taken away from her, is separated from her beloved sister Nettie and is trapped into an ugly marriage. Then she meets the glamorous Shug. Shug is assigner and magic making a woman who has taken charge of her own destiny.

Keywords: Black feminism, racism and sexism

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Black feminism is a school of thought, which argues that sexism, class oppression, gender identity and racism are inextricably bound together. Alice Malsenior Walker (born February 9, 1944) is an American novelist, short story writer, poet, and activist. Alice Walker is one of the famous black women writers whose works mostly deals with the sufferings of the black women in the society. She is a well-known black feminist writer. Her major themes in her works like racism, sexism, suppression, oppression, male chauvinism and gender identity. Her novels like *The Color Purple* and *Meridian* is about a victimized black woman and deals with their bitterness and painful experiences of life.

The most popular novel of Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1982. In this novel, the writer portrays Celie, a young, an uneducated, ugly black woman who suffers by racism, sexism, and torture of her husband. Therefore, this novel tells the story of poor Celie who was sexually abused by her step-father and then she forced to marry a man who physically abuses her.

The structure of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* is an epistolary novel that is made up of ninety letters. This novel consists of series of letters in which the novelist expresses the thirst of identity and the emotions of Celie. Celie's painful heart addresses the Lord as 'Dear God' throughout this novel as a prayer and ends the novel with 'Amen'. She openly tells her horror life, first to God, then to her sister Nettie, and finally to the world she has grown to love. Therefore, she narrates her life story with complete candor and honesty.

Alice Walker begins this book in a pathetic manner. The first letter of Celie to God explains the poor state of Celie (fourteen years old) who was sexually abused by her step-father Alfonso. The repeated rapes and brutal beatings of her step-father takes her to the life of hell. The brutality of her step-father hurts her and she cries as,

He was pulling on her arm. She say it too soon, Fonso, I ain't well. Finally he leaves her alone. A week go by, he pulling on her arm again. First, he puts his thing up gainst my hip and sort of wiggle it around. Then he grab hold my titties. (1)

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From the above lines, we can see the misery of childhood incest, physical abuse, powerlessness and loneliness of the protagonist, Celie. So, she has been affected physically and psychologically.

A fourteen year-old Celie, who was caught in the horror of incest and abuse. She bears one child who later turns up missing. Her breasts are swollen and dripping milk, which is so miserable to the writer. She says her pathetic situation to God as, “He took my other little baby, a boy this time. I got breasts full of milk running down myself. But I don’t think he kilt it. I think he sold it to a man”. (2)

The fear of Celie about the life of her sister, Nettie which is clearly expressed by the novelist in the novel as, “I see him looking at my little sister. She scared. But I say I’ll take care of you. With God help”. (2) But Celie believes that almighty God will protect Nettie from the cruel and brutal step - father Alfonso. In all our desperate situation, the powerful and the graceful God will help us. Celie also says strongly to her step- father as “ I can’t let you have Nettie. She too young.” (8) In this letter, Celie informs God that Fonso has been trying to seduce her lovable sister, Nettie.

Black woman are accepting all the words and pains of Black man, which is miserable. In this novel Celie accepts the violent and brutal act of her step- father and Nettie also likes to get a boyfriend who is already married. In the initial part of the novel itself, we can see the theme of Black Feminism, sexism that tortures Celie. Audre Lorde says about sexism in “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference” (1984) as, “Sexism, the belief in the inherent superiority of one sex over the other and thereby the right to dominance.” (631)

Then, Celie is forced to marry a widowed farmer, Mr. Albert with three children. She marries him and advises Nettie to marry Albert in order to protect herself from Fonso (step-father of Celie and Nettie). Celie encourages Nettie as, “I say Marrie him, Nettie, an try to have one good yea out your life. After that, I know she be big.” (6)

Celie finds a blues singer, Shug Avery and she portrays her beauty as,

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Shug was a woman. The most beautiful woman I ever saw. She more pretty than my mama. She is about ten thousand times more prettier than me. I see her there in furs. Her face rouge. Her hair like something tail. She grinning with her foot up on somebody motorcar. Her eyes are serious. Sad some. (7)

Here, we can see the sexual attraction of Celie to Shug Avery. Celie turns towards her because she represents love, warmth and feelings of solidarity. Celie affirms her sexual identity in her relationship with Shug. Sexual identity is the another theme of Black Feminism in this novel. Celie is seeking her gender and sexual identity in this letter.

In an interview with Appiah, Chinua Achebe reflects on the nature of African identity as, "it is of course, true that the African Identity is still in the making. There isn't a final identity that is African." (222) The above words of Achebe is true only because still Africans are struggling to search their identity. In this novel, we can see the poor Celie who is seeking for her gender identity.

Then Celie says the almighty God pathetically that her husband and her step- father expresses their views about Celie as "She ugly. He say." and "She spoiled. Twice." (9) Again Celie search for her identity where she stands in the life. She expresses her emotions that she was ignored by the Black patriarchal system. Celie's poor condition makes us to feel pity for her.

Celie feels for her inferiority, born as a dark skinned, uneducated, ugly and poor woman in the world. This shows her racism problem in the novel. According to Audre Lorde's "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" (1984), "Racism, the belief in the inherent superiority of one races over all others and thereby the right to dominance." (631)

Mr. Albert's choice of Shug Avery hurts the mind of Celie. Celie addresses the Lord that she was suffering physically as well as mentally. The psychological trauma affects her mind and heart throughout this novel. Celie's other letters also expresses her physical and mental agony that she undergone by the various oppression of black men in the society. But Celie cannot bear such violent, brutality and tortures of her step- father and her husband.

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Finally, she ends her private letters as, “Dear God, Dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear peoples. Dear Everything. Dear God. Thank you for bringing my sister Nettie and our children home.” (292) This final letter of Celie shows a Prayer of thanksgiving and joyously end with uttering ‘Amen’.

Alice Walker ends the novel with reunion of Celie’s family and their reconciliation, regeneration is complete. The impact of Harlem Renaissance in the novel is that the self-sufficient act of regeneration in the life of Celie and Nettie and reconciliation of the whole family. But Celie and other black women, not liberated from this arrogant black patriarchal system. As a woman, we have to regenerate successfully as a bold, courageous, independent and powerful woman to face the hurdles of our life.

According to Audre Lorde’s “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference” (1984), “it is the responsibility of the oppressed to teach the oppressors their mistakes.” (630) Here Audre Lorde says that if we explain about our pain and sufferings to the oppressors, they may not know our pain and sufferings. Therefore educate them clearly in what way we are suffering by their cruel atrocities. Audre Lorde also says about rapism as “Rape is on the increase, reported and unreported, and rape is not aggressive sexuality, it is sexualized aggression”. (634)

As Kalamuya Salam, a Black male writer points out from Audre Lorde’s “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference” (1984), “As long as male domination exists, rape will exist. Only women revolting and men made conscious of their responsibility to fight sexism can collectively stop rape.”(634) Therefore as young women, we have to fight for the restriction of male domination and their atrocities in the society. We should not eliminate the men in the society; rather we should put a limit on their sexual tortures, oppression and suppression.

Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*, provides an opportunity for black women to defend themselves in patriarchal system and gain individuality and social role. The writer says that

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the bright and colourful future of black women lays in their hands only. They can change their marginalized situations by developing their skills and talents.

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TRANSGENDER: SPACE AND IDENTITY IN THE CURRENT SCENARIO

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Abstract

This article explores the multifarious relationships between transgender identity and their bodies, their close relationships, their identities, and the pressure to pass. The paper argues that Transgenders' confirm their self-identities through converting their bodies, whether physiologically or superficially. In the future, similar studies should be conducted with female-to-male transgender men and vice-versa to explore the juncture of gender with race, class, and generational differences. Being transgender is self-sufficient of sexual orientation. Trans people may recognize as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, asexual, etc., or may consider conventional sexual orientation labels inadequate or inapplicable.

Keywords: multifarious, transgender, generational differences, sexual orientation

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"What trans people are trying to do is find a way of presenting their gender identity in such a way that the rest of the world will understand who they are." - Stephen Whittle

From the beginning, it had been taught and learned that the basic requirements of a life sustenance are food, shelter, and clothes. It is inevitable and significant to make necessary and contemporary amendments to any process, living or non-living, etc. Whether we are ignorant about it or neglecting the fact that "freedom" has risen to be included as the crucial part of the functional requirements to sustain life on earth though it plays a vital role in the Constitution of India. Hence, freedom to express his/her sexual orientation too demands equal respect both from society and the Constitution of our country. However, there is not much light on this topic in the minds of people and systematically generated society. Acceptance has turned out to be just a word with no meaning but judgmental.

This article discusses transgender lives and how they behave in a society. Every single individual in our society is subjected to a number of institutional registrations, and processes of validation. Considering the fact that every individual is evaluated as a member of social units, and institutions such as family, neighborhood, school, work, region, nation, it is quite important to closely examine how a gendered binary system is applicable to those social, and institutional settings. It also studies in detail how this affects any transgender identity and their personal space. It is also of our concern to closely observe how transgender subjects are marginalized institutionally and socially.

There are a number of issues faced by Transgenders' in India. In this discussion, mainly four of them would be dealt with in detail. The discussion would be first on observation of genitals, formulated by the medical institutions when a baby is born. These medical institutions are supposed to diagnose and identify and make the decision on one's sexual orientation, considering the symptoms and signs from medicine. Transgenders are crucified on various grounds such as domestic and local spaces. The gendered policing of Transgenders', and violence against those in the above-said areas would also be discussed as a whole. Next, toilet debates along the transgender movement are reviewed in a context of restraining transgender's mobility in public spaces gendered policing. Finally, bereavement is

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considered the last institutional practice to verify one's gender and gender identity as the last resort.

A question that always exists is about the gender of the person which is a boy or a girl. This is not just a mere question. All the social and institutional registration is based only on two basic genders; male, and female. Keeping this in mind, the scope of a birth certificate does not take consider anything other being a boy or girl. Also, it indirectly rejects immediately the possibility of all other genders outside male and female. Although the question of boy or girl sounds to be quite simple, it imparts lifetime negative consequential reflection in one transgender's life. Such gender variant people go through normalization, pathologization, and marginalization in their everyday lives.

There had been incidents when the institutions take the body of Transgenders as a new discovery and to add to their knowledge of their new discovery. For every individual health care is a fundamental service system, especially for transsexual people who need a complete gender transition. For a complete gender transition, it is necessary to conduct periodical monitoring of human bodies. It is to be noted that there is an exponential rise in the number of Transgenders. Lack of awareness and understanding of medical institutions ignores a significant number of people and their needs too.

Various programs have been undertaken to protect Transgenders. Medical institutions combined with the legal bodies have established a legal protection for transgender people. In the year 2004, The Gender Recognition Act was passed. This law was supposed to protect the Transgenders those who achieved a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) which they could use it for their employment, privacy or against any discriminatory treatment. This GRC is only issued to those Transgenders who have gone through a medical transition. Also, The Equality Bill Draft was launched in 2009. This remark human rights of Transgenders. This law was passed to protect those Transgenders who have not undergone or are not willing for any gender transition.

Family and Neighborhood: In any society, a family is considered as the smallest building block. Gender norms begin here. In our society, for Transgenders or gender minorities, a

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family can be represented as the place of oppression even though the authorities proclaimed rights and third column in gender as neuter. Home is a place of self-making for the general people. In a family, Transgenders face the theme of alienation. It is a fact that the other members in that family give only violent and inconsiderate response to their sexual orientation. This situation might get worse and many are estranged from family members.

Gender is, in radical feminist theory, the ordering system of male domination and consists of stereotypical appearance and behavior required of persons inhabiting either the male or female sex caste, such as the requirement that women engage in harmful beauty practices. (Beauty and Misogyny Chapter 1)

Transgender those who are deceased could not be buried in a church graveyard. Bereavement is a sensitive situation for Transgenders. In such a situation, the main concern is about how the deceased will be presented at the funeral and under which gender category. Medical transition surgeries help modify the documents showing that the deceased had lived full time in an acquired gender. These documents would be the clearest proof to validate the deceased people's right to get buried belonging to that acquired gender.

In general, transgender often gets exposed to unequal protection at work, school, and society. This situation is called transgender inequality. They become unsafe in our society. Transgenders regularly face transphobic harassment. The main reason for this situation is a lack of awareness among the public about Transgenders and their subjects.

It is a fact that our society could only accept the binary gender system such as male and female. It is quite sad that there is no much hope of existence for Transgenders. They face discrimination and violence from society, family, at school, work, and the like. They become desperate before judges, doctors and even before police officers. But there is a certain slant of hope that this is going to change in future. Best instance, was Kerala government's historical stepping stone to give a hand to employable Transgenders and hired 23 Transgenders for Kochi Metro. But it will definitely take some time to accept them as one in our society due to the mental block people have. Let the law, favor them so that slowly the social change and

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accept them. They no more need any sympathy; rather they prefer to live like them. Let them live like us and let us make them one among us.

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The Glimpses of Virtues of Teacher in Sri Andal's Tiruppavai

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Abstract

Sri Andal's 'Tiruppavai', though predominantly describes the devine devotion of the 'Gopikas' in Gokulam, towards the Lord Sri Krishna, she has also manifested a spectacular portrait of the great virtues of Teacher (Acharya). Just as the cloud filled with water raises high into the sky, the Teacher endowed with enlightenment, acquires a greater name and fame. In this state the Teacher is akin to God. The teacher will be able to manifest the luminous form of the God (Tejomaya), if the teacher sharpens knowledge with Chaitanya (active involvement). Just as the pot gets filled with milk only when it is placed under the cow's udder, similarly the seeker of knowledge should sit in front of the Teacher with reverence and one should submit one's self.

Keywords: Acharya, Sri Andal, Bharadhwaja birds, Gopikas, Jagadoddharaka), Lokasamrakshaka, Tiruppavai,

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Sri Andal has blessed this world with ‘Tiruppavai’, which is an enchanting song, particularly sung in the month of Margaseersha (Dhanurmasam). It comprises of the sanctiest elements of love and devotion that prevails between the Jeevatma and Paramatma. Sri Andal’s ‘Tiruppavai’, though predominantly describes the divine devotion of the ‘Gopikas’ in Gokulam, towards the Lord Sri Krishna, she has also manifested a spectacular portrait of the great virtues of Teacher (Acharya). The ‘Taittiriya Upanishad’ declares,

Athaadhividyam: achaaryaha poorva roopam,

**Antevaasisyuttara roopam Vidyaa sandhihi,
pravachanassandhaanam: iti adhividyam.**

This means, now as to the knowledge, the teacher is the prior form, the pupil is the latter form, the knowledge is their junction and instruction is the connection. This is with regard to knowledge.

The ‘Tiruppavai’ comprises of thirty ‘Pasurams’ (each Pasuram is an eight line verse). It mostly illustrates the various events that took place in the life of Lord Sri Krishna since his birth. The ‘Gopikas’ (the cowherd women), believed that the Lord Sri Krishna himself is God, who can protect the whole of the world (Jagadoddharaka) and also protect the mankind. We also find references, which describe the great virtues of the Teacher in ‘Tiruppavai’.

**AaLi MaLaik kanna ondru nee kai karavel
AaLi ullukku mugandhu kodaarththeri
OoLi mudalvan uruvam pol mey karuthu
PaaLiyan tholudai p padmanabhan kaiyyil
AaLi pol minni valampuri pol nindr adhirndhu
ThaLadhe sarngam udiatha saramaLai p pol
VaLa ulaginil peydhidaay nangalum
MargaLi neerada magiLindelor empavai.**

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Paasuram – 4

[AaLi = Sombre, MaLaik kannu = O! Giver of rain, ondru = not even a little, nee = you, kai = virtue of donating, karavel = reduction, AaLiull = in the middle of the sea, pukku = enter, mugandhu kodu = drink water totally, arththu = make a roaring sound, yeri = raise high, OoLi mudalvan = Lord Narayana who manifested the time and the Universe, uruvam pol = in the form of, mey = body, karuthu = darkened, PaaLi = very broad, yam = handsome, tholudai = shoulders, padmanabhan = Lord Padmanabha, kaiyyil = in the hands of, AaLi pol = like the wheel, minni = to dazzle, valampuri pol = like Panchajanya, nindr adhirndhu = generate sound, ThaLadhe = without further delay, sarangam = the bow of Lord Vishnu, udiatha- originating from the , saramaLai p pol = like a rain of arrows, VaLa = to feel happy, ulaginil = the residents of the Universe, peydidaay = shower the rain, nangalum = we also,

MargaLi neerada = to take a holy bath in the month of Margasheersha.]

O! God of rain! Please, never hesitate to shower rain sumptuously. The God fulfills the wishes in accordance with the deeds performed by the individuals. But, the Teacher, without any such discriminations imparts knowledge to all those who approach him in pursuit of the knowledge. Just as the cloud accepts the brackish water from the sea from the ocean and showers sweet potable water, teacher also dives deeper in to the ocean of 'Vedas', understands several critical and difficult aspects and in turn imparts them to his disciples in an impressive and easily understandable manner. Like a cloud, the Teacher also travels around the world so as to spread the essence of divine knowledge. O! God of rain! Please enter into the middle of the deep sea and drink the entire sea water, then roar like belching after the sumptuous meal. An ideal Teacher also enters deeper into the sea of God's virtuous elixir (Brahmajnanaamrutam) and understands it in totality. The disciples are truly blessed if their Teachers themselves are the embodiment of divine knowledge. Just as the cloud filled with water raises high into the sky, the Teacher endowed with enlightenment, acquires a greater name and fame. In this state the Teacher is akin to God. The teacher will be able to manifest the luminous form of the God (Tejomaya), if the teacher sharpens knowledge with Chaitanya (active involvement). O! God of rain! You should shower like the arrows

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thrusting out from the bow of Lord Vishnu. Here, in this context, the teaching of Vedas by the Teachers is itself the rain.

Keesu Keesendremgum aanai ch chatthan kalandhu
Pesina pecharavam kettilaiyo ? Pey pennne !
Kasum pirappum kalakalappa k kai perthu
Vasa narunguzhal aaychiyar matthinal
Osi paduttha th thayir-aravam kettilaiyo?
Nayaga p pennppillai ! Narayanan Murthy
Kesavanai p padavvum nee kette kidathiyo
Desamudaiyai thiravelor empavai.

Pasuran – 7

[Keesu Keesendru = noise of birds, yengum = every where, aanai ch chattham – Bharadhwaja birds, kalandhu – among themselves, Pesina = conversation, pecharavam = the noise of words, kettilaiyo? = Isn't it audible?, Pey pennne ! = O! Innocent lady!, Kasum = round coin like ornament, pirappum = traditional neck ornament adorned by married women in India, kalakalappa = producing sonorous sounds, k kai perthu = waving hands, Vasam = emanating, naru = fragrance, kuLlal = plaits of hair, aaychiyar = Gopikas, matthinal = with a churner, Osi paduttha – being churned, th thayir-aravam = the sound of curd being churned, kettilaiyo? = Isn't it audible?, Nayaga p pennppillai != o! Lady, our leader!, Narayanan Murthy = Lord Narayana manifested in the form of Sri Krishna, Kesavanai = the Lord who killed the demon kesi, ppadavvum = we are praising, nee = you, kette kidathiyo = sleep unconcerned in spite of listening, desamudaiyai = O! Dazzling beauty! Thira = open the door.]

O! Innocent lady! Already the Bharadhwaja birds woke up, as the dawn is set. These birds are conversing among themselves contemplating that they will meet again only in the evening. The Teachers also woke up, they already started the recital of Vedas and they are training their disciples. At times, the scholarly Teachers discuss among themselves like these birds and conceptualize the obscure matters, so that they in turn explain this to their beloved disciples.

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Kanaithilan kattrerumai kandrukk irangi
Ninaiththu mulai vaLiye nindru paal sora
Nanaiththillam cherakkum narchelvan thangay
Paniththalai veeLa nin vasar kadai pattri
Sinathinal thennilangai k komanai ch chettra
Manatthukkiniyanai paadavum nee vaay thiravaay
Initthan eLunthiraay eedhenna p perurakkam
Anaithilltharum arindhel or empavai

Pasuram – 1

[Kanaithu = shout in agony, ilamkattrerumai = cows bestowed with calves, kandrukku = for the sake of the calf, irangi = out of affection, Ninaiththu = pondering that the calf has set its mouth in its udder, mulai vaLiye = from the teats, nindru = continuously, paal sora = having shed the milk, Nanaiththu = got wet, illam = home, cherakkum = became muddy, narchelvan = a noble and rich person, thangay = sister, Pani = dew, tthalai vela = over the head, nin = your, vasar = door, kadai pattri = holding the upper frame, sinathinal = in anger, then = in the south, ilangai = Lanka, komanai = king Ravana, chettra = to kill, Manatthukku = to the heart, iniyanai = soother, (Sri Rama), paadavum = sing in praise, nee = you, vaay thiravaay = wont you open your mouth (to speak), initthan = at least now, eLunthiraay = please wake up, eedhenna = what kind of, pperurakkam = deep sleep, anaithilltharum = all the villagers, arindhu = came to know.]

The lactating cows are worried because their calves haven't suckled milk from their udder. These cows are involuntarily shedding milk pondering that their calves are sucking the milk. Similarly, the Teachers with divine knowledge and out of their benevolence towards their disciples always contemplate over their well being and bright future. They are worried, thinking that they could not impart knowledge to their heart's satisfaction.

Ettrak Kalangall edhirpongi meedhalippa
Maatraddhe paal sorium vallal perumpasukkall

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Aatrap padaithaan magane ! Arivuraay
Oottramudaiyay ! periyaay ! ulaginil
Thottramaay nindra chudare thuyileLay
Maatrar unakku vali tholaindhu un vaasarkann
Aattradhu vandhu unnadi panyumam pole
Pottri yam vandhom pugazhndhelor empavai.

Pasuram – 21

[Ettrak = set for the sake of milk, Kalangall = pots, edhirpongi = brimming, meedhalippa = over flowing, maatradhe = continuously, paal = milk, soriyum = flowing, vallal = highly generous, perum = huge, pasukkall = cows, aattra = in a large number, ppadaithaan = possessor (Nandagopa), magane ! = son, Arivuraay = wake up, oottramudaiyay ! = masculine, periyaay ! = unconquerable, ulaginil = in this world, thottramaay nindra = manifested, chudare = O! Luminous form, thuyileLay = come out of sleep, maatrar = enemies, unakku = of you, vali tholaindhu = become power less, un vaasarkann = at your door step, aattradhu = could not resist, vandhu = arrive, unnadi = at your feet, panyumam pole = so as to sing, pottri = sing in praise, yam = we, vandhom = arrived, pugazhndhu = to adore.]

O! Lord Sri Krishna! The son of Nandagopa your father is endowed with innumerable cows which shed milk sumptuously. Here in this context the cows are but the Vedas and Vedaangas (Smritis, Samhitas, Puranas, Upanishads, Epics, Darshanas etc.). The master of Vedavedaangas is Nandagopa, since Lord Sri Krishna prefers himself being called as the son of Nandagopa (Nandagopa kumaran). Like the cows, the God and the Teacher go in search those who are in troubles and need help. They protect the people with love and care (Lokasamrakshaka). Just as the pot gets filled with milk only when it is placed under the cow's udder, similarly the seeker of knowledge should sit in front of the Teacher with reverence and one should submit one's self. The Vedas are the ultimate apex standards for the entire universe. Hence, Gopikas praise Lord Sri Krishna as 'Vedaswaroopa' (manifested as Veda).

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Sri Andal in ‘Tiruppavai’ mellifluously manifests the unconditional love in its purest form of gopikas who praise Lord Sri Krishna as the Universal teacher and master of yoga (Yogeeswara), as protector of all worlds, ‘Jagadoddhaarakā’. The Gopikas, seek the shower of knowledge from the Teacher so as to facilitate their union of devotion with Lord Sri Krishna.

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VICTIMIZATION OF WOMEN IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S "THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS"

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Abstract:

Suzanna Arundhati Roy is an Indian author best known for her novel *The God of Small Things* (1997), which won the Man Booker Prize for Fiction in 1997 and became the biggest-selling book by a non-expatriate Indian author. An attempt is made in this paper to explore the elements of Feminism in Arundhati Roy's novel 'The God of Small Things'. This paper aims to study the work of Arundhati Roy, 'The God of Small Things' as a text of 'feminine writing'. In this novel, Arundhati Roy has beautifully and effectively shown the plight of women in the Indian context. It also prominently reflects the story of caste exploitation at the center of which is the sub-text of forbidden love between Ammu and the Untouchable, Velutha. Through this novel, she throws light on some important things in life like how love leads to misery, how a person's childhood experiences affect his/ her life.

Keywords: Plight, women, exploitation, misery, childhood

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Arundhati Roy, in her novel *The God of Small Things*, pleads for greater reform on the inflexible condition of women and the unbearable sufferings of the oppressed class. The novel presents an absolutely new world of self-interest, self-advancement, and social equality and attacks the values of the patriarchal society by presenting daringly love and sex between upper caste Syrian Christian woman and an untouchable Paravan. Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, says S.P.Swain :

It is a major breakthrough in Indian fiction in English. She imparts an aura of freshness to Indian novel in English especially in her typical Indian setting and her depiction of a hackneyed reworking of the 'old duchess-and-the gamekeeper plot' in an engaging tale of cross-caste forbidden love between a Paravan and a Syrian Christian. Never before in Indian fiction in English has any novelist dealt so daringly and ingeniously with the theme of love and sex. (S.P.Swain, 1999, 144)

In the novel *The God of Small Things*, two women characters Mammachi and Ammu are the victims in the hands of their husbands. Besides, Ammu is also victimized by the patriarchal hierarchy. Mammachi is the wife of Pappachi. He is an ambitious entomologist. He hankers after ineffectual status, which has not been materialized, sinks in frustration. His discovery of an unidentified species of tufted moth has been captured by an unmerited scientist and named after him. Out of this disillusionment, Pappachi targets Mammachi who becomes a gizmo for his bestial assault which is one of the habitual practices:

Every night he beats her with a brass flower vase.....The beatings weren't new – what was new was only the frequency with which they took place. One night Pappachi broke the bow of Mammachi's violin and threw it in the river. (2)

This brutal attack on his wife has become a regular phenomenon to Pappachi as if an alarm of a watch rings a bell to wake him up. It appears that Pappachi experiences boundless ecstasy in inflicting physical and psychological torture on his wife. Two reasons can be attributed to his annoyance and jealousy of her: She is seventeen years younger to Pappachi and another reason is that she is highly talented when compared to him.

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Ammu, the protagonist of the novel, represents the new woman's plight in the patriarchal Indian society. Right from her childhood, she leads a troubled life. "Every inch of life of an Indian woman," says S.Prasanna Sree, "is filled with multifaceted struggles." (S. Prasanna Sree, 2005, 149) Life for a deserted woman like Ammu in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* offers no choice except endless suffering. Like all women, she too yearns for happiness, pleasure and a life, free from all shackles and hindrances ... For in her memories what stands treasured are the bickering beatings, cries of desperation, humiliation, and puddles of frustration. Mohit Kumar Ray gives an account of his impressions on reading the novel as follows:

I was deeply touched and profoundly impressed. To me, the novel seemed to be a literary sport, a brilliant novel and I would not hesitate to call it a contemporary classic, however absurd it may sound. It is a modern novel in its theme and the treatment of the theme, a postmodern novel in its knotting and knitting of narrative threads, manipulation of expressive literary forms and creative 'play' with words, a feminist novel in the pity and terror that it evokes for the condition of women in particular cultural milieu, a political novel in its criticism of the hypocrisy of the communist party, an autobiographical novel in the way the facts of the author's life have been distilled into a verbal artifact and so on. In fact, the novel is eminently amenable to multiple approaches and interpretations. (Mohit Kumar Ray, 1999, 49)

Ammu, Mammachi's daughter is the practical witness to all the untoward occurrences at home. Ammu could perceive the wild masculine power of her father right from her early stage of life. Moreover, even Ammu, the little girl was beaten by Pappachi with the iron-topped riding crop and used to incise with scissors her finest walking boots into tiny pieces in front of her and flung them all around. Ammu has not escaped the narrow-mindedness of her father regarding her education. She is refuted to pursue higher education because of her father's stubborn attitude: Pappachi insisted that a college education was an unnecessary expense for a girl, so Ammu had no choice but to leave. (3)

Ammu's frustration is indefinable. Because her core of heart is longing for freedom: All day she dreamed of escaping from Ayemenem and the clutches of her ill-tempered father and bitter, long-suffering mother. (4)

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Pappachi marriage means the acceptance of the male authority over the female. He considers wife a slave who can be driven out of the home at his will and whose precious possessions such as piano can be cruelly broken as the much-liked gumboots of her nine-year-old daughter. He always had the feeling that Mammachi was neglecting him, which was an added reason for making his life miserable. "To some small degree, he did succeed in further corroding Ayemenem's view of working wives." (48)

Coming to his daughter Ammu, when no suitable marriage proposal came to her in a reasonable time, she began to grow desperate. At Ayemenen, she felt like a captive lady, fettered to household chores and dull, mechanical routine. Her frustration for the sudden disruption of education, uncongenial atmosphere at home and lack of a viable alternative through marriage made her desperate: "All day she dreamed of escaping from Ayemenen and the clutches of her ill-tempered father and bitter, long-suffering mother. She hatched several wretched little plans. Eventually, one worked. Pappachi agreed to let her spend the summer with a distant aunt who lived in Calcutta" (38-39)

She was lucky to be allowed to go to Calcutta to spend the summer with her distant aunt there. In Calcutta, she met a young man who proposed to her five days after they first met. He was an assistant manager of a tea estate in Assam, who happened to be there on the vocation from his job. Ammu accepted the proposal of a man whom she had known so little and for such a short time, not because in a fit of desperation. She was in a hurry to marry him because she knew that in Ayemenen, people were dead against her wishes and so something was better than nothing.

He was a small man, but well built. Pleasant-looking ... He was twenty-five and had already been working on the tea estate for six years. He hadn't been to college, which accounted for his school-boy humor. He proposed to Ammu five days after they first met. Ammu didn't pretend to be in love with him. She just weighed the odds and accepted. She thought that anything, anyone at all, would be better than returning to Ayemenen. She wrote to her parents informing them of her decision. They didn't reply. Ammu had an elaborate Calcutta wedding. (39)

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But it soon transpired that she had actually fallen from the frying pan into the fire. Ammu discovered to her dismay that her husband was a 'full-blown alcoholic with all of an alcoholic's deviousness and tragic charm' (40) Ammu was eight months pregnant when war broke out with China. She gave birth to twins-Estha and Rahel. They were nearly born in a bus when the car broke down in which their father was taking Ammu to the hospital in Shillong for delivery. They left the car and boarded in State Transport bus. The compassionate "passengers made room for the couple and for the rest of the journey Estha and Rahel's father had to hold their mother's stomach with them in it to prevent it from wobbling." (3) They were born from separate but simultaneously fertilized eggs. Estha Esthappen was older by eighteen minutes.

They were two egg twins. Doctors called them 'Dizygotic'. They never did look much like each other, Estha and Rahel, and even when they were thin-armed children, flat-chested, worm-ridden and Elvis Presley-puffed, there was none of the usual who is who? And which is which? "The confusion lay in a deeper, more secret place. In those early amorphous years when memory had only just begun, when life was full of Beginnings and no Ends, and everything was For Ever, Estha and Rahel thought of themselves together as Me, and separately, individually, as we or us. As though they were a rare breed of Siamese twins, physically separate, but with joint identities." (2)

By the twins were two years old, their father's drinking aggravated by the loneliness of tea estate life driving him into an alcoholic stupor. He started just lying in bed and didn't go to work. He did not take care of his wife even during the period of her pregnancy. He faults in his responsibility for her. He is soon sacked from his job for absconding from the duty for a long time. The manager Mr. Hillock wants to exploit the situation by threatening him to resign from his job. The manager's eyes fall on the beauty of Ammu. Hence, he suggests a way out in which he may retain his job. He asks him to go on long leave sending Ammu to his bungalow to be 'looked after'.

Arundhati Roy here depicts the plight of women in India. Life offers little scope for a woman who yearns for happiness. An alcoholic husband can be as tormenting as male domination. Ammu also suffers bullying at the hands of her husband but less than her mother. Her

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childhood bitter experiences prepare her to face any sort of hardships of life and create a rebel in her in the event of injustice thrust upon her. Unlike her mother, she refuses to be a silent sufferer. She retaliates when her husband tries to convince her to go to bungalow: "Suddenly lunged at her, grabbed her hair, punched her and then passed out from that effort. Ammu took down the heaviest book she could find in the book-shelf—The Reader's Digest World Atlas—and hit him with it as hard as she could. On his head. His legs. His back and shoulders. When he regained consciousness, he was puzzled by his bruises." (42)

It denotes that Indian women can endure torture and suffering but do not accept immoral conduct against their wishes. No educated woman can tolerate such alcoholic, careless and tormenting husband. We may recall the observation made by a leading sociologist John Stuart Mill who said that

Even the poorest Indian male is fortunate in having opportunities for releasing his impulse to domination and the fury of his frustrated ego because he always has a wife whom he can treat as an inferior. (John Stuart Mill, 1869, 40)

Ammu had no alternative but to break off and come back with her twins to the very same place from where she once had tried to run away: "Ammu left her husband and returned, unwelcomed, to her parents in Ayemenem. To everything that she had fled from only a few years ago. Except that now she had two young children. And no more dreams." (42)

At the personal level, she was now burdened with the liability of two children, who were not really loved by anybody, and all her dreams had shattered. Although she loved them, and it was as much for them as for her sense of self-respect that she had deserted her husband, they were, nevertheless, like milestones round her neck. Furthermore, at the familial level, she did not receive any sympathy at all. Her father would not believe that 'an Englishman, an Englishman, would covet another man's wife' (42), and to her mother, her children were a nuisance. And so far as the society is concerned, her situation was a juicy topic. The relatives-near and distant-came to see her and actually chuckled at her discomfiture while they religiously expressed their lip sympathy, so that "Ammu quickly learned to recognize and despise the ugly face of sympathy." (43)

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At the age of twenty-four, her life came to a standstill, nothing to hope for, nothing to happen, only to spend the long uneventful days languidly one after another, and her rebellious spirit only made her more and more miserable as the days went by. At this stage when she knew that she was "already damned" she became an "unmixable mix" combining the "infinite tenderness of motherhood and the reckless rage of a suicide bomber." (44)

She realized that though she lived in the parental house with mother and brother, she had no "Locusts Stand I" (159). Thus at twenty-four, Ammu had the painful realization that "Life had been lived" since she had spoilt one chance by making the irrevocable mistake of choosing the wrong man. She became virtually "untouchable" in her home, in her family, and in the society. The mood of the patriarchal society is reflected in the views of Baby Kochamma: "She subscribed wholeheartedly to the commonly held view that a married daughter had no position in her parents' home.

As for a divorced daughter-according to Baby Kochamma, she had no position anywhere at all. And as for a divorced daughter from a love marriage, well, words could not describe Baby Kochamma's outrage. As for a divorced daughter from an intercommunity love marriage-Baby, Kochamma chose to remain quiveringly silent on the subject." (45-46)

The novel's progress and implication depend on the untouchable, Velutha. He is a Paravan, an untouchable who undergoes unspeakable agonies at the hands of people whose outlooks are directed by age-old caste discrimination. Since he has been untouchable, the society has forbidden his growth which reminds him that his essential identity is his caste. Arundhati Roy views that:

Mammachi rehired Velutha as the factory carpenter and put him in charge of general maintenance. It caused a great deal of resentment among other Touchable factory workers because according to them Paravans were not meant to be rehired. (29)

Velutha is rehired as a carpenter because he is a skilled worker. Had he not been a skilled worker, he would not have been rehired because he belongs to the untouchable caste wherein caste prejudices are glaringly visible. Velutha's father, Vellya Paappen is not a daring personality because he belongs to a time when the untouchables "were expected to crawl backward with a broom, sweeping away their foot-prints so that Brahmins and Christians

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wouldn't define themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan's foot-prints. Velutha derived this inheritance from their forefathers which made him realize his social status. Velutha inherited this sort of profound sense of humiliation and that hurt him and annoyed his heart. Vellya Paapen's fear belongs to the ruthless veracities he had practically witnessed and experienced. He could not violate the limits set by the caste system.

The God of Small Things prominently reflects the story of caste exploitation at the center of which is the sub-text of forbidden love between Ammu and the Untouchable, Velutha. He is one of the central characters of this novel who belongs to Paravan Community. It is a community in Kerala subjected to extreme ignominy through ages. In order to curb the inhuman humiliations for the future generations, Velutha's forefathers had opted for Christianity. But the Christians themselves had practiced the stringent and inescapable caste-system, thus the Paravans had only received the status of 'Untouchable Christians' with separate church and priest of their own. In the novel, it is clearly mirrored that the Syrian Christian family still practices the age-old traditions. The novelist emphasizes the unbending caste-system that endorses rigid behavior and highlights the grave consequences who violate these codes. Though they were converted to Christianity, that does not unshackle them from the inhuman and unjust cast frame of mind. All the men and women who reside in the Ayemenem House stick to this state of mind in which Velutha is victimized due to the cruel casteist social system.

Velutha, an untouchable, is a genuine Trade Union worker, a young man of novel ideas and abundant strength. He has the vigorous healthy physique and inborn talents for making wooden objects. He is a little magician with exceptional aptitudes for many other things. He is a skilled technician in repairing radios, clocks, water pumps and also involved in plumbing and electrical works at the Ayemenem House. His services are essentially required at this house whose exceptional skill impressed everyone. But unfairness towards Velutha is clearly seen in which he is paid fewer wages than a touchable carpenter. Mammachi did not allow him into the house because he is untouchable. Velutha's sexual relation with Ammu further complicates his subjugation. The marriage of Ammu was a failure. Moreover, she was an uninvited and unwelcomed person. Later, Ammu meets Velutha. He is very strong with muscular power besides a gifted worker. Velutha was in deep frustration because of the cruel

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and irrational orthodoxy which did not revere a talented person like him, just because he was untouchable. Out of isolation, Velutha hungered for love and belongingness. Three years younger to Ammu, he finds a stable haven in her someone in whom he can find repose. The notion that Velutha is an untouchable never strikes her mind. He was handsome and Ammu was an attractive lady. Moreover, Velutha was fond of her children, thus she felt drawn to him and they used to play with him because the children didn't know the bias of caste discrimination that he was untouchable.

His love for her taught a new meaning into her immense void rushed the warmth of his companionship for she has been lonely for the last seven years without a husband and who was neglected and humiliated by her parents and her brother. Velutha's multidimensional personality enables him to deal with a number of issues. The novelist opines that Velutha is the God of Small Things, in fact, the 'inversion of God'. The novel focuses on the unjust treatment inflicted on the untouchables. Opined by one of the scholars, Velutha embodies taboos of all sorts. One of the scholars expresses his opinion that untouchables simply have no existence and a woman who has an affair with one would be expelled from her caste.

Velutha's sexual relationship with a high caste woman is not digested by the upper section of the society. It is demarcated by the man. The cultures of little subaltern communities are different from those of high traditions for which man should strive to understand the concept of the God Who has created all human beings equally. It is regrettable to mention that right from the birth of various religions, Dalits have been segregated from the rest of the community through the inhuman and arbitrary practice of untouchability. There is a dire need to awaken the Dalit consciousness among the untouchables to find a solution to such caste discrimination.

Velutha and Ammu were together for thirteen nights. Velutha was brutally killed in the police custody. Fate or fault, but Ammu certainly suffered as a woman for no mistake. The treatment given by her husband was unmanly, brutish and cruel. She left him for the sake of her children. Her attraction towards Velutha was just natural, an instinct that seeks fulfillment and gratification. But society could not forgive them. The police registered a case of rape and abduction and Ammu was called a veshya. Finally, she died in her lodge. The lonely woman

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meets her tragic end because she cannot withstand the public humiliation. She has left herself when she died. She was only thirty-one.

The novel is a sad story of a woman who becomes a decent subject in a world still clinging to a single, unified, unrelenting patriarchal authority. Ammu is a woman who loved "not wisely but too well," and was ruthlessly crushed down by the patriarchal love laws that lay down "who should be loved. And how. And how much." (328)

Arundhati Roy's characters have their weakness and have their distinct personalities. The characters' unquenched desires, unfulfilled assurances, broken marriages, shattered faiths, unreasonable hate and planned revenge – all these are the crux of the novel. These complex and complicated problems bring them nothing but frustration, which culminates in perpetual suffering.

The major issue discussed in the novel is the struggle engaged by women for the establishment of their identity, their economic and sexual freedom. Ammu is a valiant fighter for these causes, though the options open to her in the male-dominated order are not viable at all.

Roy is concerned about matters that prove to be devastating and dehumanizing for all. Her anxiety is for the mortals in general. Female preoccupations with specific roles and images are carefully diluted. The institution of marriage as an enclosure for both the sexes is envisioned by Roy in *The God Small Things*. For women, total equality in marriage may still be a Utopian dream, but for men also, as Roy records, the road is not impediment-free. Women can overcome the debilitating effects of marriage, overtly or covertly, to discredit male power or energy. This constant competition breeds the psychology of the victor and the vanquished.

The God of Small Things pretty well fits into a feminist text foregrounding many visible barriers. Patriarchy has continued to rise in women's way to gain parity with men. One of the key issues which very often figures in contemporary feminist discourse is the patriarchal powers within the household, the society, and the economy. It is so because "in spite of a

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number of face-saving laws made by the State, practices like dowry-based violence or female foeticide are carried on with impunity within the household."(Pandey, 1999, 143).

The God of Small Things is the truthful portrayal of the plight of women in society and their marathon struggle for seeking the sense of 'identity' in a male-dominated conservative framework. The social structure of an Indian woman is full of many ups and downs. Life offers little choice for a forsaken woman like Ammu which is presented in this paper. The Indian traditions do not support Ammu at all during her struggle to define herself. The new voices of India, the new feminists, the women writers echo the inner turmoil, the seething anger and the pant up depression. The woman has to work for her liberation without resigning herself to her destiny.

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IDENTITY CRISIS IN JHUMPA LAHIRI'S THE NAMESAKE: A SOCIO-LITERARY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Today's world is maintaining relations in the form of social networking sites and interconnected than ever before in the history of mankind. Technological advancement has transformed the entire world into a global village. Irrespective of religion, cast, and creed human beings are able to collide with each other. Migration has become the order of the day, and with large-scale intra and inter migratory movements across the globe, the concept of home acquires newer dimensions. The postcolonial period has observed the production of a number of literary texts by diasporic writers which aim at re-forming. South Asian diasporic writing is an effective documentation of the traditional and diasporic experience of the outcasts who are torn between the emergencies of self-recognition in an antagonistic land and the fidelity towards ethnoreligious traditions of the homeland. The universal trope of dislocation found in these works emphasizes on the regularly changing nature of diasporic identities. This article proposes to undertake a postcolonial reading of Jhumpa Lahiri as a diasporic writer with special reference to her novels. In most of her novels, one finds the pursuit for self-identity by characters who reflect the disposition and receptivity of the Indians who migrate to the West in search of innovative pastures, but in due course are enforced to accede to the tense forces of cross-cult.

Keywords Identity Crisis, alienation, rootlessness, prejudices, cultural perplexity

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1.0 Introduction:

Diaspora is all about the creation of new identities, spaces for growth, resolution of conflicts and a new culture, either composite or plural. Diasporic writings are constructed not on the principles of harmony but on the principles of simultaneity. The principle of simultaneity displays 'the core' human predicament in the countries of the West and the East. Diasporic discourse, therefore, is the step towards the discourse of the species of man, the narrative of the Homo- Sapiens. The word 'Diaspora', derived from the Greek word Diaspeiro, literally means scattering or dispersion of people from their homeland. Diasporic writing has been receiving increasing academic and disciplinary recognition. It has emerged as a distinct literary genre.

A large number of people have migrated from India to various alien lands under "forced exiles" or 'self-imposed exiles'. Some of them have made a mark in the field of writing. These immigrant writers reflect, on one hand, their attachment to their motherland and on the other hand, their feeling of alienation and Immigration proves a pleasant experience only to a few immigrants who succeed in assimilating themselves with new geographical, cultural, social and psychological environment. They all voice the anguish of the people, living far away from their native land and being discriminated against on the grounds of race, color or creed. Every immigrant experiences injustice, inequality, discrimination, biases, prejudices and a threat to cultural identity in the unfamiliar country. Adjusting with the social, economic, political, psychological and environmental changes is also a challenge.

The abrupt change in the lifestyle, culture, status, society causes emotional and psychological problems. Adjusting with the changing scenario of their lives is a challenge. The Indian Diaspora focuses on the varied aspects of life abroad. The Indian women Diaspora writers have created a niche for themselves in the literary world. Writers like Bharat Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, and many others have taken great pains to focus on the world of immigrants. The present paper is an attempt to explore the tormenting experiences and cultural perplexity of the first and second

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generation immigrants. It also focuses on universal dehumanization in the modern globalized world.

In the present era of transnational migration, the flow of the people among the different countries, convergence of the heterogeneous cultures and hybridization of identities have broken the concept of fixity or absolute territoriality. The intersection between the terrorization and deterritorialization creates the 'third space' or liminality where the 'cutting edge of translation and negotiation' occurs. Therefore, the concepts of homeland and identity in this age of global migration from a complex framework. According to the critics like Homi K. Bhabha, Avtar Brah and Stuart Hall, the floating nature of home and fluid identity have replaced the age-old concepts of fixed 'home' and identity as well.

The idea of 'home' evokes the spatial politics of home, the sense of self, its displacement, intimacy, exclusion, and inclusion. The flow of the people across different countries breaks the concept of true home. The notion of home not only construes the sense of self but also ties with the human emotion, feelings, sentiments, proximity, and intimacy. Beyond the spatial territory, 'home' is associated with emotional territory.

The hybrid identity that the immigrants carry creates a tumultuous situation regarding the belongingness. In the opinion of Bhabha, hybridity is the 'third space' which makes the other positions to emerge. The identity as suggested by Bhabha indicates the impure identity rather than fixed identity. Dual or hybrid identity construct an identity crisis in one's creating home of familiarity in the overseas countries. The second generation immigrants find it hardly possible to adhere to the identity of the parental land. The national identity of the first generation may be changed politically, but they are able to fasten with their original homeland culturally, linguistically and ethnically. In the contemporary era, immigration, exile, and expatriation are related to home, identity, nostalgia, memory, and isolation. These are the recurrent theme in the diasporic writings of the post-colonial writers like V. S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Bharati Mukherjee, Agha Shahid Ali, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai and many others.

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This present article focuses on the first-generation and second-generation immigrants' adherence to the old and new lands as can be found in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* (2003). In this novel, Lahiri has explored the psychic condition of the first generation immigrants, Ashima and Ashoke and the second generation immigrants, Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi. The novel critically demonstrates how the concept of homeland creates an atmosphere to construct home and identity of proximity.

In this age of transmigration, 'home' signifies its impermanence, displacement, and dispossession. For many critics, the idea of home is more conveyed as a sense of being between the two places instead of rooted one. In the novel, Ashima's sense of being at home is connected to the original homeland, i.e. India. And the selves of Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi are supposed to be attached with the USA, their birthplace. The questions, however, arise as – is this land for which they seem to negate the Indian ideological values and principles? And how far they are able to create the true home?

In an unknown city of Massachusetts, Ashima's pang for abandoning the home country is emphasized through imagining the picture of the family in Calcutta. And the feeling of nostalgia seems to mitigate the pang and anguish of Ashima. When she is about to give birth a child, her Indian ethnicity reminds her of the conventional social code and customs of the Indian Bengali culture: "...women go home to their parents to give birth, away from husbands and in-laws and household cares..." (p.4). Again the solitary atmosphere in the hospital makes her recapture the particular moment of the domestic life of the Calcutta. The reference to the 'fractures of memory' can aptly be mentioned in this context. Ashima's anxiety over giving birth and rearing up the child in the alien land is poignantly revealed: "... it was happening so far from home, unmonitored and unobserved by those she loved, had made it more miraculous still" (p.6).

Similarly, Ashima's recollection of the lullaby from the Bengali songs, remembrance of 'did I'm coming' for 'goodbye' are intimately associated with the Bengali social conventions which are hardly evadable for the first generation immigrants like

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Ashima. Her recollection of the past and imagination of the present Calcuttan family life are encapsulated within the tapestry of the isolated life in the USA. Her feeling of nostalgia captures the very moment of the far away Calcuttan life where "a servant is pouring after-dinner tea ... arranging Marie biscuits on a tray" (p.5).

The lack of tie with the Indian family makes Gogol seldom recognize the photos of the family members of Ashima. Ashima endeavors to transmit in Gogol the convention of the Bengal by introducing him with the Bengali rhyme, names of Gods and Goddesses and prevalent Bengali tradition of calling every child by two names.

The tie of the language especially the Bengali of the indigenous land is presumed to make Ashima link with the Indian soil. Ashima's grasping 'a tattered copy of Desh magazine' in the foreign hospital indicates her temporary relief in the far-off country. Ashima's solicitude over rearing up the child without her family surrounding this strange city, impels her to think of "... a person entering the world so alone, so deprived" (p.25).

The bipolarity of forging the cultural performances between the first generation and second generation Indian immigrants is viewed in the present novel. The nurturing of the Bengali culture through Nazrul and Tagore songs, the argument over the films of Ritwik Ghatak versus Satyajit Roy, as well as the debate over the political parties of the West Bengal among the Bengali immigrant community in the USA illustrate their proximity with the Indian soil. Cultural performance generally plays an instrumental role to construct an immigrant's identity. In the overseas countries, native cultural activities such as dances or songs construct the cultural identity of the immigrants and endeavor to negotiate with other cultures too (Aparna Rayaprol, 1997). Inversely, the second generation immigrants like Gogol gets involved with the American music than the Indian classical music: "... a cassette of classical Indian music he'd bought for Gogol months ago ... still sealed in its wrapper" (p.78). The utmost effort of Ashima and Ashoke to make him acquainted with cultural activities like Kathakali dance and Apu Trilogy plays.

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Ashima's preservation of the varied Bengali rituals in the new land epitomizes the bond with native India. The celebration of Gogol's Annaprasan (rice ceremony) as per the Bengali convention provides Ashima a temporary relief in this foreign atmosphere. On the other hand, to perform this ritual, the absence of the family members overshadows Ashima which denotes her longing to create the Bengali atmosphere in the new unknown country. Ashima, Ashoke, and Bengali immigrants obey the religious festivals of Christmas and New Year celebration probably to reconcile with the culture.

Reversely, the eagerness and excitement of the second generation Bengali immigrants is observed in celebrating the American festivals than worshipping of Indian Gods and Goddesses.

Ashima is supposed to be the 'other' in the unknown American atmosphere, as she usually observes the disparity between the home and host cultures. Similarly, ethnic food and costume act as the symbols of one's ethnic identity. Ashoke-Ashima's preference for the Indian Bengali food like rice, dal, samosa etc symbolizes their shared root. On the other hand, Gogol-Sonia's preference for the American cuisine like Shake' n Bake chicken or Hamburger Helper than the Indian food is critically examined: "Gogol savors each mouthful, aware that for the next eight months nothing will taste quite the same" (p.81).

Hence, Gogol's returning from India to Boston symbolizes his escaping the loneliness of India which usually projects his reluctance to negotiate with the Indian environment: "... for Gogol, relief quickly replaces a lingering sadness" (p.87). In the new atmosphere, Ashima's inability to adapt to the social rules and systems and sense of embarrassment and anguish comes out regarding raising baby-son Gogol. Her yearning to move back to India is embedded in this solitary atmosphere: "I'm saying I don't want to raise Gogol alone in this country. It's not right. I want to go back" (p.33).

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Their hyphenated position, Indian-American, within two different ethnic identities gives them no specific identity for the preservation of the particular ideological value of any country. The seeming manner of their adherence to the American customs makes them impart less significance of the Indian one. Another situation can be observed through Gogol-Sonia's changed behavior of endeavoring to obey the rules and regulations of the Indian religious ceremony after their father's death: "... it was a Bengali son's duty to shave his head in the wake of a parent's death" (p.179). Hence, the inability of the second-generation immigrants to create the true home of familiarity and bond in America or in India generally can be analyzed due to the pendulum situation.

Moushumi, the British born off-spring of the Bengali parents can be viewed from the point of transnationalism. Her continuous moving from one country to another seldom makes her adhere to any particular cultural ideological values of the countries like Britain, America, and France. Hence, her belongingness is moving to different countries instead of a fixed country. Moushumi's preference for the French literature, food, and a feeling of oneness with the French friends usually signify her reconciliation with the French environment instead of the Bengali. Again her reluctant acceptance the surname 'Ganguli' of the spouse in the codes and conducts of the Bengali marriage institution, pinpoints her willingness to enjoy liberty and independence by being not confined under this particular or fixed system: " When relatives from India continue to address letters and cards to 'Mrs. Moushumi Ganguli,' "she will shake her head and sigh"(p.227). Her escape from the Bengali convention and culture to cling to the French culture does not explicit her feeling at home with the later one. Her continuous moving from one country to another is supposed to re-create the home in France: "Here Moushumi had reinvented herself, without misgivings, without guilt (p.233).

The floating nature of home and fluid identity are explicated in her lack of feeling with the previous bond with native Calcutta, which she used to nourish in Calcutta and the USA. It seems to emerge as foreign, a new land. Moreover, she is presumed to be connected with the USA through the rumination over the past days across

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boundary after returning to Calcutta: "... to the city that was once home and is now in its own way foreign" (p.278). Hence, she would be sandwiched between the dual cultures and identities as well. The city of San Francisco never emerges as the sweet old home in Calcutta but is only the place of residence without any attachment: "I'm feeling just a little alien and uncomfortable, a tinge of not-belonging, in the midst of such welcoming comfort ..." (p.75).

Conclusion

The indecisive condition of the first-generation and second-generation Bengali immigrants, their vain endeavors to tie with the particular tradition and to carry the pure identity coalesce with the vain attempt of creating the true home elsewhere. Due to the effect of global migration and cross-cultural networks the first-generation immigrants generally try to be attached with the indigenous land through the recapitulation and the feeling of nostalgia. And the second generations seem to build any connection with the unknown parental land. The second generations usually adhere to their birth land. The national identities get eroded and replaced by the hybrid identities in which both the first and the second generation immigrants have wavered. He visits his childhood home to prepare for the event and rediscovers the book of Russian short stories his father had given him when he was fourteen. Inscribed in the book is a short note from his father reading "the man who gave you his name, from the man who gave you your name." Hence, the belongingness of the immigrants hardly clings to any singular place than the multi-places.

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Portia's Dynamism as a Shakespearean Woman Character

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Abstract

Portia is dynamic in the sense that she is a sensitive woman character as well. She is sensitive to her chosen person, suitor Bassanio. She doesn't go away from her father's words in the execution of his Will even after his death. She is dynamic in fanning out her multifaceted personality as Bassanio's lady love, a rich legal heiress of Noble birth, a sympathizer of Antonio's much-valued friendship towards Bassanio, a witty, wisdom-filled lawyer in disguise, and a saviour of Antonio's Life. She cracks the crucial text of the critical bond by her subtle layers of wisdom and wit. This theme deals with the role of Portia in William Shakespeare's world famous play "The Merchant of Venice". The character Portia too passes through many stages from innocence to achievement in the end like what is expected of every woman to face the challenges of the world. Her wish of love is put to test in the very beginning but the not the suitors are put to test in true terms because Portia loves Bassanio already. Portia is blessed to marry Bassanio. Her character proves in the next moment itself by sympathizing with Bassanio's friend Antonio and his pitiable plight. She doesn't remain silent. By giving 6000 ducats to Bassanio she tries her best to rescue Antonio. But, Shylock is adamant. She further gets into disguise as a lawyer apprentice Balthazar and enters the court. She exercises her intelligence by getting into the tune of Shylock's cunning nature and agrees with his stand in the beginning. She appears to be so. But, slowly and shrewdly she brings forth the wrong intentions of Shylock to the surprise of everyone in the court. Shylock is trapped in his own guilt. He is defeated in the court. Shylock's defeat is the success of Antonio. Portia passing through many roles in this play proving herself to be a

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dynamic woman in the true sense which is exemplary to all women. This play mirrors the image of Portia as one of the memorable characters of William Shakespeare.

Keywords: dynamic, multifaceted, saviour, women etc

Portia is the dynamic heroine of 'The Merchant of Venice', William Shakespeare's play. As 'The Merchant of Venice' opens, Portia's father passes away leaving her with a good fortune. The noble and rich legal heiress, Portia in 'The Merchant of Venice' is one of the strongest and wisest characters found in William Shakespeare's plays. Portia is beautiful, wise, creative, spontaneous, humanistic, and adventurous of her character. These qualities portray her as one of the unique and memorable characters of Shakespearean dramas. The depiction of the character Portia is handled with a high degree of dexterity and workmanship by William Shakespeare.

Portia loves Bassanio, a young Venetian gentleman. She hopes and wishes to marry him. As dictated by her father, the suitor who wins her hand must pass a test and choose from among three chests filled with gold, silver or lead. Each chest had an inscription. The gold box says, 'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire'. The silver box says, 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves'. The lead box says, 'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath'.

Portia is hopeful of her love. She is also sensitive about her future like any other woman. But, she is confident that she wins Bassanio. This is the kind of confidence that empowers a woman. Only one of the chests contains a picture of Portia. And, if the suitor chooses wisely, he will win her hand in marriage. Portia's maid Nerissa assures the young woman that her father was a good man with her best interests at heart. However, Portia may not love the suitor who chooses the right chest. Portia feels absurd at this juncture and explains her dilemma to Nerissa in this monologue.

"If to do were as easy as to know what were
good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a

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good divine that follows his own instructions. I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree".

Portia understands the difference between knowing and doing what's right. She is respectful towards her father's wish. She honours him. But she is unable to be beyond her heart's desire too. Because she already loves Bassanio. Like a sensitive woman, she oscillates between her father's wish and her wish. But, in her heart, of hearts, she is confident enough that she could win Bassanio. As she wishes, the destiny is favourable to Portia. Bassanio chooses the lead chest, which contains her picture. Bassanio and Portia marry immediately, after which Bassanio finds out that the life of his best friend Antonio is in danger. Portia gives her husband 6000 ducats to rescue Antonio from Shylock. Portia understands the situation and gives her consent to Bassanio to see Antonio immediately. This is how William Shakespeare portrays Portia as a spontaneous, helpful, generous and bold woman.

At Venice, Antonio's ships are reported lost at sea. So the merchant cannot repay the bond to Shylock. Shylock has become more determined to take revenge against Antonio at this crucial situation. But Shylock demands only the pound of flesh from near Antonio's heart. The Duke wishes to save Antonio but is unable to nullify the contract. In the court scene, Portia's role as a Lawyer in disguise is remarkable and significant. Portia tries to convince Shylock in many ways. Her wonderful speech on the quality of mercy is an everlasting speech in the history of English Literature. Antonio confesses the bond.

It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice"

Portia's humanistic approach towards Antonio and her inner struggle to transform Shylock are touching. Portia herself honours the law of Venice. She regards the Justice as inevitable and obliging. She pronounces that no power in Venice can alter a decree once it is established. Shylock's malicious nature is defeated by Portia's great wisdom. The ignorance of Shylock mounts and shouts, "O wise young Judge, how do I honour thee!" Portia studies the bond executed by Antonio to Shylock. Shylock is blindfolded not to listen to Portia when

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she hints, "Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee." Shylock sticks to his stubborn state. His malice leads him to lose which is an unpredictable end for himself. In the beginning, Portia agrees with Shylock that he has a legal claim on Antonio's pound of flesh near the heart. But then, she shrewdly turns the tables on the malicious nature of Shylock. Portia as Balthazar, an apprentice lawyer tells Shylock that he can only have his one pound of flesh and not his blood. Portia proclaims,

"This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh';
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice."

For Shylock, it is humanly impossible to shred a pound of flesh from near the heart of Antonio without shedding a single drop of blood. When Shylock realizes what he has to lose, the time lapses and he loses.

The character of Portia passes through many crucial stages in this drama "The Merchant of Venice". The character evolves as an exceptional character reaching its heights. As an innocent daughter, she struggles to be bound by her father's intentions, though she loves Bassanio. She is noble and also blessed in winning Bassanio's love. To her luck, Portia's love gains success by Bassanio's right choice. She gets married to Bassanio. Immediately, she gets ready to send Bassanio with 6000 Ducats to his friend Antonio to rescue him from Shylock's imposition of law against Antonio. She doesn't stop with that. She gets into the disguise of the apprentice lawyer Balthazar and exercises her true intelligence in the court by way of her convincing Shylock, sympathizing with Antonio, agreeing and approving the law of the court of the Duke, trapping Shylock slowly and intelligently in his own guilt - are some of the exceptional and excellent qualities of Portia.

Her nobility is further qualified for her actions. Portia is dynamic in obliging her father's will as his daughter. She is also dynamic in choosing her own suitor not weaning away from the procedures of the established pattern of choosing the suitors. She honours the true friendship

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between Bassanio and Antonio. She respects Antonio as he is the cause of her marrying Bassanio at the cost of his own life. She immediately prompts Bassanio to save Antonio from the guileful intentions of Shylock. She lands into the court in disguise, but confidently, to try to convince Shylock, to remind Shylock of an attractive offer from Bassanio, to slowly support Shylock in his stubborn wish, to honour the law of Venice ultimately and to defeat Shylock finally. What else is called dynamism other than these qualities of Portia?

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IMAGES OF WOMEN IN MODERN CREATIVE WRITINGS

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ABSTRACT

Can anyone imagine a day without night or a night without a day? It's highly impossible. As the human race got used to the light and the darkness, they cannot imagine a life without them. May be that could be the same reason behind the creation of the universe. As we have left and right, sun and moon the human race also started its existence with the creation of male and female species. But unfortunately one race has dominated the other suppressing their life and emotions. The age old traditions have given women a sub ordinate status and men a dominant status. Ultimately the sufferer is the weak sex. Whether it is a family or a society, the representation of women is one and the same. When one observes the literature of the past and the present times, it is crystal clear that the writers had chosen the theme of the existing day. From a male writer to a female writer the choice was limited to portray the characters of women. When the feminists had struggled to liberate the subordinated characters from the dominant characters, the male chauvinists portrayed the domination as a natural phenomenon. Suppression makes to raise more as anything cannot be pressed for a long time. So the feminists tried to focus on the burning issues of the modern days to show that their female protagonists are the new women, who were no longer confined to the four walls of their caged lives. The present article is going to focus the views of a modern writer Anita Nair through her pen out *Ladies Coupe* published in 2001.

Keywords: Emotional disturbances, domination, independent and so on

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The literature of any country depicts the true culture of its own. When a writer pens out his feelings, he chooses the characters, themes and emotions from the society around him. As human beings are social beings it is a common fact that they follow their predecessors. Anita Nair is one of the South Indian writers who has rightly dealt with the sensitive issues of the modern century. As quoted by *The Times*, “Nair conveys her protagonist’s dilemmas with a freshness and charm”. It is obvious that Nair wanted to free her female protagonists from the age old traditions. She has rightly focused on the lives of middle class women who suffer internally with their burning emotional turmoil. She sensitively portrays the characters to show how women need to be recognised and brought out of their inner sufferings as the development and success of any country depends on family and women are considered as the strong pillars of a healthy family.

Nair is good at creating sensible attitudes in typical South Indian families. As change is inevitable, one cannot confine to their age old traditions. Many of the advancements in the fields of Science and Technology have brought about a great change in the living standards of the human race. This in turn led to the development of their life skills which made women to be emotionally and physically strong. The demands made them to realise that they need to be recognised. So the struggle of independence had made them to fight for their self liberation. It is a known fact that attaining freedom is not an easy matter which costs many sacrifices.

Ladies Coupe presents the lives of different women caught in the trap of family sentiments. Born and brought up in orthodox families, their families and society imbibe the roots of tradition from the infant stage. So it becomes very difficult for them to swallow the reality and they suffer internally, because they know their external omission may ostracize them. Nair portrays the lives of these women in a ladies coupe. May be she wants them to be liberated from the entire world of domination. She creates a space for them to disclose their inner agonies. A journey to new places makes them to identify a new inner self. It is known fact that women try to bury their feelings rather than disgrace their family reputation. Here Nair carefully creates an environment that her protagonists travel to open spaces to breathe in fresh air.

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A journey generally brings out new innovations. The journey of these women also brought out their originality which they never thought of or were never cautious about. Akhila, a spinster was the first one to reach the station for a sojourn to Kanyakumari. As a spinster, she was ruled by her younger siblings who never cared of her future but were conscious about her independent status. The story of Akhila moves the readers, as the eldest one in the family the entire burden was on her shoulders. Her mother gave much importance to her husband and wanted the things to go on peacefully. Akhila's thoughts were never cared. She feels that economic dependence comes from the working status of the parents. She wants her mother to use her good voice to teach music to children. But traditional mother denies the fact saying that "Do you think your father would allow such comings and goings on here? Don't you know how strict he is? Anyway, do you think your father would let me? If I wanted a working wife, then I would have married someone like that" (19).

Would the opinions never change? The same mother had to send Akhila to continue the job of her father after his death. If not how could the family be run. Being the sole provider for the family, Akhila forgot her personal needs; neither her mother nor her siblings were worried about her. She performed her duties. What about her personal life? She identifies her individual necessities and searches for her own identity while discovering the lives of her fellow lady passengers. The situations in life may be different to different individuals, but the ultimate destination of anyone is happiness. Akhila realised that she was miles away from as she had no one to claim as own for her.

Janaki, who says "I am a woman who has always been looked after. First there was my father and my brothers; then my husband. When my husband is gone, there will be my son."(22). A typical Indian woman who believes women are born and end up with fragile mind. Life cannot be the same in all the stages. From caring parents she moved to the hands of a adorable husband and finally she had to accept the domination of her daughter-in-law. May be that was the time she has rightly recognised that protecting self-identity is more important in a woman's life than labelling herself as an obedient, caring and dutiful daughter, wife and mother. She could understand that she was carefully trapped under the umbrella of suppression.

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Sheela, a fourteen year old girl was more matured than the former. She knew well about the harassment of the dominated sex over the subordinate sex. Her physical and mental development made her to realise the attitude of a man, her friend's father who tried to treat her as a woman, who can be sexually abused. Nair shows Sheela as a modern girl who knows well how to protect herself from the sexual abuses. May be her grandmother had rightly made her a perfect girl. "Ammumma hated imperfections of any kind. In her home there was no room for a cracked plate, a blotched towel or a faded cushion"(67). Through Sheela's character Nair throws light on how women are sexually abused by men.

Margaret Shanti, a Chemistry lecturer married to Ebenezer Paulraj, the Principal of her school, realises how difficult is to tolerate the bossism at home and working place. She silently observes his demanding, egocentric attitude towards her. Any woman in her place would certainly think of separating from her unhappy married life. But the traditional roots in her blood warn her about the way the society thinks of her. Unable to withstand the silence in her life, she fills the vacuum by making him obese which in turn makes him dull. May be she was satisfied as both of them were sailing on the same boat. Nair shows how women are submissive to a certain extent but rebel when things are out of control. A great Principal couldn't sense the dangerous cyclone that hit his life. "In the morning, I rose at dawn and rushed into the kitchen. Your time begins Ebe, I told a sleeping Ebe. Your time begins with this breakfast. Puris fried in ghee and a potato, peas and cauliflower korma" (133).

Prabha Devi brought up in an environment where her mother refuses to give her permission for a matinee show, "I don't think your father will like it" (170). She was caught in the three fold position of being a daughter, wife and a mother. It was too late when she could realise that she was not actually what she was. Unfortunately by the time she realised the real essence of her life, she crossed the most valuable years of her life. She struggles to balance her missing life. Nair shows through this character how women are caged in the bars that they feel their life is protective inside but realise that they forget that they need fresh air to stay healthy.

Marikolunthu, the name suggests a fragrance but unfortunately she misses the sweet smell in her life. Driven by poverty her life was out of her hands. Nair shows how the aristocratic families rule the poor families. Missing her childhood she becomes the mother of a child for

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the mistake of her owner but she was the ultimate sufferer. Circumstances forced her to be a doll rather than a human being. She was sandwiched between the family members and her poverty. She finally relieves herself as she says, “Sometimes I would think of the past and I would feel a quickening in the vacuum that existed within me now” (266). A pathetic story of a teenage girl who missed humanity from the people surrounding her, and suffered the only one life she had on the earth.

A single night journey makes Akhila to realise that every woman should live up to her expectations. Society neither cares for their happiness nor sadness. It is the individual who should make a choice of her life. Whether a woman is married or not, the problems are one and the same. Nair throws light on the lives of different woman ranging from a teenager, middle aged woman to an old woman. Their sufferings are cut from the same cloth. They want to be realised as an identical being. *Ladies Coupe* is actually self-realization of the characters which in turn makes the readers to realize their self. Nair depicts the reality in the world and wants her women to lead a safe and secured life, where much importance should be given to individual's happiness.

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SAGACIOUS CREATION OF MODERN WOMEN CHARACTERS

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Abstract

Are women born weak or made weakly? This question gives way for much introspection. Yes, a woman may not be physically stronger than man by birth, but they have strengthened themselves to be equal with man, sometimes even more than them. A woman in the past was made weak herself, among the others and in the society too. She was entangled with restrictions and burdens in the name of custom, tradition, and culture. She was penalized to follow the traditional norms in silence. With upcoming revolutionary thoughts of great personality, women issues were brought into the limelight through the writings of great Indian people. In the recent years, every woman has been given freedom to enjoy her life, freedom to search for her identity, freedom to express her thoughts before others but how far this group utilizes it in a superior manner is always a million dollar question for the writers as well as the readers of literature. We read, hear, listen, and dream ourselves in a superior manner but can we justify this in doing the right or wrong thing? To what extent we can avail our freedom, in what way can it be felt, will all our enjoyment, happiness, the satisfaction of self be welcomed by the others, or will it be accepted in accordance to the societal norms? The present article tries to provoke into the select writings of the two modern writers Chetan Bhagat and Anita Nair, and bring out how the women characters have been projected, and in what way their freedom is sustainable and acceptable in the context of Indian society

Keywords: Submissive, Identity crisis, Freedom, Chauvinism

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Chetan Bhagat, an Indian author, columnist, screenwriter, television personality and motivational speaker, known for his English-language dramedy novels about young urban middle-class Indians. He said in an interview that 'Feminism to me is a woman getting an equal right to pursue her happiness. That depends on the context, region what average Indian women want. He points out that what feminism in the US could mean would be different from what it would be in a small village in our country. The author believes that he has tried to hold a "mirror to the society" He highlights the main difficulty was to figure out what "average Indian women go through in their lives". He believes that his protagonist for the book is a "practical feminist and not a feminist Nazi.' The youth icon of India has always put his writings ahead of the others especially in projecting the youth of this modern society. His characters are picked up from the near and far of the places of his living. He inserts the concept of realism, existentialism in his writings and relates it to the current happenings in the society. Bhagat has made a female as the main protagonist in his novel One Indian Girl and projected her as a liberated soul with modern perceptions.

Anita Nair, a contemporary woman writer, focuses on the wretched women folk prevailing in the middle-class modern society. The writer has taken the pain to exhibit the pathetic conditions of the women who are being dominated by the patriarchal group. They remain subjugated and dormant within the four walls of the house, but at times when their identity is at a crisis they become rebellious and decide to break down the clutches to liberate them. Anita Nair focuses on the divergent aspects of presenting the women from a middle class, upper class, educated group, illiterate group, traditional group and modern group. She has depicted how the dominant male group may be a father, brother, husband or a son hold the strings and loosen or tighten it according to their needs. So, the born girl had always been under the control of the other, serving the other, living for the other without knowing the purpose of her life on this earth. Nair has beautifully projected the women folk in different walks of their life in the novel Ladies Coupe.

In One Indian Girl (2016) the main protagonist is Radhika Mehta, a leading investment banker, at Goldman Sachs in London, aspires to view life in a new dimension. Though she was born and brought up in an Indian orthodox family, she chose to enjoy her life in a different manner after stepping into the materialistic world. Radhika Mehta was the younger

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daughter of Sudarshan Mehta and Aparna Mehta. Though she had the privilege of enjoying things equally with her sister, she sometimes feels insane for the praise and applause were given to her sister for her elegance. A small prickle grew in her throbbing heart as she grew older. Though she was an outstanding student in her studies she couldn't proclaim her identity among her family members or in the society where she lived in as they always gave importance for the beauty of a girl child to get married off. So, she decided herself regain her identity in the far-off places where due worth is giving for education, talent, and skill. She kept her body and soul together and worked hard keeping her mind as the asset. She gradually succeeds in her career and was able to get back her identity as a talent, became a dynamic, young investment banker who earns more than a man. Everything around her changed, gradually she felt more superior to others.

Her caring and loving father allowed her to continue her studies in spite of her mother's decision to get her married at the right age. "He never said no to anything. Ahmedabad, New York, Hong Kong, wherever she wanted to go, he would let her" (Pg-263). But her mother obliged that "Who wants to marry a girl who earns so much? If the boy earns less, he won't consider you. If he earns more, why would he marry a working girl?" (Pg-9). Here we can find how a daughter has been given the freedom to select her career and the supportive minds to welcome her success. A traditionally bound thought often tries hard to seize her and put her back into the clusters of a man. Radhika Mehta being modern, intellectual attributed her liberty and started her second journey of life from New York at Goldman Sachs to fulfill her dream. Being accustomed to the new environment, she changes herself to suit to the needs of the English society. She gets attracted to the care, loving nature of Debu, who works in an advertising agency on Madison Avenue in Brooklyn. She felt happy in his company and he enjoyed her success vigorously.

"Yeah, I said. Also, there are hardly any women on the team. It's a man's job.' What nonsense,' Debu said. 'Why can't a woman do it? They are better negotiators.' It's all these bulls hit men spread. To scare women out of a role or position. Fact is, men are shit-scared of talented women like you.' (Pg-49) She felt happy for two things- the first for a person who enjoyed her success as his, and the other for his encouraging mind. But things get worse when the real masculine gender in him gets activated. He couldn't enjoy his long-awaited

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promotion, as Radhika gets a base increment of 1,50,000 dollars per year which happens to be a huge amount when compared to his. His dominative male mind couldn't accept it and leaves her behind though she was ready to leave her job for the sake of his love. He disparages her that she can't be a good mother to his kids. He blames her to be an unkind materialistic woman who can never become a good housewife. Here we come to know of the real thinking of a man who couldn't digest the woman's success, especially if the woman happens to be his better half.

Being messed up with the thoughts of her lover, she becomes fragile, takes alcohol to overcome the isolation and at times she wails for being dejected by Debu. She abandons New York and moves to Hong Kong, where she meets Neel Gupta, a forty-five-year-old man, a partner at Goldman Sachs who was married, has two small kids. Neel helped her to come out from her repulsive condition with care, love, and affection. She too felt the same with him and both enter into a relationship. She thought that the love of a man and woman can suffice them to living in the society, whatever may be their status in the society. So, Radhika asks him to marry her, but he rejects the proposal and saying that she is unfit to be a mother or to have a family. Here the women's Achilles heel is touched upon and put her as a machine of happiness without any identity. She decides to move to London and start the third juncture of her life. After two failures, vexed with her choice, she decides to marry a person whom her parents have selected for her. Later realizing her true love both Neel and Debu chase her to marry, but she rejected both of them. As her mind is muddled with the past and the present, she decides to break off from the materialistic world.

In Ladies Coupe, the writer Anita Nair chose to show women in feminist perspectives. The writer has taken efforts to show the life of women in the contemporary society and how it should be but it is not in that manner. Feminism means not only providing women with education and making them economically independent from the conventional oppressive masses but to just how far the liberty of the women is being accepted and welcomed by the other sections in the society. There arises a question whether true liberty is self-liberty from the constraints or liberty of self-satisfaction. When self-liberty exercises an identity which is respectable and within the norms of the societal conditions it is accepted, whereas the self-satisfaction of the woman's thrust which is against the norms of the society is not welcomed

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by the people in the society. So the problem of self-arises from the women or from the men. If a man has every right to think about his self-identity, satisfaction, and recognition why can't a woman long for it? Anita Nair has beautifully painted the characters of six women from different stages of life who had been pressurized and forcefully made weak, unfit to lead an independent life in the society where they live in. Akilandeswari, a the 45 years old spinster, dedicated her life in serving her family members on the dispatcher of her father. She pulled up her sock and worked hard to get her younger siblings to settle in life. After fulfilling her duties towards her family, she aspired to get a support for herself.

But the greedy brothers and sister neglected her and thought her to be a money making a machine. When her brothers are ready to find their life partner, no one in the family questioned about Akhila's marriage who happens to be elder than them. "Don't you think you should wait for your elder sister to get married before you think of a wife and a family? But who was to mouth this rebuke? Akhila waited for Amma or Narayan to say something. To broach the subject of Akhila's marriage. when didn't Akhila swallowed the hurt she felt and let the anger that grew in her flare." (Ladies coupe 77) Akhila thought that at least her mother would worry about her future life, but she was still continuing to calculate and apply the formula which is applicable for the life. She felt of gaining her identity in the society like her siblings, but couldn't make it over. Failure in satisfying her-self she actuated herself to enjoy her life at her will and wish though she knew well that it is against the social norms.

Margaret Shanthi, an educated woman falls in love with Ebenezer Paulraj and marries him. She admired him a lot and served him well to satisfy the norms of a good loving wife. But very soon she realized that her husband is a man in black who loved only her external beauty and not a truthful husband. His desire is to be praised in the materialistic and professional world and lead the life as a monarch. The poor dedicated wife couldn't surmise the inner mindset of her husband and obeyed him blindly even abort her first child as it was not liked by her husband. Gradually she gets to know about his true color and pull her socks to change his external appearance. Here, Margaret, many times decide to leave her husband, but as she couldn't get any support from her parents, she decides to live with him. The identity which she has lost because of him burnt her heart so she decided to medicate it by taking full control of her husband.

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Prabha Devi got married at the age of eighteen to Jagdeesh, the only son, and heir of a prosperous diamond merchant. When she was born her father was not happy, as he thought if it were a son he would have opened the fifth jewelry store in the city. He said in a distressful manner that "Has this baby, apart from ruining my business plans, addled your brains as well? If you ask me, a daughter is a bloody nuisance." (Pg-169) But mother always loved and enjoyed her daughter's company.

For Prabha Devi's mother, her whole world revolved around her daughter. When she got married off her mother was shoved into darkness. Prabha Devi being a young girl liked to enjoy her life to the fullest and so she hesitated to satisfy the wish of her in-laws for want of a grandson. When she visited New York, she admired their way of living and started to emulate their lifestyle. With her innocent smile, and catchy appearance she gets trapped by her husband's friend. At that time she realizes her mistake and changes herself to be a good daughter-in-law, wife, and mother which was welcomed and accepted in the society as the identity of a married woman.

Marikolanthu belongs to a lower caste, in order to bring home the bacon, her mother and she works in Chettiar house. Her father is an earthen son, who delighted in cropping his field. He always cursed the Chettiar family for their business whereas the other villagers praised him. He works hard in the field, as being diseased he departs his family. Marikolanthu along with her mother rolled their arms to make both the ends meet. Being destitute, none to support or show concern for them they led a miserable life. Taking advantage of their pathetic condition, the owner's relative molests the young Marikolanthu and take up her virginity. She decides to forget the inhuman attitude of an animal on her, but it haunts her and develops in her womb. Unable to lead a normal life, she decides to abandon the child. But the dark clouds follow her like a shadow throughout her life. Here we come to know about the wretched condition of a young girl who lost her dreams in the darkness.

Janaki a role model for a true Indian wife, felt happy to serve her duty as a daughter to her parents, as a wife to her husband and as a good mother to her son. She felt a woman's life would always be safe in the hands of the male. Janaki lived a contented life with her husband and son, but things started to change after the marriage of her son. She lost her identity,

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lacked the love and support of her own family members. Her aching heart grew with compassion and started to find ways to resolve it.

Sheela a young girl attracted by her grandmother Achamma decides to walk in the footprint of her. She too has a bitter experience with the other who happens to be her father's friend. Being cautioned about the insidious world she had a hairbreadth escape to save her life. The male chauvinism acted on the little girl makes us feel that humanity has become something else.

Women have been an object of pleasure for the men, but they are no more. They learned to identify themselves in the context of the family realizing the need for self-satisfaction in their life too. Gone were the days of serving the members of her family with dedication without any recognition. They have started to think, react, and enforce the power to maintain their status. Life is only to lead and not to be led by the others. In both the novels, we can find the main characters Radhika and Akila initially being submissive and acted according to the wish of their family members, but once they lost their identity, they knew how to fly away off and satisfy their self least bothered about the society. When freedom is not allowed to be enjoyed, the captivated one always finds a crooked way to escape from the scene. When the society fails to recognize them and they boldly cry out so that it could be heard even in a far-off place. Writers become the voice of these subjugated, oppressed, submissive women and they depict how the women take their freedom on their hand and lead a happy life to the fullest possible. But the desire for freedom if takes the wrong direction again women become the victim in the society.

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OBJECTIFYING WOMEN WITH REFERENCE TO THE MAHABHARATHA

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Abstract

Objectifying women is a burning issue from time immemorial. Considering women as a mere commodity to be transacted is a walk of life for men during various periods in the history. Passed down from one generation to the other, the world's greatest epic, the Mahabharata conveys the dire state of women through many stories and instances. Women of high ranks were also treated as an ornament. Their presence was to embellish their role in the society but not a compassionate companion.

Key wordss

Objectifying women, Commodity, Sexual assault, Epic, The Mahabharata, Draupati, Hidimbi, Subordination, Equal rights.

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Objectifying women is a burning issue started centuries ago from the Vedic era to Epic age until the current situation. Abducting women for her beauty, abusing women for the carnal desire, harassing the women folk in an aggressive or robust manner are viewed as heinous crime in the society. Yet the abhorrent behaviour on the female becomes unavoidable. Sexual assault or considering women as a mere commodity is fast spreading in the society where we strive desperately for the equal rights for both the sexes.

The oppression of women is one of the key factors for the crumbling values of the balanced society. Women have suffered immensely due to their sex. They are respected, provided they abide by the norms laid down by the society. If they rebel they may be categorised as a 'bad woman' because they are adventurous, active, intelligent and questioning.

In a society where the woman is no more a equal being, where her self is not given importance, where her identity is not respected, where her emotion is not valued the ethical stratum of that society faces malign.

Rather than from epics and literature there are innumerable examples in the current society of considering women and her physique as a mere commodity. Taharrush, the mass sexual assault of women in public has been documented in Egypt since 2005. Seen as a threat to the female protestors, this behaviour spreads in a rapid speed that by 2012 sexual assault by crowds of young men is regularly seen at protests, and religious festivals in Egypt. This brutal behaviour is seen as a misogynist ideology that penalizes women for leaving the house, attempts to terrorize them out of public life, and defends sexual violence as a source of shame for the victim.

Kathua rape case in January 2018, Nirbhaya rape and fatal assault in 2012 are few examples to showcase the inhumane behaviour of considering women as a mere commodity. Women are idealized as mothers, wives, daughters and daughters-in-law. So their total existence is dependent on the men folk and they are devoid of their individual identity. This is relentless and ruthless fact of the condition of women.

The leap from one generation to the other witnessed many transformations in the ideologies and expectations with regard to women. Historically speaking, the status of women in India

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has been fluctuating and has gone through several changes during various stages. At times she is oppressed and at times she is regarded as a deity of the home. During the Vedic age women enjoyed an esteemed position in the society. They enjoyed a fair amount of freedom and liberty then. The age can be termed as the period of feminine glory and prestigious life. In the post-Vedic period, the status of women suffered a setback. Various restrictions were imposed on their rights and privileges. The epics reveal many instances in regard to women and stories about the situation they faced in those days. Those stories provide a better understanding about the status of women of epic age.

This paper aims to interpret the way how women were looked upon and represented in the Indian epic The Mahabharatha. It explores the lives and roles of women during the age. This Indian epic is regarded as a religious manuscript for the people of Hindu religion till date. The pinnacle of the Hindu religion, as we know it now, is probably the world's greatest epics- The Ramayana and The Mahabharatha. Passed down from one generation to the other these works have guided the people of Hindu religion even to the present day. It would seem that epic era was not very sympathetic to defenceless women or women at distress. She is a mere object who can be used at will by men.

The incidents, rivalry, alliances and the ordeal of fate that are shown in the Mahabharatha happen even now. The relationship among the brothers, the rapport of daughter in law and mother in law, the controlling power of mother and a wife, strive for power, the deceit of a villain to gain popularity still exist in modern times. Every woman in Mahabharatha is introduced as someone's wife, mother, daughter or sister. She lacks individual identity. There are many instances in the epic where kings offer rishis with gifts of hundred of women slaves. Girls were offered to rishis to please him and wait at his beck and call. Kunti served the sage Durvasa once when he visited her father, who in turn gave her a boon to have a god at her will to have a child.

Though marrying many wives was common in the epic age, the marriage was considered as a strong allies in case of any war in the future. The first of the five Pandava brothers to get married was Bheema. After the Kauravas attempted to kill the Pandavas by setting alight their lac palace on fire, the Pandavas hid in the forest, disguised as Brahmins. During this

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time, a rakshasha called Hidimbi fell in love with Bheema. Kunti consented for the marriage of her son to a rakshasha woman only to make themselves safe in the forest. Hidimbi gave birth to a son, Ghatotkacha. No where do we find Hidimbi in the lives of Bheema or Pandavas thereafter. But Ghatotkacha went on to become a great warrior and an important figure in the Mahabharata war.

Arjuna, the son of Indra and third Pandava won the hands of Draupati in the swayamvara by proving his valour in archery. Abiding by the words of their mother Kunti, the five Pandava brothers married Draupati. Apart from Draupati, Arjuna married Ulupi, the daughter of Kouravya, the king of serpents during his period of exile. She bore her a son called Iravan, who later participated in Mahabharatha war. Later Arjun married Chitrangada, the daughter of the king of Manipur. She bore him a son called Babruvahana. Soon Arjuna left from the kingdom without taking his wife or the child. In his 12 years exile, Arjuna reached Dwaraka and married Subhadra, the sister of Krishna and Balarama.

The epic does not discuss Draupati's state of mind when asked to be locked in a polyandrous marriage with five brothers. She would perhaps have objected had she so desired. Draupati, the daughter of king Drupad, sister of Dhrishtadyumna, is rather seen as a victim of her extraordinary beauty that influenced the desire in the hearts of men. She undergoes mistreatment from many people in every stage of her life. She is rather seen as a commodity rather than a woman with emotions and a heart with aspirations of her own. During the Pandavas' exile, Jayadratha an ally of the Kauravas was decoured by lust as he came across Draupati in Kamyaka vana. Later Kichaka tormented and kicked her in the court of Virata in the presence of Yudhistir who advised her not to create a scene and to go away.

The epic describes Draupati as the 'fire-born' daughter of Drupada, the King of Panchala. Even the birth of Draupati is for a noble cause to destroy evil and embody goodness in the society. King Drupad performed a yajna (fire-sacrifice) to obtain a son to revenge on Drona, who had taken half of his kingdom (He was defeated by Arjuna, the third Pandava prince on behalf of Drona). As a result of the yajna, Drupad got a son Drishtadyumna and also emerged Draupati as a beautiful, dark-skinned young woman together with her sibling. In both the Vedic and Epic era, sons were favoured and daughters were seen as a burden and the root of

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all misfortunes. Nothing in her life happened at her will. Draupati's swayamvar was arranged by her father to bring the Pandava brothers out from incognito to light. He planned to get her daughter married to Arjuna and form a strong ally with the powerful empire of the time, Hastinapur and revenge Drona, his enemy.

When Draupati was tied in a wed lock with five brothers, the pandava brothers had taken many wives apart from her. Yudhistir married Devika, the daughter of Govasana of the saivya tribe. Bheema married Valandara, the daughter of the king of Kasi. Nakula married Karenumati, the daughter of Shishupal and Sahadeva married the daughter of Dyutimat, the king of Madra. Virginity and the need to be married for men has not been insisted, it was only enforced on the women. Both Satyawati and Kunti had become mothers prior to their marriages, both threw their infants away fearing the disgrace for their family. Even the lady scholars were rarely mentioned in the epic. There is no mention of the schooling of any women as there was of all the heroes.

Subhru, the daughter of Kuni wanted to remain unmarried until her death practicing severe penance. At the time of her death, however, she learnt that she could not go to heaven because her body was not consecrated by the sacrament of marriage. With utmost difficulty she then induced sage Sringavat to marry her and stayed with him for one night and was then enabled to go to heaven. Even the salvation for women was at the mercy of men. Niyoga was an ancient Hindu tradition, in which a woman would request and appoint a person for helping her bear a child, only when her husband is incapable of fatherhood or has died without having a child. Sathyavathi bore Shantanu two sons, Chitrangada and Vichitravirya. They die childless leaving no heir to the throne of Hastinapura. At this juncture, Sathyavathi's calls her first born son (to sage Parashara) Vyasa, to perform niyoga with the wives of Vichitravirya for the progeny of the kingdom. As per the wish of mother-in-law, the princess of Kashi, wives of Chitrangada, Ambika and Ambalika give birth to Dhritarashtra and Pandu with Vyasa.

One of the main reasons for the Mahabharatha war is Draupati's vastraharan. Gauravas used Draupati as a tool to revenge against their cousins, Pandavas. When Dushasana, one of the Kaurava brothers, tried to strip off Draupati's sari in a court filled with scholars, her five

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husbands remained a passive spectator. Though she was a dutiful wife to all her five husbands, she remained helpless in a dire state of need. The inability of her husbands to save their wife humiliated her. Though women like Draupati, Kunti and Gandhari are seen as the most powerful women of the epic, they are subjected to men folk of their age. They were greatly affected by conflict leading to emotional turmoil.

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WOMEN: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY PORTRAYED IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S THAT LONG SILENCE

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Shashi Deshpande an award-winning Indian novelist, a winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award for the novel That Long Silence in 1990 and the Padma Shri award in 2009 has contributed immensely for the growth of Indian Literature in English. Shashi Deshpande has ventured in the genres of writing like short stories, novels, essays, as well as children's books. Apart from fiction, Deshpande has written a number of articles on various subjects on literature, language, Indian writing in English, feminism and women's writing that has been put together in a collection Writing from the Margin. Deshpande delivers the lecture in Universities, both in India and abroad.

Keywords: sufferings, patriarchy, identity, a confident individual

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Only in recent times, the works of women writers and their writings attained special attention. It is read from the subaltern and gender perspective. One such eminent woman writer in India is Shashi Deshpande, who writes from her own experiences of the educated middle-class Indian women's predicament. Her works explore her potential to explore the pathetic situations in which a sensitive woman has to live her life and the sufferings she undergoes when caught between the powerful currents of tradition and patriarchy of terror and suppression.

That Long Silence, one of Shashi Deshpande's finest novel analyses the emotions within the protagonist Jaya, an educated middle-class woman who lives with her husband Mohan and their kids Rahul and Rati. She is the typical Indian middle-class woman in the present century that is confined between her realizations and the restrictions under unexceptional situations. The novel narrates the life of Jaya with Mohan her husband- a tale of seventeen years of their wedded life. The novel, That Long Silence highlights the age-old tradition in which women are silent and submissive in their life. Shashi Deshpande depicts the political and social scenario in her creative writings and does not stand aloof from her milieu. Her writings are, however, a miniature of the contemporary society.

The protagonist Jaya's father brought up Jaya as an independent individual, who has the rights in all walks in life irrespective of gender. Yet, this upbringing was not welcomed in the society that hesitates to accept women to be independent. Immediately after Jaya's graduation she gets married and steps into her role as a dutiful wife and affectionate mother.

In fact, Indian women face a delicate situation in their life when it comes to choosing between freedom and dependence. In contrast to the life of women in the East, the women in the West enjoy the position and status far better than the women in the East. In India after marriage, a woman changes her name by adding her husband's name behind, which is an indication of her submissiveness to her husband. In certain cases like the protagonist Jaya in That Long Silence, tend to change their entire name after marriage losing their identity exhibiting their subordination to their husband and his family. In the novel, That Long Silence one can see Jaya whose name is transformed into Subasini after marriage and becomes docile, gentle, submissive and very different from Jaya who was an embodiment of

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deity Durga, known for her wrathful form. Jaya not only transforms her name but also her character.

Jaya loses her identity right from her name to her real self. Jaya feels so lost when she is addressed as Mohan's wife or as Rahul's or Rati's mother and not as Jaya. Her name doesn't exist in her paternal house or in her husband's house. Most of the husbands in India do not respect and consider the emotions, the likes, and dislikes of their wives. They never realize the pain and agony the women undergo in the destined roles they take up in their lives. One such husband is Mohan. Jaya has to do all her duties towards her husband, Mohan without any appreciation. Her Jaya's life changes when Mohan is found guilty of a malpractice that occurred in his business. Even the physical relationship between Mohan and Jaya, reveals a dominating husband and a suppressed wife. Mohan hurts her whereas Jaya remains silent when she is asked, 'Did I hurt you?' and my answer, 'No'. Each time, after it was over, the same question; and my reply too, invariably the same – 'No'(95). Jaya does not protest against her husband's wishes and she says, 'I had learned it at last – no questions, no retorts. Only silence'(143).

However, Jaya tries to analyze herself by attempting to write about herself and her family which is an outcome of her Long Silence. Jaya has immense resources within her to become a good writer but the fact is she is struggling for being a successful writer. Initially, Mohan encouraged Jaya but when her story was awarded, he got furious because it was the revelation of their life. The depiction of their life story wounded Mohan and he says, 'How can you reveal us, how can you reveal our lives to the world in this way?'(144) And Jaya understands that it has nothing to do with their real life but it is only a good creative story of hers. This writing of Jaya that disturbs Mohan brings her success and fame.

It is a pathetic part of a girl's life that once she gets married whether it is love or arranged marriage, the husband takes complete control over her. A woman has to follow the path of her husband no matter it is wrong or right. Women are made to think and feel that the husband is everything for a woman and this thought is deeply rooted within a woman's mind. This exactly happens to Jaya, though she is unwilling to follow the routine track yet the situations and circumstances she is put in compel Jaya to follow the principle that, 'Two

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bullocks yoked together . . . it is more comfortable for them to move in the same direction. To go in different directions would be painful; and what animal would voluntarily choose pain?' (11-12). From the time of marriage Jaya is loaded with words of advice like every other Indian woman hears, 'Be good to Mohan, Jaya'(138) and 'Remember, Jaya, the happiness of your husband and home depends entirely on you'(138). These words ring in Jaya 's mind that she finds it difficult to break the routine customs and traditions of being submissive to the husband.

Mohan crushes both – the woman and the writer in Jaya because he neither loves nor encourages her in any of her endeavors. Jaya has every reason to accuse Mohan for he has been responsible for all the misery she faces in her life. In a pensive mood, Jaya recalls their relationship as wife and husband and finds that there was no feeling of love for both of them rather only the burden of their relationship. Jaya is portrayed as a fragmented soul crushed between society, family and her. Right from childhood Jaya is taught to please others instead of caring for her mental status. The same she followed in her marital life also. She tried to make the best of it to sustain her marriage by tolerating all ups and downs. Jaya has given up all she wanted to do only to satisfy and please Mohan but she gradually understands her own stand in life. Later Mohan himself paves way for her integration.

As the novel That long Silence progresses it brings forward the determined character of Jaya. She understands her worth and overcomes her mental crisis by thinking that none is responsible for her disaster. Jaya changes her attitude.

Jaya in utter loneliness realizes and understands what Kamat, her neighbor one day told her, 'pursuit of happiness is meaningless' and loneliness is the essential condition of human existence. Others cannot be blamed all the time. To some extent, She, herself is responsible for her miserable condition. She blames Mohan for her failure but she realizes that it is not Mohan who stopped her interest of writing: 'I hadn't stopped writing because of Mohan; I could not possibly make Mohan the scapegoat for my failures, for I had written even after that confrontation with him –(145).

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This makes Jaya realize her own power and she declares, 'I'm Jaya, Jaya for victory'(137). She strongly believes that if a person has to strive and achieve one's pursuit if one wants to succeed in life. Kamat has made Jaya realize her own power and she gets a new strength which she was lacking in her life. One cannot escape from all miseries and hardships which is not always possible instead one has to search one's way through hardships and succeed in life with a sense of satisfaction.

In the beginning of the novel what Jaya finds when she searches herself, that she is Mohan's wife, Rahul's and Rati's mother which is not her real self. But Jaya's searching for her real self is found when she recalls Kamat's words 'Take yourself seriously, woman'(99). Though Jaya fulfills her duties as a dutiful wife and dedicated loving mother she wanted to gain her own stand in life. This doesn't mean that Jaya can attain herself by rejecting her married life and rejecting her children. Jaya's identity is complete only if she has Mohan with her and her children. This relationship gave her the identity as a wife and the mother before becoming a famous writer. Jaya realizes that there would be no meaning in her life if she leads a life without Mohan and her children. This novel traces how Jaya gradually emerges as a confident individual. A stereotyped housewife initially nervous but later Jaya turns into a confident woman.

It is said that both Man and Woman created by God is a part of Himself, no one is superior to the other. Each is created with the difference and for different responsibilities in one's life. But as these two form, the part of the Almighty each possesses certain resemblances which are quite natural. Therefore, human beings must be ready to accept each other, for all gender-related problems and issues may be solved. Prasad quotes Plato words which says, "both (men and women) can be both should follow the same range of occupation and perform the same functions; they should receive the same education to enable to do so. In this way, society will get the best value from both."(113)

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"THE DIN OF FAITHFUL DAUGHTERS, FAITHLESS LOVERS AND OPPORTUNISTS IN THE SELECT TRAGEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE"

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ABSTRACT

Shakespeare, the renowned dramatist stands foremost in English literature as a versatile genius and creative writer for his universal themes, unique characters, and different plots. The present research entitled, "The Din of faithful daughters, faithless lovers, and opportunists in the select tragedies of Shakespeare" focuses to examine valued virtuoso versus mistaken betrayals in the light of Aristotle's concept of classical tragedy. In the wake of advanced technology, rapid progression and globalized scenario the materialistic attitudes and aspirations play a dominant role resulting in 'betrayals.' By re-reading Shakespeare one can find him as a fervent aspirer to a fairer society and his dramas strive and thrive for rectifying oneself and to be a human. His works remind the lines of Kaniyan Pugundranar, the Tamil classic poet who articulated, the dew-washed wisdom, 3000 years back:

"Where there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character,
When there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home,
When there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation,
When there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world."

Hence it is apt to call Shakespeare a world citizen who penned great works with universal themes:

Keywords : Shakespeare tragedies ,the theme of betrayal ,Aristotle's concept of tragedy, fairer society ,a world citizen

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Introduction

Shakespeare, the renowned dramatist stands foremost in English literature as a versatile genius and creative writer for his universal themes, unique characters, and different plots. He has carved a distinct niche in the realm of world literature and became an 'evergreen' writer of all times. His plays still tantalize the interpreters, critics and lay, readers, like hundreds of years after they were penned. The paper then proceeds to analyze the literature on the concept of tragedy and Shakespearean tragedies.

Literature Review

The word 'catharsis' refers to the effect of tragedy on the human heart. It involves three things: purgation, purification, and clarification. Milton calls this emotional disturbance and the final feeling as, 'calm of mind, all passions spent.' AC Bradley, the English Literary Scholar and writer of 'Shakespearean Tragedy,' views that a Shakespearean tragedy is essentially (i) a tale of suffering and woe (ii.) of a great man. This man, due to some fatal flaw, proceeds to his doom. Bradley says, "When he falls suddenly from the height of earthly greatness to the dust, his fall produces a sense of contrast, of the powerlessness of man and of the omnipotence, perhaps the caprice of Fortune or Fate, which no tale of private life can possibly rival".

The book 'Shakespeare's Tragedies: A Guide to Criticism' traces the history of interpretation of Shakespearean tragedies. Lily Campbell, the Professor of English at UCLA states that the problem of tragedy has always been the problem of evil in the world. Tillyard, an English classic and literary Scholar says, "The conflicts of mature Shakespearean Tragedy are those between the passion and reason". McClendon argues that "a tragedy is a violent conflict and confusion of opposites", while Charlton claims that "the essence of tragedy in Shakespeare is the nobility of man triumphs over tragedy through tragedy".

According to Frye, the Canadian literary critic "What makes tragedy tragic and not simply ironic is the presence in it of a counter movement of what we call the heroic, a

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capacity for action or passion for doing or suffering, which is above human experience". In his paper The Essence of Shakespearean Tragedy, David Chandler says, "the essence of Shakespeare's tragedies is the expression of one of the great paradoxes of life. We might call it the paradox of disappointment, and further that each play contains an element of hope that is disappointment or ambition that is frustrated".

Objective

The present paper entitled, "The Din of faithful daughters, faithless lovers, and opportunists in the Select Tragedies of Shakespeare" focuses to examine valued virtuoso versus mistaken betrayals in the light of Aristotle's concept of classical tragedy.

Discussion

The four great tragedies of Shakespeare King Lear, Hamlet, Othello and Macbeth are selected for discussion on the theme of valued virtuoso and mistaken betrayals. At the outset, the paper delves to discuss 'faithful daughters' - Cordelia from King Lear.

Cordelia, as the honorable and beloved daughter of King Lear, ranks among Shakespeare's finest heroines.

She is a devoted, kind, beautiful and honest. Cordelia's reunion with Lear marks the apparent restoration of order in the kingdom and the triumph of love and forgiveness over hatred and spite.

Hamlet: The tragedy in Hamlet is neither in the death of Hamlet nor in the murder of Claudius but in the agony that the young Hamlet suffers post his father's death and the revelations of the ghost. Here is a young man 'the observed of all observers' staring at his mother's overhasty marriage to a man who was a 'Hyperion to a satyr'. Again and again, he goes back to the theme of his mother's incestuous marriage. It is no wonder that he is driven to test the loyalty of Ophelia. If a woman like his mother could betray the memory of his father then can other women be different? Ophelia does not help matters when she fails the test Hamlet sets for her by conniving with Polonius and others. Another source of anguish for Hamlet is his own inability to execute revenge - to murder the murderer of his father, to be loyal to his filial obligations. "What is he to

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Hecuba or Hecuba to him?" and again, "That I the son of a dear father murdered, prompted to revenge by heaven and hell..."

Thus the substance of tragedy in Hamlet is (i) what Hamlet considers to be Gertrude's betrayal of Hamlet's father (ii) Hamlet's perception of the act of betrayal of Claudius, (iii) Ophelia's betrayal of Hamlet (iv) Hamlet's betrayal of the ghost's bidding for revenge.

Othello: The sweet innocent maiden, besotted by the tales of adventure of the dark, brave stranger, happily married to him only to be strangled by her own husband. Desdemona's death is tragic but that again does not constitute the tragedy of Othello. The true tragedy of Othello is the falling apart of the dark Moor who is betrayed into believing that his sweet bride was unfaithful to him.

The essence of Othello the play is "put out the light and then put out the light" because, with loss of Desdemona, Othello's occupation is gone. Iago corrupts not the mind of Othello but the idea of Desdemona – the chaste, sweet and innocent girl, Othello had taken as his bride and whose absolute unquestioned loyalty he presumed to be his right. Othello falls twice- once when he finds the alleged 'ocular proof' of Desdemona's infidelity and again posts Desdemona's murder when he discovers the betrayal of Iago.

Macbeth: Wherein lies the tragedy of Macbeth? It is most definitely not in the death of Duncan. Duncan's death is only the source of the tragedy that befalls Macbeth. The tragedy is also not in the gradual fading away of Lady Macbeth – a woman who once was considered a woman of 'undaunted mettle' – till she fades into such insignificance that her death fails to evoke any emotion even in her own husband let alone an audience. The tragedy in Macbeth lies in the fall of an able, brave, loyal man when he gives in to his weakness and betrays trust- the trust of a host, trust of a soldier, trust of a good human being. His own soliloquies and asides portray his preoccupation with his betrayal- loyalty he owed to Duncan as his host, relative and as his subject.

King Lear: Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia each betray Lear in her own way. Regan and Goneril pay lip service with their avowed declaration of love for their father. They

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appease his vanity only to betray him in deepest consequence. And the kind, the gentle, the true and loving Cordelia also betrayed her father. And hers is the betrayal that was the genesis of the tragedy of Lear. Here is an old man abdicating his throne in favor of his daughters looking only for some homage in return. Goneril and Regan fulfill that expectation through their false but bombastic declarations of love. This is followed by Cordelia's abrupt announcement.

What a slap in the face for the old man who was expecting an even greater rhetoric from his most beloved child. Admittedly Goneril and Regan made hollow declarations – but was Lear's question asked with the purpose of finding out of truth? A declaration of love is meant as a promise, a reassurance. Cordelia failed to deliver. She too failed in her filial obligations. Lear's suffering is once again the result of the perceived lack of loyalty of his daughters. The man who wanders around in a raging storm is conscious only of the betrayal of his three daughters. It is the anguished cry of a father "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child," though it is not ingratitude but Cordelia's alleged betrayal that is the cause of Lear's anguish. Frailty thy name is the woman (Hamlet, Act I Sc II).

A cutpurse of empire and the rule, that from a shelf the precious diadem stole (Hamlet Act III, Sc IV)

iii. False face must hide what the false heart doth know. (Macbeth Act I Sc VII)

Treason has done his worst (Macbeth Act III Sc II)

v. She has deceived her father and may thee (Othello Act I Sc III)

vi. Yet she must die else she will betray more men (Othello Act VII)

These are the key phrases from the four great tragedies of Shakespeare

Conclusion

In the wake of advanced technology, rapid progression and globalized scenario the materialistic attitudes and aspirations play a dominant role resulting in 'betrayals.' By re-reading Shakespeare one can find him as a fervent aspirer to a fairer society and his

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dramas strive and thrive for rectifying oneself and to be a human. Hence it is apt to call Shakespeare a world citizen who penned great works with universal themes:

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HISTORICITY AND IDENTITY RESTRICTIONS OF THE DYSTOPIAN SOCIETY IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S THE HANDMAID'S TALE

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Abstract

We are what we remember. The past of every individual plays a vital role in determining their actions and the ways of their existential methods. The influence one gathers from the past and the sense of the history of their environment not only creates a methodological approach to the present but also creates a sanity of the future. This obvious connection between an individual's past to their present and future is one that gives them the identity of intellectual existence. However, the dystopian regime efforts to create the society of the past to be ignored of except for selective propaganda. The paper attempts to analyze the methods by which a dystopian society can be created by restricting the history of a community and curtailing the individuality which diminishes personal identity with reference to Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale.

Keywords: gender, dystopia, History, identity.

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History in a superficial sense can be termed as a record of the past. It is the study of past events, particularly that of the human race and, as an individual progress with life, one becomes equipped with the history of their environmental existence. This historical sense or historicity provides individuals with an identity and a socio-cultural position where they can establish and express themselves. Historicity provides a plain for signifying an individual existence and this history connects one to the past, which, in a broader relation establishes the individual with the present. The interrelated strings of time connect the past, present, and future with each other and historical influences on a significant weight on both the present and the future.

The historical sense in Eliot's terms is something that "involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past but of its presence" and it is "a sense of the timeless as well as the temporal and of the timeless and the temporal together". Though Eliot puts this as a need for a traditional writer, the importance of the past and its influence on the present is made clear as something that raises the individuality of the being. This individuality directs the person to be not only significantly different from others but also accumulates to their personal identity.

This production of personal identity also establishes one's personal ideology and their personal methodologies to the stages of life. This individuality in simple sense converts the being from a shapeless self to someone capable of intellectual thought. The intellectual capacity of the individual which is directly or indirectly influenced by the knowledge of the past propagates the human race in a voyage towards an intellectually superior being who is capable of independent existence in an ideological sense. This, however, becomes the worst scenario for a dystopian regime whose aim primarily is to control citizens as a whole and introduce a fascist collective culture.

The proposition of the restriction of historical sense is something that affects the process of intellectual production of individuals and ideology and acts as a major theme of a dystopian situation. The condition of disconnecting the past, where past being nothing less than a form of experience, is examined deeply in Margaret Atwood's *Handmaids Tale* which creates a dystopian society controlled by masculine

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gender favored laws and extreme fundamentalism including religious dictatorship. The creation of a dystopian society in the fictional work examines the importance of restriction of the past that the government tries to implement in order to control the society and favor the ruling ideologies.

Gender plays a vital role in *The Handmaids Tale* as the characters are placed in a male-dominated society where women are forced into divided positions depending on their utility. The nature of gender is also important on a feministic stand as most of the dystopian works including Orwell's have always presented the character to the readers from a male point of view. The fictional government of Gilead presents the fascist ideologies which favor a few sects of elite men and the government system also controls the privacy of characters and asserts extreme punishments including death sentences for "crimes" that are registered under the new regime which include talking, reading, sex and being in a different religion. the work analyses the monotonous nature in ruling agendas that the fascist power produces, and these are more often than not, related to the modern questions of the State's influence on ethical judgments such as the outlaw of abortions and contraception in Romania, falling birth rate of Canada, Republican attempts to control and restrict abortions from clinic, threat to privacy, population and pollutions.

The novel considers the ways in which an autocratic power controls the historicity of a society as in the Republic of Gilead by changing or altering the pre-existing concepts and culture of a community. This process of desired selection allows the government to not only weed out the unwanted sections of a community but also to exterminate or exile the potential threats to its foundational basis. This, although may seem like creating an authoritarian structure, focuses mainly on destroying the alternative which could potentially become an alternative such as in the case of sex or religion.

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The intercultural mix in society such as non-whiter and members of other religion and of different political ideologies except the dominant ones are forced to work in the toxic environments of the city which creates a monocultural establishment where the aged, homosexuals and infertile women are treated no differently from the above, which creates a primary cultural identity which cannot be fragmented to alternative choices. This neglecting of a portion of society allows the dystopian regime to control the individuality of the citizens and create a final authoritative presence where the characters, mainly the handmaids in the novel, live in a lack of personal independence and privacy much analyzed by the concept of panopticon as theorized by Foucault.

Another manner in which the totalitarian state aiming for a fascist reign establishes its power is by taking away the name of the characters and terming them as the standards of their utilitarian value. The sense of objectification of individual creates an alienation from the identity of their name and psychologically undermines them more as possessions and less as human beings. This aspect of the name is something that connects an individual with a personal identity which in turn connects them with their own individual, unique and different past. However, in the novel, Atwood creates the autocratic power to take away the individual names and identify people as a collective group. The characters yearn for their individuality as a remembrance of the past. "I want to be held and told my name. This collectiveness lacks the individual pastness which indirectly makes the citizens lose their individuality and therefore successfully preventing the birth of the public intellectuals. I lie in my single bed at night, with my eyes closed, and the name oats there behind my eyes, not quite within reach, shining in the dark." (94).

The character of Offred can be identified as such a character who lost her personal identity as an individual who is a wife, mother, daughter etc... and becomes dehumanized as a handmaid to the Commander. The name of the ruling elites such as Serena Joy (pam), her mistress remains intact with the individual which shows the restriction of names as an intentional method to disconnect the individual with the past, restructure identity and easily establish as a utilitarian object for the fascist

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regime. Atwood writes "Attaching a name attaches you to the world of fact" (49) which is possible only when one can substantiate their belonging with the past which with the denial of individual names is disconnected.

The transformation of love as something that is solely to create offspring for the state also creates a separation in the aesthetic sense of love and its effect on personal life. Sex is no longer something that is granted for pleasure but a performance of duty. There occurs a depersonalization in the notion of sex with the absence of love and it becomes an act of mere responsibility. Moreover, the notion of handmaids as women to supply children for the family who owns them not only disconnect the individualistic approach to sex as something for pleasure or out of love but also propagates state-sanctioned rape. The procedures and rituals necessary to be followed by the handmaids with their masters and wives in the process of conception bring the image of awkwardness in the act of sex which implies the defamiliarization with something that is considered to be intimate. Offred describes these rituals as something that creates an awkward tension. Commander runs down my legs. Before I turn away I see her straighten her blue skirt, clench her legs together; she continues lying on the bed, gazing up at the canopy above her, stiff and straight as an effigy. Which of us is it worse for, her or me?" (106).

The dystopian cultural construction of a preexisting cultural state regardless considers individuals as potential resources much more than a non-dystopian government. This means that in order to harvest the human potential of every citizen it is necessary that their complete competence is utilized. The cultural norms and relation on the structure of family here becomes a barricade for the fascist propagation.

Here too does the historicity in the individual is curtailed as familial relations are something that roots an individual into an identity of a particular kind and influences the personal being of self. The complete control over a person is considerably harder to be controlled as long as the familial strings of a person is attached to themselves like a consciousness of a larger self than a personal self. The concept of familial belonging is considered as a distraction for the effective resourcing of individuals in a

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dystopian society. This notion of the family of the preexisted culture is considered as something that is considered a threat to the foundation of a dystopian culture and one can also observe the character Offred who recognizes her family as something that belongs to her and somewhere she belongs in.

"I didn't go on any of the marches. Luke said it would be futile and I had to think about them, my family, him and her. I did think about my family. I started doing more housework, more baking. I tried not to cry at mealtimes. By this time I'd started to cry, without warning, and to sit beside the bedroom window, staring out. I didn't know many of the neighbors, and when we met, outside on the street, we were careful to exchange nothing more than the ordinary greetings. Nobody wanted to be reported, for disloyalty" (189).

The passage shows how the influence of family keeps one away from the "duty" of the present state which is managed by the state of Gilead. The denial of any personal physical or psychological property prevents the settlement of the characters and also creates a state of extreme dependency to the handmaids. This lack of personality in sex, a constant panoptic surveillance and delusion of productive communal and marital relations creates the individual from rooting in cultural habitat as seen in Atwood's dystopian fiction and also notably in George Orwell's 1984.

The alienation from language is perhaps the greatest effort in disconnecting the historicity of a culture with the individual. Language is a medium of communication and the absence of language raises a situation where ideas cannot be communicated regardless of its intellectual worth. The handmaids and every other oppressed character are forbidden to read in the Republic of Gilead and it is considered as a crime of serious intensity. The lack of language creates a direct alienation of the individual and the past which creates the identity as a temporal construction and can be more easily manipulated according to the desires of the state.

All these methods indirectly create a means of control of what is available and what is not to the characters which create in a selective ideological breeding of the citizens

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under a fascist regime. The primary round of the suppressed in a dystopian society becomes the last of its kind to be connected with the past that the power tries to disconnect and keep shut from the coming generations. This creates in an ignorance of the new era of utilitarian citizens who can be manipulated on the basis of their absence of historical sense. The social and personal systems of naming, sex, marriage, family, thoughts, language, cultural interracial unity etc. are some of the constructional structure to the function of identity formation of individuals. Such systems provide this identity when bound by history. The character of Offred does understand how the current norms which looks much different from the previous ideology will appear to be normalized for the coming generation and this is caused by the lack of awareness of the past and the absence of any opposing alternative to provide an antithesis.

In conclusion, the foundation of communal identity is related to the individual when placed in a context of society. This context of society becomes the historicity of the State and its absence creates a form of an identity crisis as can be observed in *The Handmaid's Tale*. Through the work, Atwood analyzes how the denial of history and the selective structuring of identity functions as a method of political power directive fascism by the authority such as patriarchal governance. One finds instances where Offred continuously yearns for the past and past as something that keeps her sanity. She even considers the thought of her husband and her daughter as something of a hope in a colorless society and the hope that one day she could regain her freedom keeps her from succumbing to the totalitarian structure. The yearning for the past becomes something that moves forward the present and the need for individual identity becomes important for an intellectual existence.

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GWENDOLYN BROOKS AND BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract

The paper explored the process of consciousness development among Black women in the United States among the urban and rural. The purpose of this study was to elicit these women's perceptions of the conditions, influences, processes, and experiences that contributed to their conscientization. It is anticipated that the knowledge generated from this study will afford new insights into Black women's resistance to multiple oppressions and contribute to a psychology of Black women that is rooted in their authentic experiences and worldviews. Brooks' balanced stance in presenting the ordinary lives of the oppressed Blacks as well as criticizing the whites for racial injustice towards the Blacks in America attracted me more than the other militantly revolutionary and overtly protest writers. She feels it is the poets' responsibility to write poems in that direction which Brooks also doing.

Key Words: African-American, Culture, Race, Regeneration and Consciousness.

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Gwendolyn Elizabeth Brooks, the distinguished Black woman poet of the twentieth century America is known for her sensitive portrayal of the lives of ordinary urban Blacksⁱ and their encounter with racism, classismⁱⁱ and poverty. From the very beginning of her poetic career she has shown acute consciousness of and responsibility towards her community through her representation. But the duality of the Black writer need not be reiterated that among those poets Gwendolyn Brooks like W.E.B. DuBois is caught between the Black and white worlds in the early days of her poetic career. While DuBois wrote in the beautiful impressionistic style of world's literary masters, Brooks's complex and rhythmic verse reflects the telling influence of the metaphysical complexities of John Donne and the word magic of T.S.Eliot, E.E.Cummings and Ezra Pound. But afterwards many critics believed that her penchant for emulating the white literary canon ran counter to her interests in asserting difficulties faced by a Black urban community.ⁱⁱⁱ DuBois and Brooks made use of the traditional white style to explicate the living conditions of Black Americans who are suffering in the clutches of racial discrimination. Houston A. Baker, Jr. explains the duality of Gwendolyn Brooks as "what one seems to have is white style and black content—two warring ideals in one dark body."^{iv}

Though from the beginning Brooks wrote on the lives of urban Black men in America, she is not ignorant of the plight of the Black women. Her stance of Black women as well as of white women is unique. Her perspective of women not only presents the contemporary conditions but envisages the future role they will have to play in the society. The essence of her Black womanhood is presented through many characters in her poetry like Sadie, Maud Martha, and it culminates in the character of Winnie Mandela. For Brooks, Black woman is a source of strength to the Black man in his struggle against racial discrimination.

When Gwendolyn Brooks published her first book A Street in Bronzeville in 1945 her racial identity and gender were ignored by reviewers. Though some reviewers like Louis Simpson^v and Dan Jaffe^{vi} refute her poetry as Black poetry and prefer to call it American poetry ignoring her race and sex, her poetry has displayed the characteristics of ghetto experience from the beginning of her career. She responds as a poet to the circumstances of her life and that too differently from whites as well as from Blacks and many other Black poets of her time and before. Don L. Lee in his "Preface" to her autobiography, Report from Part One

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carefully narrates Brooks's growth of Black consciousness and her corresponding changes in voice and form in keeping with a publicly proclaimed Black identity. He succinctly defines the stance of Black poet more so of Gwendolyn Brooks thus:

...he is an African in America who expresses himself, his blackness with the written word and that the creativity that he possesses is a gift that should be shared with his people and developed to the highest level humanly possible. And that this “art” form in some way should be used in the liberation of his people.^{vii}

No poet can afford to escape his or her racial identity as it goes into one's making as a poet. Though the subject matter of Brooks's early poetry is Black experience and Black lives, her style has been in the tradition of English literature which Lee calls “European.” **Though the content is Black, the language was not Black English but of the whites which Houston A. Baker sums up as “Black content and white style.”^{viii}** That's why her Pulitzer Prize winning Annie Allen was not appealing to the Black readers and critics and Lee hence says:

This poem is probably earth-shaking to some, but leaves me completely dry.^{ix}

In her later years Brooks acknowledges her own form as: “It's EUROPEAN.”^x

The white style of Brooks has bestowed her with praise from the white critics and also the distinction as the first Black to be honoured with Pulitzer Prize. But her reception in her own Black community is not as warm as it is in the white critical community. Often her ‘essential blackness’ and her commitment to the cause of representing Black lives have been questioned. During her visit to Russia in one of her conversations she explains ‘essential Blacks’ as those who do not try to desperately to be white but are “happy to have you notice that they do not look like you.”^{xi} The major reason behind this confusing situation is that her early poetry seems to be fitting in the white, middle-class patterns. However, it cannot be true as her premise has been from the beginning is to represent the Black life as she finds it. From the very beginning Brooks worried both how Blacks should be represented in literature, and how whites misread the Black experience. Don L. Lee feels: “Gwendolyn Brooks at this time, the late Forties, was concerned with the “Universal fact.”^{xii} Hence in her early period

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she was considered an exception among Black poets—a poet who happens to be a Black than as a Black woman poet. Though she did not express her approval of the titles, she could do little. Don L. Lee justifies her condition as: “We must note that she received major encouragement from *all* quarters to accept, participate and to be grateful for whatever recognition she received.”^{xiii} For the white audience her Black identity was secondary. Her Pulitzer Prize brought fame not just as the first African American poet but as the best among the American poets writing at the times. The prize also fetched her following from her own people whereas normally she would not have had access to them. Don L. Lee says: “She attracted those “negro” Blacks who didn’t believe that one is legitimate unless one is sanctioned by whites first. The Pulitzer did this.”^{xiv}

Actually Brooks had never seen herself in the context of Euro-American poetry but she was being defined in the context of contradictory Euro-American standards. **Though Brooks was writing about the Blacks it was for the whites and hence in the white style. In those early years she could not consider herself as an African or an African-American rather merely an American.** Though often accused of being Euro-centric in her style and goal, there was strong self-awareness in her early years too than most of her contemporaries with the possible exception of Margaret Walker. **However, despite her awareness of her own people, she was trying to accommodate her work and her person to the definitions imposed on her from outside.**

Her spontaneous reactions to her surroundings could not protect her from the impact of the definitions and poetic directions of the Euro-American world. Her first volume A Street in Bronzeville demonstrates her deep involvement with Black life, Black experiences and hopes. Though most of the Black writers were craving for white approval, Brooks maintained self-restraint at least to write about her own people, if not write for them. The poetry of her pre-Nineteen Sixty Seven period is only a process of becoming a conscious African poet or a conscious African woman in America who chose poetry as her major craft. **However, Gwendolyn Brooks defines her pre-1967 poetry as “conditioned to the times and the people.”^{xv}** Her poetry of the period is only a reaction to the American reality which has always been a battle for the Black Americans. Don L. Lee feels that “the medium she

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worked in was that of the unexpected^{xxvi} in those times when the Blacks were writing to accommodate themselves in white definitions. He says:

Her movement into poetry is a profound comment on her self-confidence and speaks to the poetic-vision she possessed. The fact that she chose to be a poet denotes that her view of the "whirlwind" was serious and challenging –yet conditioned.^{xvii}

Annie Allen shows Brooks's manifold concern about how Blackness is constructed and perceived from outside. The form and language of the poem are not Black but of the white European tradition. Sujanne Juhasz feels: "The white language is being used to legitimize a black heroine."^{xviii} The "heightened diction" of the blank verse is employed to 'validate the black girl as true heroine of this poem.'^{xix} Though, often her post-1967 period is credited with her awakening into Black consciousness, Brooks in her multi faceted roles as a woman, Black, teacher, and poet gave her voice to a solidarity that begins to resolve the triple bind of a Black woman poet who would be heard as a poet rather than a victim of the racial oppression.

The decade of 1960s has been a period of turbulence and transformation for America, for Blacks as well as for Brooks in which she became more aware of and entwined in politics and social movements. A moment of new vision in the career of Brooks occurred in the spring of 1967 when she attended Black Writers' Second Conference at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. Gwendolyn Brooks's first encounter with the New Blackness of the young Black poets and playwrights as LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka) and Ron Milner at the Black writers' conference at Fisk University in 1967 brought about a "full public transformation from Negro to a Black."^{xx} All presenters in the conference were active in the Black revolution and they stirred the audience with their zeal and commitment to both literature and social change. The conference was presenting a new phenomenon of Black nationhood and Black revolution rather than the popular notions of Black white unity.

Rather than despairing about her distance and irrelevance from the young who would just barely respect anyone's mainstream credentials, she listened and began to bridge the

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“generation gap.” The vigorous provocative speeches and poetry readings of the young Black writers had awakened her into a new Black consciousness and she reflects as:

...until 1967 I had sturdy ideas about writing and about writers
which I enunciated sturdily...until 1967 my own blackness did
not confront me with a shrill spelling itself.^{xxi}

Her association with the young Blacks after sixties made her conscious of herself. They were the catalysts in creating the new insights into herself and in turn they were hope for her mission of fighting for freedom. Brooks left the gathering with a new political consciousness and artistic direction shaped by the tenets of Black cultural nationalism. The impact of the conference has awakened her into a new consciousness and vision about which she modestly comments:

If I hadn't been for these young people, these young writers
who influenced me, I wouldn't know what I know about this
society. By associating with them I know who I am.^{xxii}

She was so startled at the anger and the proud bearing of the young writers whom she calls “tall walkers” was due to the fact that during 1940s and 1950s she innocently believed that integration was the solution for the Black man's problems. As Harry B. Shaw feels that her new awareness prompts her to denounce integration in which she had before placed so much hope^{xxiii} and speaks about Black solidarity for which her grandfather sowed seed before he had died. She describes the transformation that the conference has brought in as:

I — who have ‘gone the gamut’ from an almost angry rejection
of my dark skin by some of my brainwashed brothers and
sisters to a surprised queenhood in the new black sun — am
qualified to enter at least the kindergarten of new consciousness
now. New consciousness had trudge-toward—progress. I have
new hopes for myself.^{xxiv}

The ‘New consciousness’ of Gwendolyn Brooks awakened at the Fisk University Black Writers’ Conference brought in a new dimension to her poetry. She began to focus more on writing for Blacks than writing about them for white audiences. Explaining the intensity of

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newly awakened consciousness she says: "It frightens me to realize that, if I had died before the age of fifty, I would have died a 'Negro' fraction."^{xxv} However, whatever be the transformation that had taken place in Brooks "the source of her poetry would never change"^{xxvi} because for Brooks poetry was not defined by just form and language but "Poetry is life distilled."^{xxvii}

Brooks did not remain idle enjoying her high position and as a poet of high respect but chose to transform a Black audience into poets or the spokesperson's of the race. She started revising the conventional role of a poet. In her poetry she critiqued the old while celebrating her new position. Returning to Chicago from Fisk University, Brooks began a poetry workshop in her home that included members of a Chicago street gang called the Blackstone Rangers and younger poets like Sonia Sanchez, Don L. Lee and Nikki Giovanni. Nikki Giovanni and Don L. Lee are among those young Blacks who inherited her political consciousness. Having inherited Brooks's later political consciousness Giovanni spoke for her people in their own language. The poet and person of Brooks seamlessly coincide as she associates herself with the life of the common man. She feels: "A long life has taught me that many of the Lit-tul (sic) people are large enough to merit my salute, my practical gratitude."^{xxviii} Regarding the Young men of the Blackstone Rangers group she says: "They taught me many things that I had not known before." (Conversations.75)

After 1967 her poetry would not have become so forceful if she had not convinced herself to proceed for self-construction on the path of the New Black confronted her in the Fisk University conference and in the line she began working with groups of younger and exclusively Black young people. The anthology Jump Bad: A New Chicago Anthology (1971) edited by Brooks is a result of her community poetry workshops conducted in Chicago from 1967 onwards. Her post-1967 work characterizes the changes from supplication to self-assertion because the Black literature before the influence of Baraka was addressed to the white people and seemed to be crying for material help from the white people.

She announces a new prophetic writing in terms of the new Black consciousness and the affirmation of the beauty of her own dark skin. Another technical development in the poet's bolder movement is her initiative into free verse which is appropriate to the situation. The

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technique is more noticeable and surer in achievement in the next volume In the Mecca. However rhymes dot some of the poems like "A Bronzeville Mother Loiters..." and "To Be in Love" in Selected Poems. She became a part of her society and gradually she has matured into a re-directing voice of her people which is evident in In the Mecca, her epic of Black humanity. The book exhibits various facets of the Black society for which she makes use of all her technical skills.

The immediate product of her 'new consciousness,' In the Mecca a long poem based on Black life in Chicago's old Mecca building was published in 1968. Acknowledging the grandeur of the subject of the poem Don L. Lee says: "This was to be her epic of black humanity."^{xxix} The volume was considered a transitional work because she abandoned the traditional poetic forms which she employed in her earlier work and turned to free verse and increased her use of vernacular to make her poetry more accessible to the common Black readers. Her community consciousness comes to foreground in the volume In the Mecca and it requires a language which expresses the developments of common bonds of the Blacks. Her target audience are those who are not trained to understand poetry yet she has to write for them by conviction and hence the language in the volume extends from the realistic to the expressionistic. It also unites the disinherited of the Mecca building with the disinherited across the universe. Though the poem contains rage, its central emotion is compassion, and Mrs. Sallie a character in In the Mecca is bound within a traditional mode of responding and does not undergo a change of consciousness. Largely the poems in the volume In the Mecca are about the new consciousness and the raw experiences of the Black community. In the two sermon poems the poet moves to the centre of the Black struggle and urges them to build solid foundations for Black unity and to bear the pains of the struggle.

The poem contains a wide range of Black characters and themes. The poem is based on the experiences of Brooks when she worked in the Chicago tenement building known as the Mecca. Poverty, unfulfilled dreams, and violence figure prominently as themes of In the Mecca. The locale of the poem, Mecca building is a microcosm in which we find a galore of representative Black characters. The title poem describes a mother's frantic search for her missing daughter, whom, to her dismay, discovers murdered by a fellow resident of the sprawling Mecca building. To raise the Black consciousness and to strengthen it she

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mythicizes by writing poems on the Black heroes like Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. The galore of individual characters presented throughout the three parts of the poem are many facets of the Black community. Hence the murders are juxtaposed along with Black heroes like Malcolm X and Medgar Evers. She has employed all her technical tools like blank verse, free verse, 'prose verse,' off-rhyme, random rhyme, long-swinging free verse, the couplet, the sonnet and the ballad. The volume was nominated for National Book Award. When critics enquired if the change in her work signalled her emergence as a 'protest poet,' Brooks said:

No matter what the theme is, I still want the poem to be a poem, not just a piece of propaganda.^{xxx}

After the publication of In the Mecca Brooks succeeded Carl Sandburg upon his death as Poet Laureate of Illinois in 1968 and she continued in the position until 2000.

Next in Riot the poems effectively address the communal concerns of the Black community and the white upper class is satirized in the character of John Cabot. In the subsequent poetry the poet becomes a member of the group. As part of her mission to help inspire the bonding of Blacks to each other, she wished to write poetry which could be appreciated by the people in the taverns who ordinarily do not read poetry. This ambition required some additional emphasis on simplicity. After the publication of In the Mecca, as a gesture of her commitment to Black solidarity she wanted to support Black publishers. Her commitment to Black solidarity had led her to a shift away from a major publishing house, Harper and Row which gave her a secure position to a smaller Detroit based company Broadside Press owned by the Black poet Dudley Randall which gave her no financial guarantees. The new turn of socio-political consciousness initiated in In the Mecca of Gwendolyn Brooks has become explicit and conspicuous in Riot, her first book from the Broadside Press in 1969. Her real successor Don L. Lee really explains what has happened to Brooks in the 1967 Fisk University Conference.

It is Brooks the individual who dies and resurrects like a phoenix into the community. Hence then onwards Brooks always portrays the community as a whole rather than the individual portraits. In the Mecca is the Black microcosm, Riot is the picture of the enraged

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community, In Montgomery is the picture of the community during the post-Civil Rights era and Winnie is the ultimate Pan Africanism of Brooks. Thus Brooks the individual dissolves into the community to regenerate as the face of the community. In the words of Lee: "the *only* thing that an individual can do individually is die. Nobody ever built anything individually."^{xxxi}

Before she started her publications with Broadside Press, other young writers began leaving Broadside Press in the interest of their personal growth on the assumption that the Black Arts Movement was dead. But the death of the Black Arts Movement as some young Black writers were professing was only an excuse to go after green pastures. Like the Black nationalist writers who believe in their racial identity and try to explicate their racial pride in their writings Gwendolyn Brooks also defined herself as a Black poet and resolved to use her art for the sake of her people and gave the same direction to the young generation towards intellectual and cultural liberation. **Brooks says: "My name is Gwendolyn Brooks. I'm a Black poet – you can see that."**^{xxxii} Black women by straightening their hair and bleaching their complexions and narrow their noses and spell their eyes light gray or green or cerulean they seem to be announcing that what nature has "afforded is poor, is sub-standard, is inferior to Caucasian glory. But Brooks never betrays her Blackness more over sacrifices her privileges to protect the same which she knows best. She has achieved her goal by inculcating the same spirit in her successors like Sonia Sanchez and Don L. Lee to name a few.

Riot is a long poem in three parts demonstrates her commitment for the Black community by associating herself with the newest of Black publishing companies, Broadside Press of Dudley Randall. The book is mainly based on the riots that occurred in American cities especially in Chicago after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968. The assassination of the American prophet of non-violence unleashed violence in North America and hence Gwendolyn Brooks chooses the statement of Martin Luther King: "**A riot is the language of the unheard**" as the epigraph of the poem which suggests that for her the violence caused by the Blacks is not an act of destruction but an act of giving vent to their spiritual hunger.

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The first part of the poem “Riot” describes John Cabot an imaginary character as symbolic of white affluent America. The Blacks assault John Cabot and shock him to death. The killing of John Cabot is a symbolic action of the poets’ departure from the ‘European-derived aesthetic assumptions.’ The second part of the poem “The Third Sermon on the Warpland” deals with the new message of violence as an act of redemption. The epigraph ‘Phoenix’ reminds the readers that fiery destruction and death are a prelude to a renewal. The treatment of violence in the poem is more positive and considered an act of redemption for Blacks. The third section of the poem “An Aspect of Love, Alive in Ice and Fire” suggests Brooks’s optimism. She hopes for a utopia where the lovers can meet after the riot is over and the silence is once again reinstated. It is not the characters alone who undergo the change but also the poet who merges into the community and the readers who while reading her poetry shed their self-identity and mature into group identity. Her instructive poems with the titles ‘Sermon,’ ‘Dedication,’ or ‘Preachment’ bear witness to her group consciousness. Her preachment poems suggest her inclusiveness as well as her strategic separatism.

Though she was not received in Africa as one among the natives, she had a come home feeling in Africa and established her feelings that all Blacks are one family. These crystallized feelings gave resulted in her next volume Family Pictures. It is a collection of eight varied poems was published in 1970. The title of the volume is suggestive of Brooks’s new consciousness of Black community as an extended family. She uses the term “Family” in the place of “Blackness.”^{xxxiii} The volume depicts the vignettes of various characters of various stages of life and society like children, youngsters, artists, preachers, lovers, parents, politicians and others. The lead-off poem “The Life of Lincoln West” which deals with the life of a young Black boy who attains self realization, signifies the intimate relationship between the observer-writer and the community. Lincoln West was ill-treated at school. Though his innocent childhood endeared him to all, his dark complexion repelled everybody from him. But at the end of the poem the comments of a white man that Lincoln is ‘the real thing’ comforts and gives him confidence that ‘Black is Beautiful.’

The book ends with the small instructive poem “Speech to the Young.” The volume makes clear her bonds with the Black community and bonds within the community. Her style in the volume moves close to her future verse journalism found in “In Montgomery.” As the

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poems in Riot and Family Pictures testify, Gwendolyn Brooks was not only asking critical questions but seeking substantive answers. She resolves the puzzle of Black poet's American identity in the simplest way possible as follows: “On Being An American: In America you feel a little or a lot disoriented, so far as “being Black-and-being-an-American” goes! In the last few decades many citizens have adopted a resistance to adoration of country. And true, a country that for so long endorsed slavery, endorsed lynching, endorsed official segregation, and could be capable of judging scholarly rejection acceptable is not to be blue-ribboned across the board.”^{xxxiv}

“But traveling to other countries helps you italicize American positives. Once you get out of the country, whatever your woes, your wobbliness's, your confusions, your furies, you understand that you are operationally an American. Her American identity nor her Black consciousness do not deprive of her vision for the whole humanity. She says: “OF COURSE I am “concerned,” tightly, “with human welfare and the reduction of suffering....” And I want the people of the world to anticipate ultimate unity, active interest in empathy. I commend a unity of distinct proud pieces.”^{xxxv} She continues about her human interest says: “None of this – this interest in and subscription to ALL – can ever turn me from my healthy concern for my Black Extension.”^{xxxvi} She was very conscious of the contradictions in her own personal life, and as best as possible—living in a contradictory situation in America—began to systematically deal with those contradictions.

Every Black individual has to move towards “definition, clarification, connection” of Blackness. (RPT.143)

On surface level Brooks appears to have unchanged but a close study of her work and person will reveal that throughout her she moved from one stage to another towards a more heightened racial consciousness. In the early period of career she used to write about the individuals from descriptive point of view. Whereas in her later work after 1967 there is an expression controlled anger.

Her world changed, and to some extent, her aesthetics as well. Prior to the Black Arts Movement of the sixties, she considered the polishing of technique to be “the most urgent duty of the Negro poet.” She does not waver in her belief that “a poet has a duty to words

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and that words can do wonderful things. Some critics believe that she became the most visible and hard working nationally celebrated poet in American literary history.

In the recent writings by Black women there is a shift from confrontation with social forces to intimate male-female encounters. But Brooks feels that the problems the Black women have with the Black men are just family matters and they need to be worked out within the family. These problems must not give chance to white to convince the Blacks that they should split. She feels: "It's another divisive tactic dragging us from each other, and it's going to lead to a lot more racial grief. The women are not going to be winners on account of leaving their black men and going to white men, to themselves, or to nobody."¹ She feels it is the poets' responsibility to write poems in that direction which Brooks also doing. She feels that her poem in its final form will be a "vehicle by which means life has reached some order, or perhaps it suggests there can be an arrival at some kind or degree of order. May not. It's not mechanical."²

Notes:

ⁱ Brooks has deliberately adopted the all inclusive term 'Blacks' instead of Negro or coloured or African-Americans and hence it is adopted.

ⁱⁱ B.J.Bolden uses the term.

ⁱⁱⁱ Aimee LaBrie. "Gwendolyn Brooks: Poetic Justice." Bloom's BioCritiques. 64.

^{iv} Houston A. Baker Jr. BLC.250

^v Louis Simpson.?

^{vi} Dan Jaffe.?

¹ Gwendolyn Brooks' Interview with Claudia Tate (1983) Conversations.110

² Gwendolyn Brooks' Interview with Claudia Tate (1983) Conversations.110

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vii RPO.26

viii Houston A. Baker Jr.?

ix Don L. Lee. "Gwendolyn Brooks: Beyond the Wordmaker—The Making of an African Poet." Report from Part One by Gwendolyn Brooks P.?

x RPT.97

xi RPT.59

xii RPO.16

xiii RPO.16

xiv RPO.16

xv ?

xvi RPO.15

xvii RPO.15

xviii Sujanne Juhasz.152

xix Sujanne Juhasz.152

xx Kathryne V. Lindberg CLC.125. 109.

xxi RPO.73, 84

xxii RPO.?

xxiii HBS.31

xxiv RPO.86

xxv ?

xxvi Amy Sickles. "Biography of Gwendolyn Brooks." Bloom's BioCritiques: Gwendolyn Brooks by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia.2005

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xxvii Interview 1984.

xxviii RPT.140

xxix RPO.22

xxx ?

xxxi RPO.25

xxxii RPT.66

xxxiii RPT.127

xxxiv RPT.129

xxxv RPT.131

xxxvi RPT.131

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THE METAMORPHISM OF SUPPRESSED WOMEN ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS IN TASLIMA NASRIN'S LAJJA AND SHODH

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ABSTRACT

From time immemorial, women have been suppressed in mind and body that they are inferior and secondary to men. They are enforced to play the subordinate roles as scripted by the dominant males in the patriarchal structure of society. The word 'religion' literally meaning a personal or institutionalized system grounded in a belief in a God or Gods and the activities connected with this, at its basic level, is just a set of teachings that tell people how to lead a good life. The purpose of religion has never been to divide the people into groups of isolated followers that cannot live in harmony together. In reality, religion divides and segregates genders too. In this paper entitled, The Metamorphism of Suppressed Women on Religious Grounds in Taslima Nasrin's Lajja and Shodh, an attempt has been made to analyze marginalization of women along with that of the religious minority as depicted in Taslima Nasrin's Lajja and Shodh. She turned into a voice of the marginalized and victims who attempt to get by in the faction of the viciousness and unknown.

Keywords: Bigotry, gender bias, Islamic writings, religious extremism, suppression.

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Violence against women is an age-old well-established practice which has now turned into a pressing issue of worry in this day. Whether it is civil strife, communal clash or World War; women have been the significant casualties of savagery, torment, and embarrassment. The dominant male nature has been talked about by numerous women activist authors and Taslima Nasrin is no special case. The best that isolates her from the rest is that she embarks to express this, disregarding living in a male-ruled, general, and radical society like Bangladesh. She is one of the casualties of the patriarchal structures. Taslima Nasrin has seen things intently that how women are given the part of a subordinate where they can't, in, at any rate, attest their entitlement to freedom, appropriate right to a solid life and right to equality.

The women activists pushed off Taslima Nasrin in the context of the issues related to women, the issues looked up by the marginalized Hindus in Bangladesh. Ideas of country and religion have been complicatedly woven together in Lajja and Shodh. This paper centers upon the diverse measurements of savagery and their effect on the protagonist Jhumur, battling to build up her own identity and personality in the patriarchal set-up of the novel Shodh. The females depicted in Lajja are simply enigmas that are utilized by the male predators to satisfy their desire. Lajja depicts certain men beguiling young Hindu girls for their satisfaction. The novel Lajja gives an express declaration of this trademark of male nature.

The novel uncovers that minority in Bangladesh endured hardship as well as oppression. The Hindu students were compelled to go to the Islamic classes. The Muslims were considered as the important persons in the nation. They were allowed to pray in the mosque, to do what they need for their religion, to wear burkha, to have a facial hair, to wear around top on their head, to take after the customs of their religion. The Hindus were treated as their slaves and each time they needed to conceal their identities. They can't take after any religious customs and utilize anything implying their religion. The kidnapping of the Hindu young girls was a typical thing in Bangladesh. The hooligans did not have any sort of dread. At whatever point they wished, they kidnapped a girl and raped her mercilessly.

Maya, the daughter of Sudhamoy was also abducted and raped while coming home from the school when she was only six years old. No one knew who the abductors were and what they did with her. She returned home herself two days at some point later. For two months she felt

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traumatic and sleepless at nights. She used to get unknown letters that undermined to grab Maya again when she grew a young lady of 19 years and the foreboding day went ahead on 11th December 1992 when a gathering of seven hooligans went into the place of Sudhamoy who had endured paralysis recently and started to break the things of the house. Sudhamoy and Kironmoyee tried their best to resist but they could do nothing against those seven evil doers who rapidly took Maya away. Maya was crying for help yet no one moved nearer to help her since she was a Hindu girl and the abductors were Muslims. This cruel episode impacted on everyone's deepest desires of Sudhamoy's family. Being a communist, they didn't put stock in religion whether Hindu or Muslim; humanity was the main religion for them. But now they broke into pieces and decided to leave for India. Suranjan tried his best but he could not find Maya.

The female characters in Lajja, Kironmoyee, Maya, and Shammima Begum are inside and out, obliged to bear on as per the man-dominated standards, wherein Nasrin goes for including the condition of women having a place with minority network of Hindus in Bangladesh, who expected to encounter an extraordinary stage in the midst of the demolition of Babri Masjid in India. The twofold marginalization of women on religious grounds from one point of view and their sex character on the other is another crucial perspective in the novel. The patriarchal norms don't give women a chance to satisfy their yearnings, with respect to Kironmoyee who needed to stifle her profound internal desires which would, in the long run, transform into virtual hardship and turn out to be a lifestyle.

Kironmoyee contributes every one of her assets, money-related transactions in keeping her family together. Kironmoyee gives an extraordinary fight to her daughter's abductors. Despite her hesitance, she cooks meat to fulfill her husband's needs and she is even arranged to perceive her son's Muslim love Parveen as her daughter-in-law. Her second statement of revelation appears in her refusal to recognize the money offered by her son Suranjan after her husband Sudhamoy has a crippled assault, which obviously outlines her as a loss of a male-centric culture. She takes her chastity by virtue of her husband's genital mutilation as an existential given and never specifies this impede as an issue.

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Taslima Nasrin portrays Kironmoyee as an amicable, altruistic and liberal spouse and a mother who is obliging to the solicitations of her husband and son, for her essential concern is only the flourishing of her family. And her particular choices are a non-issue in nature as imagined to have been brought in. It is critical to take note of that both, family and society scheme to underestimate women. In Lajja, Taslima Nasrin indicates how women are doubly risked—based on sex and on nationality which is indistinguishable from religion.

Muslims considered only themselves as human beings. They are allowed to pray in the mosque, do what they need for their religion, wear burkha, have whiskers, wear a skull top on their head, and to take after the ceremonies of their religion. The Hindus were deemed to be their slaves and needed to conceal their identity as a general rule. They can't watch any religious ceremonies of their own and can't work on anything implying their religion. The women were barbarically brutalized, tormented and assaulted; as depicted in Lajja, they attempt just protests and are utilized by the male predators to satisfy their desire.

Taslima Nasrin depicts in Lajja how women are sexually exploited, grabbed and subjected to different sorts of torment that may even result in their death. Taslima Nasrin shows the abduction of the Hindu young girls is the main violence in Bangladesh and how the miscreant does not have any kind of fear in Lajja. In this way, the sex radicalism and religious fundamentalism go as one all through the substance subjecting the female characters like Maya to pitiless torment until she tends to be gone forever. Hers isn't just the death of a woman but of that inward confirmation of survival with respect to the Hindus in their own as Sudhamoy would accept at one point in the content preceding when his girl inhales her last.

Shodh is an account of requital, a young girl Jhumur who is well educated and weds the man whom she adores. She breaks the news of her pregnancy to her husband, Haroon planning to make him cheerful. However she articulated, he blames her for undermining him by saying that it is difficult to imagine her pregnancy in about a month and a half and he puts an assertion that she needs to get married to him hastily because of the fact that she is carrying another person's seed in her womb as he doesn't trust her and says it is difficult to wind up pregnancy in about a month and a half. He compels her to get the child prematurely aborted which throws a profound mental effect on Jhumur, with the goal that she ends up pernicious

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and chooses to retaliate for herself. Regardless of being an informed, valiant and receptive woman her voice in the household matters is stifled. This charge and mental injury slaughter her soul to live and smash all her assumptions.

Through the account of Jhumur and Haroon, Nasrin lays weight on the requirement for affection, congruity and a little flexibility in relations. Before marriage, Jhumur and Haroon appear to be a flawless couple; the relationship loses its appeal once the egocentric, suspicious and petty male supersedes the lover Haroon. Unavoidably to vindicate herself, Jhumur gets intimate with Afzal, a boy staying in her home as a guest, lastly brings forth a child, naming him as Haroon's child. Haroon loves the baby ardently; thinking him to be his own son is highly ironical and serves the novelist's purpose of casting a shattering blow to the hegemonic patriarchal set up where a woman's fidelity is constantly under the shadow of suspicion and doubt thereby subjecting her to physical and mental anguish and pain. Jhumur gets thrilled and pleased and does not have any guilt feelings about bringing Ananda, her son, into the world of Haroon and his family.

Taslima Nasrin almost assesses the bad influence that such disharmony in wedded connection makes upon the girl troubled. In Shodh, Jhumur, notwithstanding as an educated, valiant and liberal woman, experiences such battles and her voice in all issues is quieted by Haroon. Jhumur's fantasy of joy in a marriage and child-bearing are broken. Through the character of Jhumur, Taslima Nasrin exposed the colossal experience of sophisticated elites and above all the flourishing burglarized their women's satisfaction and emotional peace. Jhumur is obliged to get the child aborted because of the only reason that Haroon has capacity and superiority as a male to which Jhumur, being a female is subjected and surrendered. It has been observed that a charge of abuse has been used throughout on a woman and forces upon resulting in the ruinous and whipping end.

Jhumur can't develop a notion of having a place with the home of her husband, Haroon because of the path where there is no appearance of reverence, fellowship, mental peace, and regular discernment. The concealment of Jhumur's voice and her wants constrained her to a demonstration in a differing structure which at last gives her mettle to build up her own personality and recapture her regard and independence other than being a wife, mother, and

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daughter-in-law. Jhumur has a tendency to be a propelling variable for each woman smothered to stand firm keeping in mind the end goal to keep up her own independence and regard.

The women in Taslima Nasrin's fictions are the model instance of abuse and enduring. Her women protagonists have been generally and interminably casualties of nexus amongst religion and the patriarchal society in terms of physical, enthusiastic and scholarly excursions. Thus to conclude, it is fitting to express that male-driven structure in the overall population is the foundation of different levels of orchestration where the control is esteemed by them and the heartlessness keeps running with control doing nothing next to offering torment to a man who is sensitive.

Taslima Nasrin lays accentuation on a woman's never-ending battle despite seemingly insurmountable opposition to make a specialty for herself. Taslima Nasrin has communicated her experience with regard to savagery, misuse, mistreatment, oppression, and segregation of ladies in the male-dominated culture. The twofold underestimation of women on the religious ground from one point of view and their identity-based character on the other is another essential perspective in both the novels. Taking a gander at critical point into the mind of her characters, Taslima Nasrin graphically portrays the appalling effect of brutality on the protagonists.

The marginalization of women close by that of the religious minority is depicted in both the novels Lajja and Shodh. Both the novels show gigantic potential to be considered from women's feminist point of view and the delineation of the female characters, their treatment by virtue of Muslim male fundamentalists. Moreover, the Hindu folks at the levels of family, society, religion, and country, are minutely depicted by Taslima in her novels. Taslima Nasrin's focus on both the novels is on the irrationality of the bigoted faith leading to the unavoidable horrendous brutalities that man inflicts upon the woman in the name of religion. The feminist thrust pushed off Taslima Nasrin's perspective in setting the issues relating to women. The issues looked by the belittled Hindus in Bangladesh, and the musings of the country and religion have been complicatedly woven together in Lajja.

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In Shodh, Nasrin has communicated her experience in regards to savagery, abuse, mistreatment, enslavement, and segregation of women in the man-dominated patriarchal society. The sexual orientation, radicalism, and religious fundamentalism go as an inseparable unit all through the two novels subjecting the female characters to a cruel torment. The novels likewise encompass hostile to male-centric opposition wherein sexual orientation is favored over religion especially when Nasrin outlines abominations against women similarly as religion supersedes patriotism with regards to the abuse of the religious minority.

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DEPICTION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF WOMEN: A STUDY OF SELECT NOVELS OF ANITA DESAI AND SHASHI DESHPANDE

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Abstract

Indian English Literature has witnessed a gradual development in the role of women through the ages. The emergence of Women Writers during the end of the 19th century is of a remarkable significance in the history of Indian English literature. These women writers reflected the realistic images of women in their novels. They dealt with the issues and problems faced by women in a male-dominated society. This paper presents the depiction and characterization of women in the works of Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande. These writers have presented women's quest for freedom, identity, social and psychological problems faced by women, their status and role in the society through their protagonists. They have tried to portray the mental trauma of the protagonists to expose the subjugation of women in a patriarchal society. They have depicted their characters as survivors who successfully overcome all the problems and raise their voices against all the brutalities of life.

Keywords: Alienation, mental trauma, sufferings, frustration, self-realization

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Indian English Literature has witnessed a gradual development in the role and status of women through the ages. The Early Indian English writing was available in the form of prose letters, traditional, religious, social and political treatise. Later, Novels were written in the form of expressing the social and cultural surrounding of their country. During the end of the 20th century, the attention of the writers, mainly women writers were attracted towards the social inequalities and exploitation of women in a patriarchal society. These writers portrayed the life of middle-class family, oppression of women, problems of contemporary society. Several women writers started to emerge during this period. They focused mainly on the issues of women in a male-dominated society. They probe the inner consciousness of their women protagonists and explores the realities of life.

The early novels by writers like Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharya, and Kamala Markandaya portrayed the traditional image of women like a housewife and a mother. The image of women in the novels has undergone a tremendous change during the last few decades. Writers, particularly Women writers moved away from portraying women in a traditional way. Instead, they started depicting the character of women as individuals who search for their identity and a personal meaning in their life.

Writers like Anita Desai, Shobha De, Shashi Deshpande, Nayantara Sangal etc., presented the realistic image of women. These writers have expressed the role and position of women more artistically and have made their voices heard around the world. These Indian women writers have a strong link to western life and culture, either by getting married to a westerner or their parents will be from western countries etc., Yet they have a special attachment to their mother country and its culture. Hence, they were able to project the prolific quality of the Indian Mind to assimilate with the new situations and the complex dilemma of the modern World.

This paper focuses on the depiction and characterization of women by prominent novelists Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande. The fictional world of both the writers is dominated by female protagonists. These writers have presented the contemporary Indian women with some common themes like a man-woman relationship, women's

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inner struggle, and pain, lack of communication between the sexes and gender discrimination. Anita Desai's protagonists are hypersensitive, lonely and helpless women who suffer in a world dominated by men. Maya in *Cry the Peacock*, Monisha in *Voices in the city*, Sita where shall we go this summer? Nanda Kaul in *Fire on the Mountain* are sensitive protagonists of Anita Desai who live in a world of fantasy longs for their freedom and fail to play their traditional roles. The protagonists of Deshpande have usually educated women who are ready to come out of their conservative shells and revolt against the tradition. They reflect the realities of life and the frustrations experienced by women in contemporary society. Jaya in *That long silence*, Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Indu in *Roots and Shadows* are assertive protagonists who are conscious about the social inequality and injustice that exist in the society and struggles hard against all the oppressions and patriarchal social setup to acquire an identity and individuality of their own.

Anita Desai is one of the well-known contemporary writers of the Modern English fiction who voices the traumatic experiences of the female in a patriarchal society. She is a most popular and a powerful writer whose contribution to Indian English Fiction is highly commendable. Her novels reflect the social realities from a psychological point of view. Her travel experiences to different places of India and her interaction with different kinds of people in India has enriched her writing. Her novels revolve around the inner world of her characters and bring out the mental trauma of the female protagonists. Her novels reflect the harsh realities of the world. Her female characters are always hypersensitive, lonely and helpless.

They suffer a mental trauma mainly because of their coldhearted husbands, fathers, and brothers which in turn leads them to the feeling of alienation, depression, frustration, isolation, withdrawal and lack of communication. Her protagonist Maya in *Cry the peacock* suffers a lot due to the indifference showed by her husband Gautama. The protagonist Sita in *Where shall we go this summer?* is a hypersensitive female who feels alienated and finds herself confiding in urban life. Her feeling of alienation manipulates only emptiness in her life and induces her to be pessimistic. Nanda Kaul in *the fire on the mountain* leads a life of silence due to the betrayal of her husband.

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Anita Desai also focuses on the issues and problems of marital disharmony in her novels. All her protagonists belong to the patriarchal family system. They remain marginals in the family. These protagonists experience a kind of mental trauma and frustration. Sita, Nanda Kaul, Maya, and Monisha are good examples of sensitive individuals endowed with a feminine sensibility. They always long for an identity in a patriarchal society where women are forced to live according to their traditional roles. Through her protagonist Monisha, she presents the unfortunate condition of women who live like a caged bird in the male-dominated society. In *Cry the Peacock*, she presents her protagonist as a neurotic woman whose marriage gets collapsed due to the emotional incompatibility between the partners. She characterizes Nanda Kaul as a victim of emotional and physical violence against women. Through her character Uma, she portrays the life of a girl in India as subjugated both in her parent's house as well as in her In-law's House. She presents the typical patriarchal family set up through the character of Anamika.

Her themes, characterization, and images revolve around the role and status of women in the society. Her protagonists are very much concerned about freedom. They seek freedom not from outside the house but within. They struggle hard to attain an identity for themselves. Anita Desai focuses on gender inequality and reveals the multi-facet nature of females; as a daughter, a wife, an individual, and a member of the society. All her protagonists struggle for an existence, their pursuit of freedom, their search for identity and rebel against all oppressions.

Shashi Deshpande is one of the prominent feminist novelists of Modern English fiction. Her protagonists are modern educated women who suffer the conflicts of age-old traditions and western lifestyle. These conflicts create a dilemma and tension in the minds of the protagonists and lead in the search for an identity for themselves. They finally emerge as independent individuals and champions of their rights and empowerment. Her protagonists are assertive and confident characters who are not able to liberate themselves from the limitations of the patriarchal society. Her novels are based on the themes of the quest for self, exploration of the mysteries of life, man-woman relationship, gender discrimination etc.,

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In *Roots and Shadows*, Indu is the protagonist who experiences mental trauma because of the double standards of her husband Jayant. Her husband expects her to be a typical woman who follows all the traditional roles of a wife. He becomes intolerant if she deviates from the traditional norms. The writer reflects the inferior status of married women of the contemporary society through her protagonist Indu. Though she is well educated and broad-minded she realizes bitterly that She has become a victim like any other illiterate girl in a patriarchal social set up.

The novel *Long Silence* portrays a middle-class educated women's search for happiness and identity. The protagonist Jaya gets married to Mohan right after her graduation. She is frustrated with the monotonous routine life of the family. She finds it difficult to play the role of a traditional wife and mother. She ceases herself from all the duties and responsibilities as a mother and a wife. Her frustration leads to the search of her identity but in the end, she reconciles herself and realizes that her happiness lies in the happiness of her family.

Dark Holds No Terrorism the second novel of Deshpande. Deshpande portrays the protagonist Saru as a woman of great strength and vigor, who accepts the challenges in a male-dominated society. Though She undergoes a lot of sufferings and mental trauma of the patriarchal social setup, she decides to protest the oppressions silently without breaking from her family life. She fails to identify herself as a beloved daughter to her parents before marriage and feels that even her marriage obstructs her growth as an individual. Manu, her husband is a typical Indian man who believes that men are superior in the family. He feels insecure when Saru attains a social status in the society by becoming a doctor and all the troubles in life start from here. The writer reflects the typical Indian society and every aspect of a family system in India as such in this novel.

Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande portray the world of women of the contemporary society. The women protagonists of both the writers are middle-class Indian women who struggle hard to free themselves from the restrictions inflicted by the society, tradition, and culture. They demonstrate the changing facets of Indian womanhood

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when encountering the conflicts of personal desires and societal expectations through their protagonists. Each protagonist strives hard for an identity of their own, apart from the traditional roles of daughter, wife, and mother. All these protagonists have self-realization of their problems and withdraw temporarily from the societal norms to resolve the problems. At the same time, they do not sacrifice their individuality for the sake of sustaining their traditional roles as a wife, mother, and a daughter. These writers portray the agonies and tensions experienced by women in the process of attaining an individuality of their own in a male-dominated society. They readily revolt against the traditional norms of the society and attain an identity for themselves in the family and in the society.

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THE IMAGE OF WOMEN IN THE HINDU SOCIETY: AN OUTLOOK FROM THE ANCIENT TO THE PRESENT DAY TIMES

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Abstract

With the coming of humans into existence there always has been an agenda concerning male domination and female suppression. The creator created both the man and woman with the same five basic elements viz earth, water, fire, air and space and bestowed both (man and woman) with equal human instincts. Only slight biological differences are there which simply and just mean either male or female. But with respect to socio-cultural context and religion, this slight difference gave way to a huge gap to the psychology of humans. In ancient India, we have a lot of myths which express the power of women. Rishi Ved Vyasa in his scripture "The Mahabharata" mentions the power of women and the downfall of Kaurava's who humiliated Draupadi. The position of women in ancient India was good. However, the patriarchal system was followed since long and the women also obeyed the same. It is also here to mention that all the four Vedas and some other sutras favor and grant women equal status to worship the lord and accord the women with the same devotion. Women enjoyed such a position of respect and reverence that they were pre-fixed 'Devis' before their names. But as the time passed the equality of women started decreasing and so here position in the society. Corrupt religious "Pandits" and "Sadhus" imposed restrictions on women. These fanatics even barred women from entering temples or worshipping places during their monthly days of discharge. And those restrictions took their way

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to certain unorthodox customs and beliefs in the Hindu society of India. This paper tries to trace the position of women in India up to the present time, with respect to their socio-cultural context and it also inculcates the reasons for the delay in the development of our Nation.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Equality, Patriarchy, Fanaticism, Female-Suppression, Gender-Justice.

Introduction:

To begin with a quote from the biggest intellect of India- (Swami Vivekananda).

"It is impossible to think about the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is impossible for a bird to fly on only one wing."

"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world". With these great quotes, it is clearly understood that humans have two faces-one the male and the other female. These quotes perhaps suggest that both are incomplete with either one's presence only. So they have to co-exist for the progress. Though the phenomena of creation take place and go on and on but not in the right direction, in fact, directionless and meaningless or simply to say purposeless. The point here is of progress and development and not just simply the matter of continuing the progeny; without any purpose or aim. It is just clear from the above-mentioned quotes and it does not further require for their explanation or paraphrase that a man is an incomplete being without a woman, and so the reverse is true. But where the question of superiority or inferiority arises, let see in this paper.

HIGH ESTEEMED STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE VEDIC PERIOD

The women in the Vedic society enjoyed a high position. Their conditioned was good. They were provided opportunities in terms of their intellectual expansion. Their spiritual standard was high. Women rishis were also there in ancient India. They were regarded as no less than deities. History reveals that

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in the Vedic society a "Yagya" – a spiritual ceremony in the presence of the fire would not culminate unless the participation of a woman. It was incomplete with her absence or participation in that Yagna.

Our epics and Puranas equated women with a property. Ancient India had many learned ladies. There were two types of scholarly women - the Brahnavadinis or the women who never married and they cultured Vedas throughout their lives; and the Sadhyodvahas- those who studied the Vedas till they married. Though there was high reverence for women there yet the patriarchal system was also found. There is no denying this fact that only the males were allowed to be the head of families but it may be due to their high physical strength; of males as compared to females. But it was acceptable to females. There was no torture, no domestic violence no female suppression at all. In fact, they were held in such a high reverence that their names either prefixed or suffixed as 'Devis'. Even to this extent, women were consulted in political matters too .

Status Of Women In Post-Vedic Period:

Just after the Vedic period history shows a sharp decline in the human thinking. This may be due to some selfish ingredients which started germinating in the society after the Vedic phase. The fanatics adopted religion as the best method to dominate the society. They gave rise to several social evils and gender inequality is one such. As India is a religion of faiths and beliefs so the common masses when consulted these fanatic people to ceremonial issues; they were misguided. They misinterpreted the religion of "Sanatan - Dharma" and conveyed it in a wrong way to the common masses. Several unorthodox beliefs and customs paved their way. Women were restricted to worship the Lord; esp. in temples. They were thought to be impure in their periods and they were not allowed to enter kitchens and touch the utensils.

These unconventional customs are still found in some parts of our India particularly J&K, Rajasthan and in the seven states of East India. However, several protests were there but as mentioned earlier that India is a land of

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faiths and religions and the fanatics ruled the common masses, these protest went in the air and the women were suppressed and stuck between the 4 walls. She was thought to be interdependent on men for her survival. It was deeply rooted in the psyche of a woman right from her birth that she lives in a male-dominated society and she always has to spread her hands in front of her husband for her needs and not try to stand at her own or earn something for her own. So, women were deprived of their rights in all spheres of life.

Women in Modern India:

Data sources show a decline in women suppression. Women nowadays are becoming shareholders in many economies too. There is also a sharp rise in the regulation of female sex-ratio. Sources suggest that women are given opportunities in government sectors too. There are several initiatives by the govt. of India and one such is the Beti Padaho- Beti Bacho which aims to generate awareness and improve the apprehension of welfare services intended for girls. It was funded initially by Rs. 100 crore. Its main focus was on gender critical districts.

Conclusion:

To conclude gender-balance or gender equality is the dire need of the hour in the entire circumstances of life. An utmost need is to provide her opportunities right from family to social to national. And not to deprive-off her rights and think no more inferior to her counterpart and believe not in orthodoxy and adopt the religion in its true spirits. Let's have reverence in our hearts towards her as we all have mothers, sisters and so on. In this way let us take our nation forward for peaceful co-existence and not become the objects of the hindrance in our nation's development. Again the quote of Swami Vivekananda has to be worked out for the welfare of the entire world.

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CASTE, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY OF DALITS IN URMILA PAWAR'S THE WEAVE OF MY LIFE

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Abstract

The stream of Dalit Literature is based on the Dalits and their unheard voice which has not been considered for previous centuries. The author of this literature presents their sufferings through self-narration in the form of poems, short stories, and autobiographies. Urmila Pawar's The Weave of My Life is a notable autobiography's leaves a deep impact on the mind of every caste and class reader. The Dalit woman's raised their voices with their own stories of pain and suffering, narrating the anguish of Dalit life in the original. They depict the hardships and helplessness against the discriminating attitudes of dominating caste for the weakest section of society and they suffer from caste discrimination as well as gender discrimination within and outside their community.

Keywords: Dalit, Community, Society, Caste, and Identity.

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India is one of the fastest growing countries in the world, yet, it is notorious for its rigid caste system. This paper examines the history of suppression, condition of the suppressed and origin of Dalit writings. It explores how Dalit community struggled for equality and liberty. Due to strong Dalit movements as well as hammering on upper caste society through Dalit literature by writers and thinkers, and also by the implementation of welfare schemes by Government, a positive approach toward equality is seen in the social life of Dalit community nowadays. Discrimination on the basis of caste and gender are banned by law.

The Dalit problems in India are unique in its own ways, not just in terms of its form but also its dynamics. Nowhere and never on this earth an enormous mass of people, sons of their soil, have been treated so badly for a continuous thousand years or more that they were reduced to the level of two-footed animals under the social system called the Caste system as its popularly known. Dalit problems are not like the problem of slavery as existed in the west till the last century but have its own religious cultural dimensions to it. It goes beyond the realm of mere physical exploitation of somebody for economic gains using whips and batons but simultaneously using the weapon of religion to spoil the living spirit of man.

As the lowest in the caste hierarchy, Dalits in Indian society have historically suffered caste-based social exclusion from economic, civil, cultural, and political rights. Women from this community suffer from gender discrimination gender, caste identity, and consequent economic deprivation. Dalit women's problems encompass not only gender and economic deprivation but also discrimination associated with religion, caste, and untouchability, which in turn results in the denial of their social, economic, cultural, and political rights. They become vulnerable to sexual violence and exploitation due to their gender and caste. `Urmila Pawar describes her experiences in terms of education, earning a livelihood and the emergence of individual identity in the modern world. Pawar's Aaydan is translated to English by Maya Pandit and published as The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman Memoirs. The personal narrative was originally published in Marathi in 2003.

Pawar expresses a deep interest in Dalit literature and women's literature by taking to creative writing, which reinforces her subaltern activism. Her stories are translated into many Indian languages and earn many awards for her. One of her stories is adapted as a television

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play. Thus she comes to be recognized as an established Dalit woman writer. One may trace an evolution in the life of the protagonist from innocence to experience, from an inferiority complex to self-confidence, and from passivity to activism. Pawar was much sensitive about her caste as well as her poverty so during school period onwards her conscious mind was aware of the limitations of the person of lower caste and meaning of poverty not described in the books, but in reality. As she writes. The upper caste girls always used words like 'Ladu', 'Modak', 'karanjya', 'Puranpolya'. They brought such novel items in their tiffin boxes as well as at times we went on excursions. However, I never asked myself the stupid question, why we do not prepare such dishes at home? We were aware, without anybody telling us, that we were born in a particular caste and in poverty, and that we had to live accordingly. (The Weave of My Life, 31).

Urmila Pawar reflects on her use of the category 'Dalit', arguing that is a radical, rational humanistic category developed in the rebellion of those oppressed and humiliated by the social system. She sees her consciousness of becoming a modern individual emerging from the Phule Ambedkarite movement and granting individuality to both men and women from the women's movement in Maharashtra Sharmila Rege in her afterword writes,

Both in the village and the city, people would first purify the Aayadan, the basket, woven by Dalits by sprinkling water on it. At school, teachers would pick on Dalit girls to clean the dung on the school veranda when it was the turn of their class to undertake the cleaning. (The Weave of My Life, 105).

In the autobiographical work, Aaydan Pawar provides an account of the day to day life and routine of Dalit women as they carry out their work in order to earn a living and hence sufficing to the family's income. Pawar describes how all the women of the community gathered to embark on their daily journey of work in the following words: Women from our village traveled to the market at Ratnagiri to sell various things. They trudged the whole distance, with huge, heavy bundles on their heads, firewood or grass, rice or semolina, long pieces of bamboo, baskets or ripe or raw mangoes... vexed women would utter choicest abuses, abusing our original ancestor, the mool purush of the family... It was he who had chosen this particular village... [which]... was an extremely difficult and inconvenient terrain.... (The Weave of My Life, 87).

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By providing the reader with this rich description Pawar earmarks the work culture of the Dalit women. This may be different from the women of the 'upper' caste or the city-bred women who work in offices, nonetheless, the tasks that these women carry out is equivalent to any other job that requires a level of practice and experience, and also helps them earn money. These women actively support their family economically. The sections of the society that lives in a 'hand to mouth' position, their lives are spent in daily labor to collect family members. Labour is a characteristic of Dalits' life and is identified with their vocational jobs. Despite the upper castes' looking down upon their work and life, it cannot be denied that this is their very culture. The description brings forth another significant aspect; it provides an information about how these people came to be settled in this area which is isolated because of being surrounded with hills and thereby making any sort of travel difficult, creating impediments to their routine jobs.

In to be recording their history which has remained absent in the any of the 'historical' records. History and culture are intertwined as the former is believed to be the carrier of the latter. Here Pawar's narrative accounts the work ethos and the historiography of her community. The other important reference about the community living and exploitation of the women are seen in their food preparations at home. It is very evident from the memoir that separate food preparations were done for men and women and particularly the daughter-in-law is exploited up to maximum level.

When the menfolk went out and women and girls remained at home, they dined at kata. A small quantity poured in water and cooked as a soup, with chili powder, salt and a piece of mango or maul. This was called sugar! This sugar used to be the regular diet for daughters-in-law. Women ate their rice with the water dish. to sing:" (The Weave of My Life,152).

The transformation of religious activities also took place after Dr.B.Ambedkar's Maha Nirwan .It was unanimously decided by the villagers to discard all Gods and Goddesses and replace them by Dr. Ambedkar's photo and Lord Buddha's photo. As Urmila narrates,We put all of them in a basket.In fact, the silver and the brass would have fetched a tidy amount if we had sold the stuff. However, we have firmly resolved to discard the gods with all the accompanying paraphernalia. Therefore, we went to the river with the other people, the

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young children in a row. On the way, people chanted the same traditional invocation but with a completely different set of words. (The Weave of My Life, 184).

The conversion was the main activity in those days in the days of Buddha and Ambedkar revolution of change in religious faith. After conversion to Buddhism and keeping a portrait of Dr. Ambedkar on the wall, the signs of change were visible even in the rituals of marriage and other religious activities. Pawar also gives an account of the celebration of festivals by her community. Sometimes the festivals are the same for all the castes, but they may be celebrated on different days and also in a different manner, in a community's own chosen way. In enumerating upon the festivals as enjoyed by the people she says:

In our was customary to celebrate Tersa Shimga. On the hill beyond the river of our village, there was a huge rock known as Chandaki Devi's Rock...There they would put turmeric and kumkum on the covered rock, worship it, break a coconut, and then set it on fire...they would pray...this would be followed with obscene curses and shouts....(The Weave of My Life, 172).

This sketch of the celebration of festival and life serves as a response to the critique that Dalit literature is all about pain and suffering. The whole idea of pain-pathos as the sole constituent of Dalit autobiographies is subverted here. It instead provides a view that along with the suffering, there are also moments of joy. Pawar accounts that they have their own way of celebrating the festivals that includes a different customary ritual to carry out the festival related processions.

This comes across as an interventionist voice that asserts itself, and refuses to be subsumed within the meta-narrative. If they are prohibited from participating into the ritual of celebration it does not signify their bareness of cultural ethos. There are no records to show such procession of the people of Pawar's caste and the other related castes that indulge in during the festive time.

By finding a way into Pawar's literary or socio historical account it has also found an access to the reader allowing them to rethink about the Dalit community and culture. At the same time Pawar also anecdotes how the casteist social structure has framed the mindsets of

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the Dalits that the latter are made to believe and conform to certain practices, which though then becomes a part of their culture too. It has been substantiated with two examples; the festival of Holy for which the Mahar boys carry the heavy woods and gather it for the ritual of burning it to initiate the festival, they are restricted to participate in the following practice of bearing the palanquin.

After the physical work is done, the society dismisses their presence, nonetheless the Mahars do not object to the task of carrying logs. Secondly, the next morning of the festival the Mahar women would go to the 'upper' caste houses to 'beg for the festive food'. In the given circumstances, the social construct has shaped their consciousness in a way that the dismissal and begging are accepted by them without any contestation. This in turn becomes a part of their life and practice and thereby contributing to their cultural capitalism.

Harishchandra, Urmila Pawar's husband also got the bad experience of caste differences when he left his job at Ratnagiri and joined the office of District of Superintendent. Harishchandra had understood the strong caste barriers prevailing even in upper castes also. Even the educated people treated him like an untouchable. This horrible experienced had changed his mind and decided to go for a job in the city He has reached to the conclusion very strongly for the discrimination due to low caste treatment and decided not to do job in the village. He remembers the call given by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to youngsters that they should go to the city and forget the caste barrier.

Thus in these Memoirs we see a graphic description by Urmila Pawar of three generations of Dalit women who struggled to overcome the burden of their caste. The Dalits belong to the lowest strata and are prohibited from performing respectful tasks. On the contrary they are forcefully made to do menial jobs and unsanitary duties. Due to this cyclical path of them being considered racially inferior and polluted by nature and poverty they could never overcome these barriers and progress and were therefore forced to live as isolated communities on the outskirts.

Still after so many years of Independence and so much work done by the Women Liberation Movement activists, the situation for women in India has not changed

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much. In these Memoirs, Pawar brings out the struggle for discovering her selfhood and identity of being an independent woman and a respectable human being.

The writer gives a detailed account of their caste and community provide a narrative of the culture of Dalit world. Dalit literature is contested to be 'Literature of Revolt' that intends to break down the Brahminic hegemony over the realm of literary creation. This 'revolt' is also an attempt to claim their identity via the power of rhetoric. In the process of defying the age old subjugation, they assert themselves and their lives, followed with an attempt to open up their world to the readers. The potential reader is given a window to the culture of the Dalits. Commenting upon the unique genre of Dalit women autobiographies Sharmila Rege elucidates that it washed out the 'I', an outcome of bourgeois individualism and displaced it with the collectivists of the Dalit community....

(Sharmila rege, 11).

Therefore the form of Dalit women life narratives that presents a collective consciousness of a community then by definition becomes a cultural account of their respective communities.

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WOMEN WRITERS IN INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE

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Abstract

Fiction by women writers constitutes a major segment of the contemporary Indian writing in English. They focus on women's issues and women from all strata of society find the place in this fiction. Since times an immemorial woman has been given an inferior position in society. She is conditioned by traditions, conventions but women in the present socio-cultural set up feel deeply frustrated by their restricted and regimented lives. Thus we find women who are traditional in their way of living but modern in their outlook and strive to retain their individuality in the writings of women writers like Kamala Markandeya, Nayantara Sahgal, Ruthpravar Jhabvala, Shashi Deshpande, Rama Mehta etc.

Keywords: Women's issues, tradition, convention, socio-cultural set-up, regimented, individuality.

INTRODUCTION

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Indian writing in English refers to the Literature written by Indians who use English as a creative medium of expression. It is a special genre enriched by many internationally recognized literary personalities like Tagore, R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Markandeya, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Salman Rushdie etc. Fiction is the most characteristic, powerful form of literary expression today has acquired a distinct position in the Indian English writing. As a significant literary form, the novel is the latest and the most dominant one. It is the readiest and the most acceptable way of embodying experiences and ideas in the context of our times.

Indian Women Writers

Fiction by women writers constitutes a major segment of the contemporary Indian writing in English. Fiction especially novel enabled women writers as well as women readers to create a world of their own. The women novelists focus on women's issues. The authentic portrayal of the conflicts and trauma in all their nuances, ambiguities and contradictions could be achieved only by women writers. The writing of women writers in the first phase is dominated by romanticism, sentimentalism, and didacticism. Lack of education, stifling conventions, social taboos denied respect, recognition, and justice to women. Toru Dutt the precursor of women's writing in English wrote Bianca with the central theme of Bianca's journey from childhood to romantic love. Raja Laxmi Devi's The Hindu Wife, Krupabhai's Kamala – A story of Hindu Life, Cornelia Sorabji's Love and Life, Between the Twilights, are the expressions of sufferings of women caused by strict religious taboos.

Kamala Markandaya is one the foremost Indian Women Novelists. She tries to achieve a texture of sociological realism and in it, we can trace the pattern of women's roles in the changing matrix of society. She has ten novels to her credit where she explores life in India in the context of the impact of modernity on the basically traditional Indian society and the cultural upheaval. She fights against oppression and domination. She claims "to be on the side of the human and life against machinery, against exploitation of the weak, against war and violence"¹. A fine feminine sensibility pervades her fictional world.

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We find the emergence of women of substance in Ruthprawa Jhabvala's novels. She wrote eight novels and published a collection of short stories. She is often compared to Jane Austen and is well aware of the position of women in an Indian family. Her novels portray the change that is brought in her attitude in the changing cultural context. Nayantara Sahgal has established a reputation both as a journalist and as a novelist. She is described as "one of our best socio-political novelist today"². She believes that today's woman suffers because she has been caught between tradition and modernity. Her women characters seek fulfillment and self-expression within marriage, but if it is not possible they step out of the bond to live as free individuals. Commenting on her novel Meena Sirwadkar says "The Central pre-occupation of Nayantara Sahgal's novels is the suffering caused to women in the prison house of loveless marriage and her suffering when she makes a breakaway"³.

Inside the Haveli by Rama Mehta is another novel which focuses on gender and woman's question. The novel is truly a woman's novel told from the woman's point of view and won the Sahitya Academy Award. Geeta, the protagonist is a Bombay based western educated Hindu girl who after her marriage comes to live in a Haveli in Udaipur and is expected to conform to its traditions. Gradually she grows away from the westernized attraction acquired from her education and learns to appreciate the dignity, solemnity of indigenous traditions. Anita Desai breaks a new ground in the world of Indian English fiction by shifting emphasis from the external to the internal world. Her novels delineate the inner lives of hypersensitive women who are in the eternal quest for meaningful life. She states that all her writing is "an effort to discover, to underline and convey the true significance of life"⁴.

Shashi Deshpande is another significant writer whose novels are concerned with the woman's quest, an exploration into the female psyche and an understanding of the mysteries of life. The theme of woman's quest for life has continued in all her works like Roots and Shadows, The Dark Holds no Terror, That Long Silence. She deals with the educated woman's emotional upheavals who are caught between the tradition and modernity. Among woman writers, the best seller in nineties is the Bombay

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based journalist Shobha De. Her treatment of new themes, especially about high-class Indian society and neo-rich women shot her to fame.

Conclusion

Thus women writers have distinguished themselves for their boldness in presenting the status of women in India society and for depicting man-woman relationship in fictional form. The prominent women writers are a legion and that include Namita Gokhale, Geeta Mehta, Sagarika Ghosh, Anita Kumar, Meersyal, Meena Alexander, Manju Kapoor, and others. It is through these writers that we are able to get a deeper insight into the female psyche. No longer is woman portrayed as a mere fool in the hands of her male partner. She is no more a wooden creature, subject to suppression and male domination. We have in these writings women in flesh and blood, with a distinct mind of their own.

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FROM BAITHAK TO BOLLYWOOD TO CHAUPAL: FILMS AS A SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION TOOL FOR EQUITABLE PARENTHOOD

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Abstract:

This paper forays into the perceptual contradiction prevalent in India regarding parenthood; a factor which accounts for and complements a family. It touches upon the stark difference of attitudes towards a married and an unmarried parent, especially an unwed mother. Despite the legal provisions and support for such mothers, the general approach towards them is not at all in tandem with our social evolution and progressive mind-sets. Notably, when pitted against the real scenario, the power of progress weakens when it comes to that progress is seen very unevenly distributed; its intra-societal and inter-societal implications vary. This article explores how brought the mainstream cinema in India can contribute to highlighting the plight of such mothers, sensitize the society and to espouse their cause. It endeavors to plot a progressive representational journey of unwed mothers in selected Hindi films to reflect upon the concurrent social evolution of India and thereby establish them as an impactful tool for social and behavioral change for destigmatizing the unwed motherhood. The cinematic projection of reality is proposed to be a potential space to negotiate between the different aspects of progress wherein somewhere along the way, an issue which is discussed in hushed tones in Baithak (private sitting room) is brought out in the Chaupal (open public space) through the interface called cinema.

Keywords: unwed mothers, social reality, cinematic reality, mobilization, evolution

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The April 2015 judgment by the Supreme Court of India acknowledging and recognizing an unwed mother as the sole guardian of her child was lauded immensely and termed 'landmark', 'path-breaking', 'watershed moment', 'progressive' verdict on 'gender equality'. The aftermath of the verdict has seen many such 'well-educated, gainfully employed and financially secure' single mothers, like the one, in this case, is referred to, breathe a sigh of relief. In fact, for those who want to be unwed, single mothers by choice, the verdict makes it a lot easier. There have been many stories like 'I'm a single mother and proud of it' (Stuti Agarwal). And that's progressive, indeed. It's a testimony to our evolved thinking, liberal attitudes and modern approach towards the problems of human existence. We live in an age where the conventional modes of role-playing is going through a drastically fast-paced change and the old confined societies with equally confined idea of a 'family' are breaking up as, what Terry Eagleton calls in Marxian terms, "productive forces expand beyond its frontiers" to keep pace with the global progress (6). In the new millennium, the idea of a 'family' is not necessarily a 'father-mother-children' unit; it can be a household consisting of single parenthood or non-heterosexual parenthood. Therefore, when the heteronormative codes of society are no longer strictly adhered to, the said verdict is a step forward in the right direction which indicates equality, empowerment, and dignity to an otherwise, commonly stigmatized person: an unwed mother.

However, when it comes to the purview of this progressive judgment, it fails to be holistic and falls short of covering the large scope that media and people, in general, imagined being covered. First, it addresses the concern of a particular segment of unwed mothers who are either financially well-equipped or upwardly mobile and thereby, independent and assertive. Secondly, moreover, it still limits the choice of a single mother by –choice as it leaves scope for the father to intervene at any given time. Third, it still underpins the normative framework of society when it retains that disgraceful term 'illegitimate' for the child. It leaves the underprivileged, socially backward and otherly marginalized section. Fourth, legal provisions can bring justice only when it is fought for, they can't ensure such mothers the respectable status which our feudalistic thinking and dogmas of faith have deprived them of.

The online page of The Hindu says regarding the verdict that "with this judgment, the Supreme Court has given its stamp of approval to a woman's status as an unwed mother of a child". The question is, does legal approval ensure social approval too? And that is something

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even a well-established unwed mother and her children need to guard themselves for. In October 2017, Masaba Gupta warded off the trolls who abused her for merely supporting the Supreme Court ban on firecrackers. When it comes to the latter, less or unprivileged mothers, Gayatri Spivak's essay "Can the Subalterns Speak" comes to mind. Published reports, news, and researches from Kerala, Nagaland, and Nagpur, Bangalore, Vishakhapatnam, Jharkhand validate their society induced subjugation, degradation, censorship, exploitation, deprivation, and silencing. The fate of many certainly goes unreported. Most of them don't even have any idea about not being culprits but actual victims who can seek justice against the perpetrators of violence on them. "We thus observe an obvious contradiction between the legal framework and its social acceptance. Media discourses reflect this tension." (Fritzi-Marie Titzmann)

So, all in all, with or without the legal support, these mothers experience a continuous psychological and emotional violence due to social ostracization in varying degrees, in different manners; depending on and corresponding to the diversity of their socio-economic background and the nature of support system.

So the next question that arises is: how can the mindsets change so that our societies are more all-encompassing and supportive of the unwed mothers and facilitate justice and a respectable life for them? The answer may lie in naming the governmental/non-governmental agencies, social/political activists, and media in all its forms-social media platforms and films, as facilitators of a more positive and inclusive understanding regarding the unwed mothers. This article explores how films are the most effective catalysts to modify the social equation, endeavors to plot a progressive representational journey of unwed mothers in selected Hindi films to reflect upon the concurrent social evolution of India. It projects cinematic reality to be capable of situating this issue at a distinctive vantage point to mobilize the society.

Films in India, as anywhere, have been shaped by their contemporary times and have shaped the codes of social behavior and cultural canons in turn. Bollywood has produced a number of movies which take on social issues, challenge the pressing status quo and projected progressive futuristic visions as well. How the 'RDB effect' has been working its way in multifarious ways since the release of the film in 2006, is a very small example of the power of cinema in leading public activism, community mobilization and impacting the whole social, political machinery. Restricted to the limited scope of the present article, the focus rests on the portrayal of the unwed mothers in Indian cinema.

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The reality of unwed mothers has always been a complex factor for our society to deal with and adjust with. However, Indian filmmakers till recent past have very subtly tried to include and make such characters the protagonists in their films which were received very well by the audience. Dhool Ka Phool (1959), Dharamputra (1961), Aradhana (1969), Andaz (1971), Julie (1975), Trishul (1978), Devta (1978), Bhavna (1984), Kya Kehna (2000), Paa (2009) have the predicament of an unwed mother as the triggering point to unfold the story further. Yash Chopra's Dhool Ka Phool: "made some telling observations about pre-marital sex, unwed mothers and caste-ridden society" (Deepak Mahaan). It proved to be a revolutionary initiative in the direction of a socially progressive attitude which championed the acceptance, empathy and respectable space or rehabilitation for the unmarried mother, Meena who is deserted by her lover, Mahesh who marries another woman and spurns both Meena and the child. Banished from her uncle's house, she is supported by their poor maidservant, Gangu Tai. The censuring social environment compels Meena, with all the crippling emotional trauma weighing heavily on her psyche, abandon the child in a forest.

With this profound reality kept a secret, she gets a job, marries her boss and ends up living a normal life. It's the co-incidental twists in the story which make Mahesh lose his son, know Meena's son's reality and be ready to accept him in his life, that too upon being insisted by his genuinely liberal wife. In his next, Dharamputra, a Muslim girl, Husn becomes a deserted-by-lover unwed mother whose child is adopted by her father's Hindu friend. The father, once disappeared, never shows up, Husn marries another man. The conflict revolves around the gap between mother and son borne out of indifference of the son due to distance and different religious affiliations between them. Both Aradhana and Andaz, depict the strenuous life journeys of two woman, Vandana, and Sheetal respectively, who are rendered vulnerable unwed mothers by virtue of their secret weddings and the accidental demise of their partners. Vandana has to give her child for adoption albeit being with her as his nanny.

The son and the society ultimately recognize her sacrifices and applaud her perseverance. Sheetal takes up a job as a teacher and finally settles down with a man who is also a single parent, to which the efforts of both the kids contribute much. Trishul defines the tenacious self-efficacy of a displaced-by-compulsion unwed mother, Shanti and the anguish of her child, Vijay who vows to avenge her miserable life and death. He successfully machinates to bring down the father's business, his family and after making him confess, reconciles with

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him and his children. In Devta, Mary becomes an unwed mother after her womanizer boyfriend washes her hands off his responsibilities towards her and is unwittingly killed by her father. She, along with her daughter, lives a modest life with Dr. Shambhunath and his wife while his father is in jail. This movie "was the last flicker of the glorious '70s when Hindi cinema, diverse and meaningful, was probably at its best" (Vijay Lokadpally). Bhavna represents the compelling struggles of a mother, Bhavna whose temple wedding deprives her of a legal wife's position and whose partner has deserted her to be lawfully wedded to another woman. The dream for a decent life for her son despite her financially deprived condition lands her in prostitution.

She doesn't let her really be known to her son for fear of the repercussions of the truth on their relationship and to save him from being twice marginalized. The father appears suddenly and claims his guardianship. Stuck in a catch 22 situation; the choice of parting with all the savings or revealing her son's whereabouts, Bhavna fatally hits him and faces a jail term. Finally, with the forced intervention of her friend, she reunites with an overwhelmed son. In Julie, the bold treatment of the ramifications of an inter-religious relationship involving out-of-the-wedding pregnancy put the age-old Christian laws open to scrutiny. Julie, the Anglo-Indian protagonist gets pregnant with her Hindu friend's brother, Shashi who unaware of it, leaves to study in college. Julie's mother sends her away to her aunt where she gives birth to a boy, has to leave him in an orphanage, come back and fend for her family after her alcoholic father's death. Although after knowing the truth, Shashi wants to marry her their mothers ensure otherwise. However, with the support of her friend and mediation of Shashi's father, she reunites with him and their son.

Kya Kehna came after the gap of around fifteen years to heed the growing concerns of the stigmatized existence of an unwed mother, Priya who gets lured and cheated by a playboy. She goes against all odds to keep the child. Supported by her friend, Ajay and eventually her family too, she reconciles with the turn her life has taken. However, when the father of the boy offers to marry her, she declines and accepts Ajay's proposal. In 2005, Salaam Namaste charted the journey of two modern Indians, Nick, and Ambar who decide to be live-in partners in Australia but break up after Ambar gets pregnant and refuses to abort the child. The compulsion to share the apartment even after that enables Nick to deal with his escapism and be committed to his responsibilities towards parenthood. After this movie, the latest to

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show an unwed mother was Paa in 2009 where Vidya, a gynecologist breaks up by choice with her ambitious boyfriend, Amol after he asks her to abort the child. She goes on with the pregnancy and gives birth to a boy, Auro who suffers from a rare genetic condition called progeria. Although the movie presents Auro as the protagonist, Vidya's resilience and courage in managing the unique predicament of her life makes her the stereotype of today's independent and strong unwed single mothers. However, the father is again shown to be remorseful ultimately and with the help of Auro's efforts, reconciles with a hesitant Vidya.

After Paa, no movie, touching upon the vagaries of a single mother's life and challenges, diversified as they may be, has hit the screens. Even if a single mother is portrayed, as in Nil Batte Sannata, the mother is not pronouncedly unwed. It seems the taboo-ness of the issue is disproportionate with the openness of the contemporary decentralized lifestyle. And as we progress and see the achieved progress spilled over in the form of growing urbanization; skyscrapers, massive industries, increasing fetishes for glory and possessions, advanced military powers, rising social mobility, rehabilitation drives and so on, the side effects go unnoticed or unworthy of attention. Women in India are still fighting the unequal, discriminatory treatment meted to them. Add to it the other glaring issues which keep a great number of them marginalized like illiteracy, economic reliance on others, inaccessibility to the legal and social support systems and an orthodox community, and their vulnerability multiplies manifolds.

If we make a chart of our 'progressive society', our social progress does not seem to match our economic growth, especially since the last two decades in the context of such border lined citizens of our country who have constitutional right to equity, equality, and justice, notwithstanding their class, caste, ethnicity, religion or so. There is a wide gap between the legal and social acceptance which needs to be filled to be called progressive in the real sense.

However, the diverse cinematic treatment of the issue of unwed mothers makes the role of films as intermediary more pertinent a point to ponder. All of the movies listed here were super-hit/hit at the box office. What power did they have to draw people to theatres to take in an experience which they could not digest in reality? What made them so convincing as to 'suspend their disbelief' for how the story ended on a positive note.

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The answer lies in films providing a space, or rather being the space which negotiates the chances of possibilities, the win-win situations. Films offer a discourse which brings us to terms by virtue of being dialectical. Of course, there can't be a single solution for the women with disparities of background, the narratives of these films act as an interface to provide an insightful solution, a comprehensive vision for a shame-free, in fact, credible life for an unwed mother and her child. And that is, one, the victim has to gather the courage to shake off the moral baggage pressed into the psyche by the community's gendered mindsets and build the resistance to survive the onslaughts.

Vijay in Trishul drops a bombshell when he calls his father 'illegitimate', whereas Priya in Kya Kehna stands up on the stage in her college and exhortingly questions the double standards of our society for a married pregnant woman and an unmarried one. Two, there has to be a support system within or/ and without family to accept and enable the mother to accept the situation which needs to be taken head-on. While Meena gets support and shelter from Gangu Tai, Husn finds it in her own and her Hindu uncle's family, Julie, in her aunt, Bhavana, in her friend, Shanti, in her fellow workers, Mary, in a sympathetic elderly couple, Priya, in her family and friend and Vidya, in her mother and colleagues. Three, economic independence has to be acquired, either by oneself or through some outside support. All of the unwed mothers in these movies make efforts to be economically self-reliant and do not intend to be a liability to anybody. Fourth, the father of the child should be brought around to realize his unscrupulousness and is willing to share the responsibility. This is the point which apparently borders on being parochial and validating patriarchy. And it does, to an extent. Notwithstanding, this reflects our inherent idea of a traditional family and the cinematic efforts at reconciliation are seemingly factored in to appease that collective wishful thinking. Still, such efforts leave out the fragment of fathers who are completely indifferent, disinterested or apprehensive.

A qualitative research study, Investigation on the Impact of Gender Representation in Indian Films in 2016, funded by the Oak Foundation and Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, establishes that "Indian cinema is in a unique position to help bring about cultural change in the nation" as the viewers consider cinema potential enough to influence people's behavior. The same study has the tagline, "If she can see it, she can be it". It is true that any activity or event which happens outside the periphery of age-old, traditionally defined social norms and

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relationship models is naturally taken as a destabilizing factor and a challenge to the dominant ideological perspective. Notably, all these movies prove to be a site of ideological contestation within the contemporary social framework and bargained with the prevalent social consciousness to accord an even extra-sensitive treatment to this vulnerable section of society. According to Oscar Wilde, "Life imitates art far more than art imitates life...And it has always been so. A great artist invents a type, and Life tries to copy it, to reproduce it in a popular form."

Till recently that is what has been witnessed in the context of movies like Kya Kehana; it was credited with addressing a 'bold theme', giving voice to many such guilt-ridden unwed mothers and their tradition-bound hesitant families. It is also true that most, the film's appeal and impact do not outreach its target population who identify with their social, financial and educational status. Nevertheless, it opens new vistas of hope: films, with a sympathetic treatment of the trial-ridden life of unwed mothers, will be the best bet for translating the 'unusual', 'disgraceful', 'doomed' and 'social pariah like' bordered existence into a quite usual, graceful, providential, a natural part of mainstream society.

The power of cinema in effecting a far-reaching and sustainable change of human behavioral patterns cannot be underestimated. Films function as the meta-narratives which can identify the legal caveats, tap the social disparities and fill the gaps in the institutionalized narrative of our society. They can also enable the victims to, what Joseph Kupfer terms as, "create narratives for themselves and their family that will enable them to survive, if not thrive" and thereby actually be the narratives of emancipation. Films can maneuver to shape their narrative in such a realistic and humanistic manner that the volatile undercurrents of a legal provision are identified and tackled in a convincing manner. Such as in the case of the April '15 judgment, the stigma of an unwed motherhood attached with the word 'illegitimate' has been retained. Most importantly, the scope for an absent and opportunist father to contest the mother's sole guardianship at any time is left open and thereby leaves the mother with an ever impending danger of an uncalled for and unsettling situation. Films, by depicting such loopholes as part of their narrative, can draw the attention of the legislative, legal and social authorities and reverse the blame game. Moreover, for a poor and ignorant unwed mother, the authentic voice of cinematic interpretations of their whole context may shake the deeply rooted dogmas of the relevant community and galvanize them into action to fix accountability

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and responsiveness of the father. Films are the platform where the question of how the father who begets a child outside marriage can compensate for whatever he compels the mother and child to be deprived of; emotional, financial, familial and social security, something that would have been their natural right if they were a 'natural' household. They can equally be a ground where the Personal Laws outweigh the constitutional laws and treat man and woman differently. Evidently, as Brecht has said, "We need a type of theatre which not only releases the feelings, insights, and impulses possible within the particular historical field of human relations in which the action takes place but employs and encourages those thoughts and feelings which help transform the field itself" (190).

Socially relevant films, through their real-life strategies, have the potential to summon the conscience of the passive observers to such parental inequity crisis and turn them into active participants and catalysts of a social drive for a more just and tolerant society. There are a few short films which have subtly depicted the crude realities of unwed mothers living in the interiors of India. They are the award-winning documentary on the excruciating reality of tribal unwed mothers of Kerala, Silent screams : a village chronicle (1996), A short film made by IIT Kharagpur students titled Armaan (2018), portraying the agony of a prostitute mother, the story of an unwed mother (Obosheshot-At Last), an Assamese short story in 2017, Peanut Butter, a short film presenting the dilemma and eventual resolution of an ultra-modern unwed mother (2017) and Maa (2018), a Tamil short film on dealing with a teenage pregnancy in a traditional Indian household.

All of these have got recognition and appreciation in the form of some or other award for their sensitive and impactful rendering of the peripheral issues. However, their scope and reach are very limited. Of course, there are Government agencies and NGOs working for the rehabilitation of the disadvantaged unwed mothers and there is no denial of their contribution in facilitating a comfortable life for the unwed mothers and their children. Mainstream cinema as the multi-layered form of visual art is still the best bet in terms of a tool for social change, because like Haifaa al-Mansoor, Saudi Arabia's first female film director said in an interview, "Art can touch people and make them open up" (Sophie Hardach).

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EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FEMINISM IN LITERATURE

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Abstract

This paper attempts to give Emergence and development of Feminism in Literature. Every day new literary theories take its birth. This paper fully focuses on the area of feminism and its growth. As a theory, it can be applied to analyze a work of art. Though women talk about the liberty and freedom, still now they are bound with certain issues. This paper elaborates the different waves of feminism and the role of writers of that particular wave. The word 'patriarchy' holds great meaning but at present, it is slowly vanishing. Feminism also has impacted Literature. In analyzing a work of art this theory is unavoidable and continues to exist for future with new terms and ideologies. From Chaucer's period to contemporary age Feminism theory is held high in the world of literature. It shows its constant progress with the arrival of new writers and their contributions.

Keywords: Patriarchy, gynocriticism, lipstick feminism, race, equality, gender, stiletto feminism, empowerment, and stereotypes.

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English Literature has its own legacy. The writers from all over the world have stepped into the world of Literature and their works still now are most valuable. Every period of Literature has its own social and political background. The term Feminism comes from the Latin word 'Femina' which means women and –'ism' is a suffix implying a belief or practice. Feminism is a belief that women also have equal rights and opportunities in the society. According to Merriam Webster's Dictionary, Feminism is a theory of the political, economic and social equality of the sexes. Feminism can also be defined as an organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interest. The term 'feminism' was first coined by Charles Fourier in 1837. Feminist Criticism is a distinctive and concerted approach to literature.

Feminist criticism was not inaugurated until late in the 1960's. Behind it, however lie two centuries of struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements and for women's social and political rights are marked by such books as Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman in 1792, John Stuart Mill's The Subjection Of Women in 1869 and the American Margaret Fuller's Woman in the Nineteenth Century in 1845. Much of feminist literary criticism is interrelated with the movement by political feminists for social, legal and cultural freedom and equality. Before the Age of Chaucer, Marie de France was the first earliest women French poet of the 12th century. She is popularly known for her 'Lais' which are short narrative lyrical poems. During the Restoration period a renowned women poet, playwright, and translator Aphra Behn broke cultural barriers and served as a role model for women writers. Following her there came many women writers during the Victorian and modern era.

The first wave of feminist criticism began in the 1830's. Women in this period are very active in fighting for their voting rights. An important precursor in feminist criticism was Virginia Woolf, who produced her masterpiece A Room of One's Own in 1929 and enormous other essays on women authors and on the cultural, economic and educational disabilities within what she called "patriarchal "society. In this period women struggle for their social, political and economic equality. Education, employment and marriage laws are the key concerns. They fight for their rights to vote and the freedom to expose their ideas. The first wave of feminism fought against chattel marriage. For example, Petruchio's abuse of Katherine in

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Taming of the Shrew. Their marriage contains severe domestic abuse. Katherine has been labeled by everyone as "shrew". Petruchio's actions and words throughout the play, along with his connecting Katherine with "tame," are unwarranted and with selfish motives.

The second wave of feminism in the 1960's to 1970's turn to gynocriticism. Gynocriticism is a term coined by Elaine Showalter in her discourse Towards a Feminist Poetics. Gynocriticism is defined as the study of women as a writer. At first, it involves the examination of female writers and their place in literary history. In Literature women, writers are not allowed to expose their talents. Prominent writers of the Victorian period include Jane Austen, George Elliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, and Bronte sisters. George Elliot wrote under her pen name Mary Ann Evans. In 1846, the sisters' poems were published in one volume as Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell. Bronte sisters had adopted pseudonyms for publication, preserving their initials as Charlotte was "Currer Bell", Emily was "Ellis Bell" and Anne was "Acton Bell". These writers lived in a society where they are supposed to maintain household duties and take care of their husbands and children.

They wrote under pen names because women were not allowed to produce any work. They lived under such social conditions. Their primary duty is to get married earlier and make their husbands happy. Jane Austen Pride and Prejudice open with "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." The patriarch of Bennet family is Mr.Bennet, a gentleman of modest income with five unmarried daughters. Mrs.Bennet is noisy, foolish women whose only goal is to see her daughters married. Victorian women wear hoop skirts and wide volume of layered gowns. They engage themselves in ball dance which in turn serves as an occasion of bride viewing. In the Victorian period, wives are meekly obedient to their husbands. A wife should never show her compliments, smiles and good nature away from her home.

The Second major aspect of Gynocriticism is the treatment of female characters by both female and male writers in Literature. While analyzing literary work men always go for a reason, rationality, competition, and subjective qualities whereas women go for feelings, emotion, intuitive, patience and determination. Literary work cannot be understood apart from its social, historical and cultural background. Sylvia Plath in her poem "Lady Lazarus" has shown her wrath towards Nazis. In the last stanza, she claims, "Out of the ash / I rise with

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my red hair / And I eat men like air".(82-84)Plath compares herself to phoenix bird which reborn out of its ashes. Plath is no longer a victim under Nazis. She plans to come back as an immortal after her death to take her revenge on men. As a woman, Plath stands for libertarian spirit. Plath attempts suicide many times in her life because she has undergone so many pains and sufferings. She proves herself as a successful writer. In the poem "Freaks" by Kamala Das, the lady could sense only the lust of men but the absence of true love. She could sense the loss of emotion and the lack of faithful love. She knows she will not able to get her love back. Her love fulfillment ends up with lust.

In the male-dominated world, she has the courage to emphasize her feminine sensibility. But Chaucer in his Canterbury Tales portrayed Wife of Bath as a lay expert in the art of love. She has been married five times and had many affairs with another man. She is one of the most famous characters in Literature. In Mahesh Dattani's Dance Like a Man, Amritlal views that man has to be strong, stout and hard in nature while women have to be docile and silent. He seriously condemns his son Jayraj who loves to dance Bharatanatyam. Amritlal associates the art of dance with prostitution and it is meant only to women. This is one of the examples of how male writers treat women in Literature.

The third wave of feminist criticism gave birth to a new term called 'Lipstick Feminism.' It begins in early 1990. Lipstick feminism works against stereotypes and breaks away from patriarchy. Lipstick feminism proposes that women can be empowered psychologically, socially and politically by wearing cosmetic makeup, sensually appealing clothes. Lipstick feminism focuses on current events, pop culture, queer, race issues, and sex. Race issues as a theme are widely seen in Wole Soyinka's "Telephone Conversation".

The conversation is between black African men and white American Landlady who has an apartment to rent. The landlady coats her lips with dark colored lipstick and she holds cigarette piper on her hand. She exposes her identity as American women through her makeup and culture.

'HOW DARK?'...I had not misheard....'ARE YOU LIGHT OR VERY DARK?' Button B.
Button A. Stench

Of the rancid breath of public hide-and-speak.

Red booth. Red pillar-box. (9-12)

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The above line reveals how terrible racism is. The landlady is very much concerned with the degree and measurement of the color of the African man. The man has been reduced to the status of a machine similar to the telephone in front of him. He is asked to choose which button he is? Understanding the depth of racism, the African man could sense the unpleasant odor in Landlady's words. He got anger and every object around him seems to turn red in color that reflects his anger over the landlady.

The man insults the lady by saying his palms are hands are completely white. His Bottom has been rubbed black due to friction and asks the lady to make sure that his identifications are true. It is very poor to reject a man because he does not share the same color of American Landlady. This poem proves how pathetic racial issues and the broken heart of African men. Maya Angelou in her autobiographical novel I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings worries that the black people are not allowed to taste vanilla ice cream and they are looked down by whites. With the arrival of Harlem, renaissance African writers gained their own identity.

Another important feature of lipstick feminism is it makes attempt to reclaim the word 'slut' which is once used to insult women. Shakespeare creates Cleopatra as seductive and beautiful queen of Egypt. After the death of her father, she marries her own brother Ptolemy. She was married to Julius Ceasar because Egypt allows polygamy. History tells Mark Antony married Cleopatra and she serves as the fourth wife. Cleopatra is too educated and high born to be called a result. So, slut-shaming exists for thousands of years. It is the most aggressive term during Shakespearean days. The controversial effort of Lipstick feminism is trying to reclaim the word 'cult' for usage of women. The idea is to make "slut" empowering, as opposed to an insult steeped in double-standards and patriarchal suppression of women's free sexual expression.

Lipstick feminism breaks away the term such as traditional, tender, meekness, nurture and it allows women to make her own way in terms of everything. Lipstick feminism is more about fashion for a modern woman who wears high heels, colors her lips with gorgeous lipsticks, walking in tiptoe and preferring to show her curves. It is something about ownership and not concerned with shame. To say in a brief manner lipstick feminism gives the opportunity to women to empower themselves by wearing short skirts and engaging themselves in pole

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dance. Some people all lipstick feminism "slut feminism" in a reference both to the desire to take the stigma out of these words and in a nod to the sexual behavior of some lipstick feminists. For a classic example of lipstick feminism, look at people like Madonna, a well-known performer who embodies "girl power" for many women.

The third wave of feminism continues with Ecofeminism. Activist, educator, and author Ynestra King went so far as to call ecofeminism as "the third wave of the feminist movement". The term ecofeminism is defined as associating an environment with women. For instance, addressing women as mother nature. Many Australian poets like A.D.Hope and Judith Wright reflected the role of nature in their poems. Rukmini Bhaya Nair's Yellow Hibiscus is a poetry collection in which she places nature at the center. Nature at its core is women. Ecofeminist theory questions or rejects previously held patriarchal paradigms and holds that the domination of women by men is intimately linked to the destruction of the environment. Poets of all ages have compared the physical beauty of women to nature. Women are associated with the qualities of beauty, charm, graceful, domestic, moral, pure and spiritual. Nature is the embodiment of all these characters that women possess. One of the major movements in conserving forest and trees is named as the Chipko Movement. critics call this Chipko Movement as "Ecofeminist Movement" because Key women leaders like Sudesha Devi, Bachni Devi, Amrita Devi, Gaura Devi, Mira Behn, and Sarala Behn have played their active role in protecting nature.

The fourth wave feminism started around 2008 to present year. It focuses on justice for women and also opposition to sexual harassment and seeking equality and justice for women. The Round House is a novel by American writer Louise Erdrich was published in 2012. This novel explores sexual violence, a problem most women and little children face in the contemporary world. I am Malala is an Autobiographical work by Malala Yousafzai is an inspirational book published in 2013, serves as an inspirational book for young teens. Malala was shot in the head for arguing equal rights for women. Fourth wave feminism has brought changes in the society. Modern women showcase her talents in every field. She has the courage to break the shackles of the patriarchal society. Almost all women are highly educated and engage themselves in reputed jobs.

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Feminist Criticism is situated after the largest struggle against patriarchy. The present feminist's works are greatly acknowledged in literature because their texts are not simply made of letters but made of their new ideas and pursuit of feminism. Their views are elevated and unique from earlier feminist and they are more concerned with modern readers. Literature will continue to flourish with enormous volumes of works by upcoming feminists.

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WOMEN IN SHAKESPEAREAN AGE AND IN MODERN ERA

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Abstract:

"If you educate a man, it will reform just one person,

If you educate a woman, it will give a renaissance to the entire family'

says-

The first Prime Minister of India Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. The above lines clearly depict how the women should have to be treated in an indispensable way for the ultimate growth of a nation. Women are the veins and types of blood of a nation to trigger new technology and content of the familial system. They must not be termed as the weaker sex and invariably subjugated in this world. In another way, it is a necessity to build the nation in much strong with the affinity of their skills. Everybody could recapitulate the struggle, forbearance, emotional outburst, sorrows, innovations, aspiration and achievements. In the Shakespearean period, women were not given par excellence to prove their masteries and skills for the public notice by the restraint of didactic principles. Later they emerged from clutches of male chauvinism and imprinted their good quality by their supremacy and creativity. The predicament was much more forcible and led to the indescribable astonishment of the world. The suppression and infusion of male member's thought paved way for the women to get insight through which they have gifted a freedom breath to the women of the modern era. Eventually, the character portrayal did not remain in the same way because it supported sometime the noble ideologies and in another time it acted as negative and counter-attack as a strategy to protest against the iron fist of masculine society. The women of modern era stepped out from patriarchy, gender variation, domestic anguish and an attempt for an identity, with the strong inclination of liberty still with a clarity of thoughts and notions. The

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study will check the paradigm shift of women and also instruct how the marching style should be in the future.

Keywords: male chauvinism, suppression, familial system, didactic principles, counter-attack, masculine society, restrain, patriarchy.

Introduction:

In the classical period, the women were persisted to remain in a circle by the male-dominated society and it has the inclination to protect the precious creation under the earth. Amazingly it was followed with strict didactic principles and was not disturbed by means of sexual harassment, domestic tug of war and hindrance of imagination. They were allowed to think individually and were not termed as the bonded slave. There were noteworthy celebrities in the Shakespearean period, such as Queen Elizabeth, Margaret Thatcher even his women characters in his popular plays are very much bold, concrete, perfect in managerial skills and the best in executing the tasks successfully. They were not the feeble creature to cry and lament like an old hunch back and crooked old lady to contrast with they were the clear evidence for their uniqueness. To recapitulate at this moment, we could sprinkle few historical and reputed characters from Shakespeare plays, Cleopatra a woman who was confident in reign and love.

That led Antony to tell,

"May the wide arch of ranged empire be-fall
Here is my place; as god's plenty "

Even in the Play "King Lear", the gentle princess Miranda admitted the Universal Philosophy, as the women are exponent in distributing the love equally to Father and Husband without bias. The ideas are having the element of purity and honest in Miranda's statement, and it was explicated when King Lear realized when his two daughters led him under the care of nature.

The study will not avoid the focus of multiple emotions and problems of the women, hence it will bring the light of best slice out of bread loaf. Whatever comes around the mind will get figured with the different attitude of women from classical to Modern Age.

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Women of Modern Society profoundly thinking beyond the kitchen and even succeeding in the venture to enter in various fields. They have made greatest footprints which will stand the test of time. We have contemporaries such as Sunitha Williams, Indhra Nue, Arundathy Roy, Kiran Bedi, Hillary Clinton, Dr.Santha and so many. If we compile the records which were done by these women, which could not be kept in one single room, it's like the massive end of the sky which was created by the almighty.

Character analysis of Women in Shakespearean Plays:

The Lady Macbeth pours an abundance of courage to her life partner when they were cunningly planned each other to kill King Duncan. Though it was a venomous thought to finish off the life of the royal emperor, the undaunted spirit of Lady Macbeth was astounded by plenty of readers. The following lines,

‘Art thou afeard to be the same in thine own act and valor

As thou are in desire?’ – Lady Macbeth (Macbeth) illustrates the spirit and skillful attitude of Lady Macbeth.

Though the legendary and classical women were not allowed to taste the essence of science and technology, they have developed the skill of foretelling and innovative skills. They acceded the philosophical ideology of world. In Antony and Cleopatra, the heroic woman, Cleopatra asserted a dialogue,

‘We have no friend

But resolution; and the briefest end’ – Cleopatra (Anthony and Cleopatra) to convey to the society that this is what the way of the world and cannot be confronted.

The lines of Rosalind in "As you like it"

‘Well, I will forget the condition of my estate, to rejoice in yours'

Which clearly preaches the good qualities to be developed from infancy state as the human being should find pleasure in others prosperity instead of getting jealous of others by comparing the menial situation of once own. Collective analysis of the problems faced by Women:

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It is actually an indispensable rhetoric topic to pile up the issues which were faced by women in this world. In the primitive period, they toiled physically and mentally with the man-made rules and notions which they treated as obsessive one to digest until the last breath. To the wide purview, it was an accepted truth that they were not allowed to get enlightenment through education, obstructed further to expose their opinion, given less bothering by considering as a machine to result with many children. But the renaissance period raised many questions in the minds of Masculine Society. They started accepting the legible ideas to the progress of the familial system. But it took a decade to realize their mistake and extend their warm welcome to the feminine society.

Some of the women were compelled to read religious books than the modern technology. They were instructed that it was a sin to get diversion than getting transfixed with Gospel books. When Puritanism (1) was so high, women were not allowed to indulge in any entertainment. They were strictly banned from viewing Theatre performances and boxing tournaments. Some of them who led their life with servitude were not paid back properly and treated mercilessly.

Even in the Modern period women were warned and insisted to remain silent when few masculine members married a lot of women (Polygamy System (2)). During the Second World War in the dictator dynasty of Germany and Russia, women were made forcibly to accept the pregnancy by Genetic and Biological Science.

Women of the medieval period started developing the critical skill in what are all the things they lost their desires, dreams, and privileges. They formed a club and started combating with their write-up and finally came to the public arena and fought with their slogans and voices. Their incessant struggle smarted(3) the fences of male members and evolved like a tree as a seed.

Just like a volcano when it is compressed much, at one point of time would reluctant to outburst the women will also aspire to outburst the pent-up feelings. It was a queer element in a modern period just as the women were stabbed and beheaded for evolving with new theories. So many women writers kindled the confidence level women in their literary

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contributions such as Virginia Woolf, Ellen J. Barrier, Marguerite Duras, Kamala Suriayya Das, Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair and so on.

The stream of a conscious and deserted situation:

Women who lived in the 19th century were given much torment both physically and mentally and it led to absolute medication and council. Disappointments and decisiveness slowly tested their credibility with the familial system. Some of the husbands divorced for petty issues and some others deserted the women carelessly. This was strongly condemned by few feministic writers still not all the writer achieved to protest against this major flaw of men. The write-up of that period clearly emphasized how the women should be treated in a prestigious manner.

"Just as the men demand prestige

Yes there is an equivalent right for women to demand when it has been neglected"

The famous writer Virginia Woolf led the rest of her life in the gloomy dark room with much pathos, lost all her energy and confidence of life and her writings clearly exposed how many levels of psychological confrontation she obtained due to the deceiving nature of her Husband. Her only pleasure element was when she ruminated her childhood days with the abundance of care given by father. So she is not entirely blaming the male society. At the same time, she would like to put forth to the readers that one among the male members consecutively gave great catastrophe of her life. The life of the simple novelist ended with a stream of the conscious estate.

The perspective of Modern Writer;

The Modern Writers around the world were blessed with insight and deep knowledge over the life. They were not ready no longer that they realized that the silence will not work to preoccupy the privilege. They did the great combat not in a single but like a massive boat with plenty of sailors. They formed Women Liberation Society and through all channels (4) they knocked the door of obstruction till it receives reciprocation. Education has chiseled the mind of all and they accepted the ultimate freedom to be given to the women society.

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Kamala Das:

Kamala das the India Writer examined the common issues and the basic necessities that every woman will demand from the wide universe. She was harassed in her childhood days and she strictly gave a voice of protestation against such incorrigible behavior of few male members.

In one write up she elucidates the male chauvinism by,

"This has always been
Someone else's world not mine
My man and my sons forming the axis
While I, wife and mother
Climbed the glass panes of their eyes"

She emphasized that if the girl should have the capability to lead the life in an alone manner when the circumstance persists her to do. Further, she pointed out that the life will not be so pollutant and corruptive when a woman leads her life without the affinity and help of male member. As far as Kamala das concern, she said women can build a fence with didactic values and it will give meaning till the end of her life.

Arundhati Roy:

Another Indian writer Arundhati Roy openly stated that sexism is more dangerous than racism and it must be curbed from earlier stages of life. She writes up clearly examines how the people of olden days got naïve perception what sort of the paradigm shift that the new generation has developed for the conducive scenario of the modern world. She says" women care others than so rude on others" by her typical lines

"When you hurt people, they begin to love you less.
That's what careless words do
They make people love little less". – (God of Small Things)

Anitha Nair:

Another Indian writer also abiding by the same principles of Kamala dos by chiseling the equality and respect which can be given to women. According to her, the gender variation is a sin. Her writings are having a picturesque technique to reflect the crimes done to women society like a panorama view of a digital camera. She says.

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"I don't think there is a need for the categorization 'women writing'.

I think in some sense the writers lost their gender when they
Walk into the world of words. I believe that writers ought to be
Able to slip under the skin of both men and women. Only then will,
The writing and the characters have credibility and strength"

Malala:

In her prime young age, she was made to experience a lot of oppression and subjugations due to the conservative thoughts. Women in her land were denied for education, employability, freedom of thought. She evolved courageously after the gunshot by fanatic people. Later she made all to realize the importance of women in the development of any country. She contributed several books for the liberty of women and giving the lecture in national conferences about the rights of women.

Conclusion:

"A strong woman builds her own world. She is one who is wise enough to know,
that it will attract the man. She will gladly share it with." – says

— Ellen J. Barrier, (How to Trust God When All Other Resources Have Failed)

The tireless spirit to win will definitely gain much support and confidence to anyone. Each Woman of a modern trend remains as multifarious personality. They are getting a technological and scientific platform to prove their talents. There is no question of suppression and limitation with primitive rules in their life. They must work hard to enter into new theories. At the same time should not deviate from moral values. Sometimes too much of liberty will seduce the mind to test corruptive methods. Just like filter separates the impurities and good water, the women should understand the concept of leading the life in a good way until the last breath.

The study concludes that each man is endeavored to care and to respect the women in their own family and then automatically the universe will change its attitude towards women and will give way for feministic innovation to the platform of the world.

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Index:

1. Puritanism (1) – it remained in the period of the Jacobean period (Pre Elizabethan period) and strictly compelled the people to avoid entertainment than religious thought.
2. Polygamy System (2) – it is an act of male chauvinistic society that an individual marrying many women.
3. Smarted (3) - stung or clears entirely the naive belief
4. All channels (4) – women struggled hard for their liberty through various channels like mass media and social network.

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FEMINIST NOVELISTS IN INDIAN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

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Abstract

A Feministic study is a comprehensive literacy study of Indian fiction in English, produced by Indian women writers. Indian society reflected in the literature of this age is passing through a distinct period change. Not anything seems to carry for a long time. Feminism means the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes both in the family as well as in society. It challenges patriarchal perception in society. Feminism is over and over again described as a struggle against all form of patriarchal sexist oppression. It has also intended to support the most powerful movement aims at providing a complete awareness of a women's role in the modern complex world, to explore and to find a new social, political, legal, economic, personal and professional opportunities for women that are equal to those for men. Feminist women writers have created a literature of their own, placing women in these contexts of the changing social scenario.

Keywords: Feminism, Feministic Perspective, Indian English fictions, Women in Society, Social Injustice, Artistic sensibility, cultural vitality.

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Feminism is an attempt to get awareness of women's oppression and exploitation in society. Present – day feminism is a struggle for the achievement of women's equality, dignity and freedom of choice. It efficiently counters the systematic devaluation of women that are there under patriarchy to control women's lives within and outside their homes. Feminism asserts the value of a woman as a woman. It demands and fights for a justice and equitable society where there is no discrimination based on sex. Thus the concept of feminism studies the structural inequality of women caused by systematic social injustice.

Things are becoming disorganized; tradition neglects to hold individuality in check. For long, women felt that they deserve a better deal at the hands of men. There is three distinct periods of changes in woman's writing –male supremacy, protest, and displacement. Post - Independence Indian English fiction continues to have the momentum which it had during the Gandhian era. In the post-independence period, a new awakening emerged among the women writers. The remarkable development occurred with the convergence of women novelist have given a new dimension to Indian English fiction. The foremost figures among them are Kamala Markandaya, Nayanthara Sehgal, Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, and Ruth Praver Jhabvala. These women fictionist have an awareness which was obtained because of their acquaintanceship with the life of the East as well as from the west. Their high education serving as an ideological power and intellectual stands has sharpened their close observation of life and has imparted a psychological deepness of their writings gave rise to the emergence of feminism, attempted to pinpoint the deep-rooted cause of oppression of women and try to remove them.

As a result of these women novelist, have been able to comprise of facts and fictions are based on current events and social issues bring interesting parsonage who successfully reveal the oppression imposed on women in society. They exposed the fact that women fictionist give themselves overindulgence in exploring the feminine awareness of the women characters, their gradual development towards an awakened moral sense. However, the end leads to enriching their quest for inner self in a male-dominated society. In their novels, women are portrayed as a cultural backbone of a family due to their capacity of providing physical, emotional and cultural vitality to their respective family.

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They attempted to bring a change in society in which women are accepted as equal in all respect to men in sharing of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities which almost all the women have shown greater interest in scrutinizing and depicting women characters than male novelist do, an important advantage of the feminine sensibility is the projection of Indian women from all segments of Indian society, a portrayal which is free from male action of distortion and prejudice. The artistic sensibility of Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayanthara Sehgal, Anita Desai, and Shashi Deshpande have understood every problem and predicaments that have come in the way of the progress of women in thorough manner annealed with their feminine sensibility. It controls and shapes their original ideas into creativities, aspirations and get filtered through their themes, characters, attitude and general tenor. However feminist in the Indian context has with no doubts reached its highest point with the effort of above mentioned Indians. Women novelist, come forward to voice their feminist approach, whose protagonists free themselves from the traditional roles of daughter, sisters, wife, and mother and come out as an individual in their own right and uniqueness towards their needs and dreams. About the works of Indian women writers in English, Rashmi Bajaj makes the following statement:

"We have here increased social consciousness, a strong awareness of identity as the woman, Championing of women's cause, Problems of alienation and identity crisis, a daring portrayal of sex and emphasis on the study of personal relationship".

Feminism is a social movement against the patriarchal control of women, their subordination in family, religion, society, and politics. In general feminism is a phenomenon of social change aimed at liberating women from 'patriarchy', 'masculinity', 'subaltern' and others to achieve women's role in society with such a quality warrants enabling them to assert their right as "free women", this attempts to liberate women from the shackles and grip of male-dominated society, led to rethinking on gender relation reflected in literature and in life. Linda Gordon a notable historian defines feminism as "an analysis of woman's subordination for the purpose of figuring out how to change it". Feminism in many times identified as the movement which began in the late nineties, but the history of the struggles for women's to equality, even though sporadic, is older than that. Feminism in India could be followed to the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and the Atmiya

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Sabha he began in the year 1914. The liberation of Indian women was a secondary product of Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement. The Brahma Samaj led the movement of liberation. In Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement, women were encouraged to move forward and to be involved in the life of the nation. Feminism aims at compulsory education for women and improved employment. With the spread of education, there was a slow progress erode of faith in traditional customs and values but it had taken some time for the modern idea and western culture to fill the vacuum so far created. The deep inlet between the Indian and western culture created a period of transitional society which was neither fully modern nor fully traditional, and the women walked in. The clash between tradition and modernity is a favorite theme for Kushwant Singh, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Nayanthara Sehgal, Anita Desai, and Shashi Deshpande are absorbed which were preoccupied with the problem of adjustment. They have been trying to examine the feelings of women's who fall in a victim of the clash between the tradition and the newly acquired values.

When we talk about feminist writers we directly think of Virginia Woolf or Toni Morrison. The truth is that there are also feminist Indian women writers articulate feminism experience and a new personal vision. They created their own literature making it a strong vehicle to carry their feministic thoughts, beliefs, and views, are explained below.

Nayanthara Sehgal is a writer with feminist concerns attempting to seek independent existence of women. She sees women as sufferers of conventional Indian society engaged in the search of their own identity. She rebels against the suffering situation to the women in their mismatched marriages which bring only domestic turmoil, anger, anguish and suffering. She places her protagonists as the armed resistance against patriarchal society and represents the struggle. Her protagonists in novels question the existing moral codes and values, while rebelling against the unacceptable social norms; it is felt that the patriarchic practices turn down women to inferior social beings.

Her novels revealed as the ever-increasing injustice heaped upon women. Along with other writers, her female characters became aware of their emotional needs and continue to fight against the hostile environment refuses physical intimacy, breaking old traditions, asserting their individuality raises her voice against oppression, inequality and male domination. She

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delineates some modern educated women characters who suffer indescribably the distress and contradictions of the minds of our society. She gives a sensitive tension between the sufferings of the woman in traditional Indian Society and depicts the predicament of her contemporary Indian women characters in her novels her works proved more useful than many social workers and reformers. The contribution of Nayanthara Sehgal as a writer is an impressive one and her novels are "The Day In Shadow", "A Situation in New Delhi", "A Time to Be Happy", "This Time of Morning", "Rich Like Us", "Storm in Chandigarh", "Plans for Departure". Nayanthara Sehgal has contributed much to the cause of feminist in a big way to enrich Indian creative tradition and that includes among numerous others.

There is a great difference between Anita Desai and other women writers of protest fiction is that she observes social reality from a psychological plane but not as a social reformer. She is one of the major voices in modern English Fiction. She creates a world of her own and analyzes the complexities of a man-woman relationship in her novels. The recurring theme in her novels is the agony of existence in the male-dominated and conservative society. She reveals social fatalism, portrays women's plight in modern society and the psychic turmoil of her women character whose revolt is the result of jeopardizing values and beliefs. Her novels are rooted in reality and depict a complex society. Her protagonists are maddened by the gap between their aspiration to be free and their inability to cope with societal isolation. They undergo traumatic psychic experience. The novelist chooses to focus on conflict of mind. In her novels, there is a conflict between traditional values and westernized ideas. She also reflects social reality and excavates deep into the problems of the patriarchal family. Anita Desai has written many novels and some of her important novels are "Cry the Peacock", "Bye Bye Blackbird", "In Custody", "Fire on the Mountain", "Voices in the City" and "A village by the Sea". The most common characteristic in her novels, the protagonists strongly wish for freedom from all social norms. They are powerful who break down under stress, but in spite of that, they remain with the staunch individual.

Kamala Markandaya is a post-Independence female novelist. She is a votary who represents, the female voice in her fiction writing. She is an expert writer, mainly regards as the most gifted Indian English women novelist, whose novels express her feminist moral concern. She marks the traditional attitude of the society towards women. Her novels concerned with

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plight, status, and attitude of women who are under the pressure of changing social, political, economic, modern, spiritual forces. Kamala Markandaya the most outstanding modern novelist points out the need to believe the moral superiority of women in upholding the virtue of the family, she exhibits and awareness regarding the fulfillment of feminine identities. Kamala markandaya who deals with feminism has written "Nectar in a Sieve", " Two Virgins ", "Some Inner fury, "A silence of Desire ", " A Handful of Rice ", " The Coffee Dam, The Nowhere Man", "The Golden Honeycomb" and "Pleasure city".

Her works are excellent and reveal the immorality of society. In her novels, she investigates the social and emotional bonds that shackle women. This process of modernization is the point of view revolt the traditional way of life, which is the theme occurs again periodically in her novels to illustrate the ambivalence of change.

Shashi Deshpande a feminist novelist is a writer of seventies and eighties supporting primarily the manifesto of the feminist movement. Her novels are concerned to reflect the plight and crisis situations of the modern Indian women. She portrays a realistic picture of the contemporary middle class educated urban women who suffer indescribably even in the 20th century. She analyzed the life of her woman characters and has given bold voice to the disappointment and frustration of women in spite of her vehement denial of being feminist. Shashi Deshpande's protagonists are not exemplary feminist heroines, but women struggling to find their own voices in the changing social environment. She has laid the subtle processes of the suppression and gender differentiation operating within the family and male-centered Indian society. She defines freedom for the protagonists of her novels who are always modern, educated and independent woman.

Her feminism does expose the different ideological elements that shape her and tries to expose women's submissive position in the family and her restricted sexuality in her novels, it is noticed that the plot begins with an unconventional marriage and then deals with the problems of adjustment and conflict in the minds of the female protagonists are finally portrays their endeavor to submit to the traditional roles. In her novels she deals with the physical, psychological and emotional distress syndrome of women who are modern, educated and career oriented middle-class women are sensitive to the changing time and

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situation. Shashi Deshpande has written a number of books and novels, some of them are "The Dark Holds No Terrors", "That Long Silence", "The Binding Vine", "A Matter of Time", "Roots and the Shadows" and "Come up and Be Dead", her novels reveal how poignantly she expresses the frustration and disappointment women experience in social or cultural oppression in the male-dominated society.

It is to conclude that a significant development in modern Indian fiction has been the growth of a feminist or women-centered approach that seeks to project and interpret experience from the point of view of a feminine consciousness and sensitivity. Indian women writers have raised their voice in dealing with the problems of women and their assertion of women's point of view reflected their feminist awareness. Feminists assume that women experience the world in different ways from men and write out of their life in different perspectives.

Indian women writers have given special prominence to the role of women. They have understood the problems and difficulties that have come in the way of the progress of women. They also understood the techniques, tone, graft, and structure and have applied them in their writings. Through their writings, feminist novelists have portrayed instances of social ill-treatment that breed emotions of anger, resentment, revolt, and violence to awaken readers to present realities and their revolt reveals the contemporary social values. Their works reveal various aspects of modern women's feelings and exhibit the fully awakened feminine sensibility and feminist views. Their protagonists utilize language to reveal their protest, conflict, and desperation as desired by the novelist. Language is a medium through which women communicate their feminist views focusing on the injustice done to them in the society. Women writers voiced their objections to this unfair treatment in their novels of women fighting for their respective positions in the society, tragic narrative, rebellions etc., are written by women writers in their novels to attempt to inspire women to face the challenges and lead a meaningful life.

Feminist women writers have shown the worth of women in the field of literature both quantitatively and qualitatively are showing them today without any obstacles. A major preoccupation in modern Indian women's writing has seen in the action of portraying inner life and subtle interpersonal relationship. In a culture where individualism and protest have

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often continued to exist alien ideas and marital happiness and women's role at home is the central focus. It is arousing a curiosity and interest to see the emergence of not just an important Indian sensibility but an expression of cultural displacement.

Indian Women writers are bold, frank, and have shown realistic attitude in a feminist idea, began asserting women's importance, worth and substantial identity in action not in words but through their creative writings have shown women are more confident, forceful, liberated and articulated in their expression than that the women were in past. Expressing these ideas in their writings they have created a new tradition in the Indian English literature projected women as a central figure, highlighting her hopes and frustrations, through their characters they present the dilemmas that are faced by the modern women in a traditional society. The most popular among the feminist novelists in English are Kamala Das, Shashi Deshpande, Gauri Deshpande, Kamala Markandeya, Nayanthara Sehgal, Gita Hariharan, Anita Desai and many more have left unbelievable imprints on the readers of Indian fiction in English literature.

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DALITWOMAN: BABYKAMBLE'S THE PRISONS WE BROKE

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Abstract:

BabyKamble's *The Prisons We Broke* (published in 2008) is considered as the tactic of Dalit women. She recovers memory to expose the Mahar's pitiable situation in Maharashtra. It provides a realistic picture of the oppressive caste and patriarchal beliefs of the Indian society. She talks about the life in her village, called Veergaon. In her memory, the Maharwadas never had a prosperous life. On one side, ignorance and lack of reasoning ruled them, on the other side, the Maharwadas life was dominated by poverty and epidemics. Death rate was high because of the ceaseless starvation and lack of medical facilities for the fatal epidemics. More over superstitions adorned their blindness. The book deals with the two major problems of the society: firstly, the oppression and exploitation of the Dalit by the upper class: secondly, the discrimination towards women in a patriarchal society. Dalit women are positioned at the absolute bottom of the social hierarchy. They faced discrimination, humiliation and subjugated in three ways: first being as Dalit (caste) secondly being a poor (class) and thirdly being as Women (gender). So they are subjugated by patriarchal structures, both in universal society and within their respective family and community. As a result, Dalit women are subjected to inhumane living conditions, violence and discrimination which deny them to give opportunities, choices and freedoms in all sphere of their life.

KEYWORDS:

Patriarchal, Humiliation, Subjugated, Violence, Discrimination

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The caste system is predominantly an Indian crisis. In no other country it is as blatantly prevalent as in India. Hinduism claims the division of four castes (Varna)- Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, vaisyas and Sudras. Dalit do not even fit into this hierarchy because they are considered lower than the Sudras. They are called ‘avarnas’ (devoid of caste) and their touch impure. Therefore, they are distanced from the upper caste in every sphere of life. The term Dalit has its roots in Sanskrit word 'dal' which means “oppressed” or “broken”. It has been used in 1930s as a Hindi and Marathi translation of 'depressed classes'.

“Dalit is not a caste but realization and is related to the experience, joys and sorrows and struggles of those in the lowest stratum of society”

--Arjun Dangle

Dalit literature emerged in the year 1960s and 70s with the publication of poems, short stories, novels, dramas and autobiographies express the suppression and oppression caused due to the caste based discrimination. There are many Dalit men autobiographies, the first of its kind. It is noteworthy that number of Dalit women autobiographies are less in number compared to their men counterpart as they have been deprived of education. Dalit autobiographies belongs to the category of the life stories which not only demonstrates the saga of individual but also the society as a whole depicts sorrows, sufferings, subjugation, socio-economical, cultural and political conditions under the control and influence of Upper caste Hindu society. Contemporary Indian society was divided under the wrong notions of 'purity and pollution'. Dalit were treated as untouchables and polluters to the High caste Hindu because they were born in the low caste 'Mahar'.

Baby Kamble is the first women from Mahar community to pen her life story as ‘*Jina Amuche*’, published in the year 1986 in Marathi and later on it was translated by Maya pandit in English as ‘*The prisons we Broke*’ in 2008. Through this autobiography Baby Kamble has depicted the pathetic condition of women and also how Dalit society is decided as traditional and modern. They were intentionally kept ignorant and denied to take education and asked to live out of town in separate colonies by high caste Hindus to safeguard their control over Dalits. Autobiography came handy to her to demonstrate their age old suffering, exploitation and maltreatment.

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"The prisons we Broke" points out that the Mahars were leading their lives in ignorance and abject poverty. They were not aware of the human existence as such. They would not dare to go against the social norms and challenge the caste Hindus. They were greatly superstitious and obeyed their oppressors.

➤ **Religious system:**

Though Hindu Religion and gods considered Mahars as dirt, Mahar community upheld the Hindu principles and they thought of gods with great sanctity. Potrajas, and possessed women are common in the village. They never forget to give offerings to gods. Generations after generations Mahar community broke their heads on the stones of Hindu temples with hopes. But the effect was curses. They cried at the feet of idles with hopes. But the gods never heard them. They smeared kumkum and haldi on the gods. The possessed women are greeted with respect. It is believed that they could speak about the future of the Maharwada, and they could bless them with good wishes. So they often practiced the rituals that are taught by the same religion which considered the Mahars as dirt.

➤ **Poverty:** Poverty was an unresolved problem among the Mahars. They were fated to eat left-overs. The stale bhakris, and the rotten rotis were their common food. Upper caste considered them as the dirt in the garbage where others throw away their waste materials. Mahars had to fight with the animals like cats, dogs and vultures for their food. They were the masters of the dead animals. The upper caste Brahmins wiped away all the human qualities from the Mahars and converted them into beasts. They were enclosed in dark cells, and their hands and foot were in the chains of slavery. Mahars also valorize the prestige of Yeskar stick. And they thought that it is their duty to work for their masters. They never had complaints. They lead a very satisfactory life. They ate the leftovers and were content. They accepted their fate as part of their life.

➤ **Untouchability:** Mahars considered themselves as untouchables. For their hardships, and laborious work for their masters, they earned miseries and abuses as remuneration. Even in their poverty stricken life, they never forgot to love each other and show kindness to their fellowmen. Generations after generations, the Mahars served their masters very obediently. The upper caste community threw abuses at the

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Mahars, if they did not fall at the feet of their masters, or if they did not give the way to their masters when the masters came across in their way. The Mahars were not allowed to use the main road that was used by the higher castes. When they found any upper castes in the opposite direction they were supposed to vacate the road and climb down into the shrubbery and walk through the thorny bushes on the road side.

- **Mahar women:** The condition of the Mahar women was miserable. They were so ignorant that they were not able to lead a common human life. They collected the leftover food from Maratha households by cleaning their animal pens. They had to do all the household duties and go for selling wood to earn for their daily bread. They need to cover herself fully when faced by upper caste men and say, “The humble Mahar women fall at your feet master. This was like a chant, which they had to repeat innumerable times even to a small child if it belonged to a upper caste”.

Most of the time women had to go on hunger unendingly. When a ritual comes, the work of the women got doubled. They had to plaster their house with cow dung and clean the utensils and the clothes. Girls got married at the age of eight or nine and they became pregnant at a very tender age which created a lot of complications in their first delivery. After delivering a child the mother requires to take some light food but Dalit men were unable to provide food to the new mother. They were very ignorant about their women. They used to celebrate their festivals by taking loans from the village sahuakar but they did not take loan or make proper arrangements for the new mother. They had not paid any attention to their health.

Mahar men treated their daughters-in-law like slaves. Like high caste Hindus, Mahars also wants to become Masters so they put them as their slaves. They lead a very pathetic life in their husband's home. If a girl could not do the household duties, she was abused by her in-laws. She could not go back to her home in the fear of scolding from her father and brothers. If any Dalit woman happened to break the entrenched practices of the caste system, she would be humiliated not only by the caste Hindus but also by the Mahar people.

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These incidents describes the factual and very pitiable condition of Dalit women that they were victims of caste system and also the victims of being women in the male dominate society. There are some similarities in the women from the upper caste or lower caste that they have to suffer because of their gender.

"Dalit women could not get even simply rags to clean the flowing blood, this much sinful the public was"

➤ **Influence of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar:**

Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar was the light of their life. He gave the message to take education, unite and demand for the rights to the Dalit community. They admitted their children to school and started to take education. They were ill- treated by the teachers and others in the upper caste but they managed to survive. Ambedkar's speech reverberated in the village and the villagers reiterated his words. Slowly, they were becoming conscious about their rights and demanding for liberty and equality.

"Character is the pillar of this Constitution, truth is its roof and morality its foundation. This is the home of humanity"

In the last part of her autobiography Baby Kamble talked about the responsibility of the present society. No downtrodden man can achieve greatness unless he is prepared for struggle and suffering. Social transformation is an external change and it begins with the personal transformation which is an internal change. If they change their own Outlook, they can change the world around them too. Even now discrimination is not completely wiped out from our society. There are a lot of villages which should be brought into the light of main stream. The educated people should work for them. Once, Babasahib worked for the community that society got freedom. Now those who enjoys freedom should work to unchain others.

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SAGA OF WOMEN IN THE SILENT RAGA BY AMEEN MERCHANT

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Abstract

The predicament of women, a classic theme of novel, occupies a larger place in the arena of characterisation. There is a long array of woman writers, who have penned down splendid novels to depict the quandary of women society by their fine tapestry of characterisation. But the portrayal of women's suffering from a man's standpoint spins a difference. A man's rare insight into a woman's plight captures readers' attention, as in Ameen Merchant's *The Silent Raga*. In this poignant debut novel, Merchant delves so deep into women's psyche. It is with breath-taking ease that he gets into a woman's psyche, and dexterously weaves the expedition of varied women characters in the novel. The present paper, hence, proposes to explore the saga of the women character which persistently spins in the structure of the story.

Keywords:

Women predicament, women suffering, mental agony, women characterisation

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The Silent Raga is essentially a feminist exploration of the dilemmas befalling on modern Brahmin- Indian women. This novel is an intensely imagined and subtly nuanced exploration of the intricacies of family obligations and sibling relationships. Set in Madras, it depicts the story of two sisters, Janaki and Mallika, from a middle-class Brahmin family. It can also be termed as a concert of quiet anger between the estranged sisters, and the title celebrates this internal narrative as a ‘Silent Raga’. The story works on a very thin line of fiction. Two sisters and their lives in and out of a Tamil Brahmin *agraharam* and leads the reader to the final meeting between the two. As it moves from the sensuous to the sublime, and recalls the rhythms and progression of the raga, Merchant weaves a moving tapestry about the ties that bind the human relationships and the sacrifices one must make on the way to reach one’s own destiny.

In this novel, Merchant shows a clear empathy of women’s psyche by exhibiting a fine characterisation of female characters, especially Janaki, Mallika and their aunt Gayathri. The novel opens with Janaki, the protagonist of the novel, who revisits the painful memories of her past. Janaki’s recollection transports the story back to Madras where both the sisters suffocated with their father, after their mother’s death. When they lose their mother in a fiery bus accident, their father - a puffed-up bank functionary, decides to rearrange the household by pulling his older daughter, Janaki (thirteen-year-old), out of school and sentencing her to a life of domestic drudgery.

Being a gifted musician on veena, Janaki’s father magnanimously allows her to continue her veena lessons. Apart from her music, the other thing that keeps her spirit alive is her besotted attachment to Bollywood movies. Through Mallika’s eyes, Janaki’s gradual assertion of independence can be witnessed. After suffering interminable wedding negotiations from a long string of horrible but suitable suitors, she elopes with a Muslim movie star, named Asgar. And as she becomes his second wife, bears him twins, sinks into a life of luxury in Bombay, where her one close confidant is her husband’s first wife Zubieda. Her life as second wife to one of the biggest movie stars in India is portrayed as staid, calm, and mature. A strong, courageous, balanced-mind of Janaki is exhibited throughout the novel.

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The first half of the novel tells this lurid and improbable story from Janaki's point of view. However, the second half of the story is presented from Mallika's view point, who is left behind to pick up the pieces, scattered by Janaki. Mallika is as intellectual as Janaki who is passionate and artistic. Her idea of fun is reading Dickens' and Charlotte Bronte's novels and playing chess with her father. She is only six years old when her mother died. She comes to view Janaki as her surrogate mother and hopes – unrealistically, given the usual fate of Indian middle-class girls – that she will always be there to care for her and her father. But Janaki elopes at the age of twenty-three.

The book is on firmer ground, when it switches to Mallika's version of events. Mallika is resentful of Janaki's spectacular exit from their lives, which thrust her into Janaki's previous domestic role of Cinderella. She is also indignant of her father's psychotic meltdown, which lands him in a mental hospital, where 'the still-unmarried' Mallika visits him on dreary Sunday afternoons. Merchant is noticeably more concerned in Mallika's predicament than in Janaki's rebellion. When Janaki leaves Sripuram, Mallika fears of having her own wings clipped.

Another character whose psyche is brought to light in the progression of the story is Gayatri, Janaki's widowed maternal aunt. The death of Janaki's mother precipitates her aunt's intrusive presence, as the aunt develops an affair with her father. She exerts authority over the household activities of Janaki. Through Janaki's eyes, the reader comes to realise the motives behind Gayatri's visits. The craving of this woman's psyche is conspicuously done by Merchant, and the author himself admits in one interview, "Gayatri Chitti is close to my heart. She lives her life without regret. And she lives it fully and unapologetically." The novel rises to the level of pain and poetry, most notably when it tells the story of Janaki's best friend Kamala, who is left devastated at the altar and ends her life by committing suicide after her marriage goes awry. It can also be claimed that Kamala's is the silent and tragic raga that Janaki feels impelled to play.

Merchant amplifies the untold sufferings of the prevailing society. It's a worthy goal, and the author's empathy for his female characters is noteworthy. It's a commendable goal,

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and the author's empathy for his two female protagonists, particularly Mallika, is genuine and compelling.

This debut novel by Merchant successfully uses the raga, a traditional Hindu musical form, to explore the constraints, patterns and improvisations in his characters' lives. Merchant effectively uses the framework of the raga to parallel the expectations and behavioural codes the sisters had to follow. Caste, religion and being female keep them within a confined world that affords them few opportunities for independence. While the older Janaki dares to rage against arbitrary boundaries, her younger sister becomes acquiescent in her gilded cage. In the novel, the narrator questions “Where do middle-class Tamil Brahmin girls go when they turn eighteen?”(33).

Like the progression of a raga, the song of the two sisters plays out in episodes that confront their subjugation. Janaki and Mallika take turns talking about arranged marriage, their mother's weakness and the tragic fate of single woman. The haunting suicide of a childhood friend is a brutal reminder of the desperation of women whose only hope is matrimony.

Thus, Ameen Merchant weaves a finely wrought story about family, loss, and reconciliation. He captures in rich detail the world of these Brahmin Indian women, a world restricted by caste and cultural rules but one teeming with colour, music and food. It conveys the conservatism, the thrift, the social mores imposed on young girls of marriageable age as well as the paradoxes that are not spoken about. Merchant adroitly depicted the saga of women's character and vehemently registers his prominent position in the art of crafting women characters in the realm of Indian Literature.

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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND LITERATURE

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Abstract

From time immemorial India has predominantly been a patriarchal society. Man occupied a prominent place in every sphere of life leaving woman as a fragile creature to depend upon him for everything beginning from her existence to her sustenance. From equal status with men in the prehistoric times through the less equality which was prevalent in the medieval period. The campaign of women's rights had been booked up by many reformers in India in order to upgrade their position. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process which should enable individuals or a group of individuals to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. The term, or philosophy, of empowerment did not initially develop in a gender context, but through the Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire. Empowerment of women now can be categorized into five main parts – social, educational, economic, legal, and political. The literature review has highlighted a relational and processual perspective of empowerment. Gynocentrism is a dominant focus on how women resorted to writing about themselves to create their definition of their gender instead of having men doing it for them. Feminist movement creates self awareness in women. The feminist critics seek a place for the empowerment of women through literary texts. The status of women in India has been exposed to varieties of changes over the past few years. The impact of the English literature reflected in the regional literatures of the subcontinent introducing several important changes in women's personal and professional life. In India the history of the modern Western feminist movements is divided into three waves. Each wave is categorized by means of looking at the same feminist issues in a different prospective.

Keywords: Patriarchal society, status of women, empowerment, literature review, gynocentrism, feminism, literary texts, waves, concentrated effort, liberation of women

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The status of women in India has been exposed to varieties of changes over the past few years. From equal status with men in the prehistoric times through the less equality which was prevalent in the medieval period. The campaign of women's rights had been booked up by many reformers in India in order to upgrade their position. Women have done outstandingly well in different spheres of life, like teaching, academics, media, entrepreneur or defense etc. In Ancient India, most of the scriptures had written about the status of the women, where she enjoyed equal status as that of men. Not only in the field of rights but also in the sphere of education, were women given the equal opportunities.

In Vedas like Rigveda and Upnishads, much was written about the women seers and sages, Gargi and Matreyi. After the medieval period the status of the women got worsened and ill practices like Sati, ban on widow remarriage, child marriage became a part of society in India. The invasion of India by the Muslims brought in society the practices like Jauhar and purdah were brought into society by the invasion of India by the Muslims and the situations were challenging and severe for Indian women. A few women shined in the field of politics, literature education and religion. Durgavati, the Gond Queen, Chand Bibi fought against Mughal forces of Akbar and defended Ahmednagar, Razia Sultan who ruled over Delhi, Nur Jahan was a real force behind the Mughal throne who established imperial power. Mirabai an important Bhakti movement figure was a female saint.

Many reformers worked for the upliftment of the women during the British rule, and some of the freedom fighters included women in forefront like Dr Annie Besant, Bhikaji Coma, Rani Laxmibai, Kasturbha Gandhi and Vijaylakshmi Pandit. For centuries, the literary world was consumed by the opinions and creative domination of men and only men. Several literary pieces written by the some of the most accomplished writers in history subdued women and spoke about them in a manner that was comprehensive to them, thus creating tremendous misinterpretations about the various nuances of being a woman. Especially in the 18th and 19th century, literature blatantly favoured patriarchal individuality. Several post-revolutionary male writers chose to redefine patriarchy and, in this effort, they ignored the opinions and perspectives of women. In fact, until the 19th century, women were not even allowed to write publicly. Very few female writers like Jane Anger, Margery Kempe and Julian of Norwich radically emerged as rebels in an outrageously male chauvinistic world.

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The definition of Kabeer (1999, 346), states that empowerment is “the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability”. Kabeer’s (1999) theoretical underpinning of empowerment as the ability to make first order decisions that result in desired outcomes incorporates three interrelated dimensions: resources, agency and achievements. Rowland (1998) distinguishes between power at a personal and community level, as well as with close relations using three different categories: power within, power with and power to. Lukes’ (1974) three-dimensional view of power gives insights into the extent that studies, frameworks and indices engage with structural forms of power. Building on the concept of “critical consciousness” of Freire (1996), the awareness of alternatives to gendered cultural norms, communication processes and knowledge transfer can strengthen the concept of power towards empowerment. Empowerment of women is not only imperative but also crucial for all-round development of society and the nation as a whole.

The issue of ‘women empowerment’ has become a central point in the programs and activities of the United Nations and other Government and Non-Government Organizations. Subsequently, it has also become a major concern of the social scientists, politicians, bureaucrats and researchers. But there is a lack of unanimity among the scholars in comprehending the term empowerment. Various scholars have tried to define the term from their own perspectives. The term empowerment has different meanings in different socio-cultural, economic and political contexts. An exploration of local terms associated with empowerment around the world always encompasses a wide variety of definitions. These terms include self-strength, self-control, self-power, self-reliance, personal choice, capability of fighting for one’s rights, independence, own decision making power, freedom etc. These definitions are embedded in local value systems and beliefs.

Empowerment has both intrinsic as well as instrumental value. “The most common use of the term “empowerment” refers to increasing the power of the low-power group, so that it more nearly equals the power of the high power group” (Bhadra, 2001, p. 61). According to Sushama Sahay (1998), “Empowerment is an active, multi-dimensional process which enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life” (Arundhati Chattopadhyaya,2005). She holds that, “Empowerment is multi-dimensional and refers to the

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expansion of freedom of choice and action in all spheres (social, economic, and political) to shape one's life. It also implies control over resources and decisions". Further the term empowerment is defined as "the process of gaining control over one's own life while supporting and facilitating others' control over their lives" (Aspy & Sandhu, 1999, p. 24). Goodrich describes empowerment as "a benevolent but unilateral transaction in which one person enhances another's ability to feel competent and take action, that is, enhances another's power-to" (Patricia, Darlington & Mulvaney, 2003, p. 12).

The term, or philosophy, of empowerment did not initially develop in a gender context, but through the Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire (1921-1997). He developed the "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970) to empower the poor, the "oppressed", to resolve the contradiction to the "oppressors", those in power. Freire's approach led to an influential social and educational movement and literacy program to create empowerment through critical consciousness, "la conscientização" (Freire, 1996, 17). Later he was named the founder of critical pedagogy, which views the role of education as promoting capabilities for individual development from a human rights perspective. The central objective of critical pedagogy is both the individual liberation to become a transformative democratic citizen, and the collective struggle of creating social transformation towards social justice in an egalitarian society. Through this educational awakening, the "oppressed" become aware of the mechanisms of their social oppression and can liberate themselves from manipulation.

It is evident from the above discussions that different authors and organizations have tried to define the term 'empowerment' from their own perspectives. It ranges from self-strength to efficiency building of women. However, empowerment of women now can be categorized into five main parts – social, educational, economic, legal, and political. Social women empowerment means a critical aspect of social empowerment of women is the promotion of gender equality.

The literature review has highlighted a relational and procession perspective of empowerment, with Kabeer (1999) providing a theoretical underpinning of empowerment in resources, agency and achievements and Rowland (1998) distinguishing between "power within", "power with" and "power to". These conceptualisations of empowerment contrast

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operationalizations of empowerment in the form of measuring decision-making (Alkire et al. 2013) and the presence, use and effectiveness of choice (Longwe, 1995), as these represent an individualized and situational perspective on empowerment. Lukes' three-dimensional view of power gives insights into what extent studies, frameworks and indices engage with structural forms of power. His perspective highlights that measuring engagement in decision-making is only a behavioural analysis and does not examine covert conflicts, for example whether grievances are aired or power is exercised to such an extent that perceptions are manipulated. Empirical studies such as Rao (2014), Zwarteven & Neupane (1996), Joshi (2014) and Guerin et al. (2013) debunk certain assumptions such as that economic empowerment will lead to overall empowerment or that the participation in decision-making processes will empower women.

These qualitative studies provide a more nuanced understanding of factors (Patel, 1998) influencing and mediating empowerment. Such an understanding of empowerment is related to other concepts in gender and development research, such as Kandiyoti's (1988) “patriarchal bargains” and Sen's (2014) “cooperative conflicts”.

In English literature of the earlier centuries, women are often considered as dormant and submissive characters controlled and intimidated by patriarchal powers of the society. They had designated roles to play. These roles were restricted to the circumferences of family and children. Gynocentrism is a dominant focus on how women resorted to writing about themselves to create their definition of their gender instead of having men doing it for them. More women began to write on topics that seemed to be a much-needed revelation of reality. It is a complete disclosure of female consciousness, beliefs, culture, human rights, sexuality and reproduction. It applauds the sexual difference and portrays femininity in a positive light as opposed to the androcentric productions that labelled women as a secondary sex- weak, submissive and deficient.

Lord Audrey, Adrienne Rich and Maureen Duffy are some of major writers whose work showed a glaring perspective about lesbian experiences. Surviving in a man's world was challenging for these writers and emerging as literary intellectuals was a painful journey to endure. Early female writers were forced to make use of the masculine tongue in their work.

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Intimated by the female voice, men attacked their work and labelled them as 'unsuitable'. Their voice began to have an impact which threatened their stand in the literary ecosphere. Elaine Showalter was one of the very first feminist writers who critically scrutinized androcentric literature. She gave rise to the term 'gynocritics' in 'Towards a Feminist Poetics' in the year 1986. Instead, they built a space where they could focus on themselves as per their women culture. Women empowered themselves through gynocentrism. It breaks stereotypes about women constructively by responding to questions about women with relevant answers by women. It stands for the freedom of women, to express themselves beyond the ugly facades of caste, creed and sex.

The process of self awareness transfers their hidden, individual fears into security and independence. Feminism studies of women as writers, and its subjects are the history, styles, themes, genres, and structures of writing by women. Feminism does not only seek a place for women in literary texts but it seeks a place in society. Their appeal is to be considered them as a human being and equal to the male. Today if we see the condition of women in Indian society, we come to know that their place is better than previous times but it is not satisfactory. The women are rejected before their birth through the abortion of foetus. If this is a scene in the society, we need to stress this issue through literary texts. Today is a more need to write about the inequality in the society. Feminism is a supporting stone for women to preserve their identity, their existence. It is used to relieve women from the burden of patriarchal system. It makes clear vision of male being and creates a feeling of equality in them. The feminists criticize a second and other place of women in society and suggest that inequality of sexes does not have a biological basis or origin; it originates in the cultural constructions of gender difference. They feel that such type of inequality is the hindrance in the empowerment of women. There is the need for a canon of women's writing. The writing of patriarchal society puts a patriarchal ideology.

The debates among feminists in the universities across Europe and America led to active research in the field. The feminist movement produced a considerable bulk of scholarly writings on the problems of women. In literary criticism, it began with the realization of the political significance of the images of women produced and promoted in literary works. As a polemical movement its primary concern in literary criticism was to explore and combat the

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stereotype representation of women in literature. This marks an important connection between literary criticism and feminism as a social movement. It attempts to transgress the conventional subject divides and integrate positions and perspectives developed in different disciplines such as literature, philosophy, psychology, anthropology and sociology. In the 1960s and 1970s feminist theory was predominantly Western but since 1980s we find a large number of non-western writers getting seriously engaged in feminist debates. This has become a continuous support for the enrichment and empowerment of women. The British rule in India, became a blessing in disguise for it gave glimpses of possibilities that women could be allowed to obtain formal or innovative education. In the midst of such inner struggle, India found a prophet in Raja Ram Mohan Roy who being inspired by the English education and their world planned to bring about a change in the condition of women in India. Firoz Alam (2011) writes, “Ram Mohan Roy was a man of intellect and foresight. He was aware that the English language was a key to progress”.

The Vedas, the Puranas and the Upanishads are the mirrors, as it were, that reflect the glorious past of Indian: its history, its civilization, its language and literature, philosophy and theology. The Vedic tradition(Tripta Desai, 1997) has held a high regard for the qualities of a woman who is portrayed as the feminine embodiment of important qualities and powers. These forms include those of Lakshmi (the goddess of fortune and queen of Lord Vishnu), Sarasvati (the goddess of learning), Durga (the goddess of strength and power) and the like. There are others, during this period, who were seen as the examples of historical importance. They are Sati, Sita, Anasuya, Arundhatee, Draupadi, Queen Kunti etc. (Stephen Knapp,2016).

Tripta Desai further confirms, “Around 300 BC the status of women began to decline. Probably dating to the beginning of Christian era, the Manusmriti affords glimpses into the severe restriction of women’s activities and status. From AD 500 to AD 1800 more Smritis and Puranas were compiled which further degraded the existence of women. Classical Sanskrit Louis Renu (1997) literature Sanskrit served as threefold language: sacred, literary and philosophical, to Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism. As such, most of the literary masterpieces were expressed in Sanskrit. For example, Kalidasa, a famous Sanskrit poet and dramatist in classical Sanskrit exposes woman not as an ideal self abnegating Hindu

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wife sympathetic, witty, resourceful, and beautiful but someone unrecognized, forgotten and humiliated like Shakuntala.

The dawn of the new era of modern Indian literatures may be said to ignite in the late nineteenth century. In the writings of this time, the impact of Western civilization, the rise of political consciousness, and the change in society was perceptible. Indian women writers gave a new dimension to the Indian literature, in that they vented their deep seated feelings by way of art and literature. Contemporary writers like, Anita Desai, Manju Kapur, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kamla Markandaya, Ruth Pravar Jhabvala, Krishna Udayasankar, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Arundhati Roy etc. have challenged the society for metamorphosis of women's status (Patel, 1998). Indian writers like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Rabindra Nath Tagore (Firoj Alam, 2011) Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Pt. Ramabai, Sarojini Naidu, to name a few, have made use of this newly acquired concept of nationalism to attack colonial rule. Rise of nationalism proved opportune for the women writers because in the name of nationalism, they could voice out the dormant oppression that had long been suppressed. Gandhiji was totally opposed to gender discrimination.

After independence, Indian English Literature has been growing rapidly both in quantity and quality. It began, through the momentous, outstanding, and vibrant contributions by the contemporary Indian writers as competent as the British, American, Australian, Canadian and African literature. The struggle for freedom was voiced in the form of writings. A great number of Indian writings are vehemently apprehensive about various ways and forms of oppression they undergo. Nayantara Sahgal, Mulk Raj, Shashi Deshpande, Khushwant Singh, Kamala Markandaya, Gita Mehta etc. are a few examples who searched for alternatives to existing literary models making Indian modernity a mosaic. The Indian English literature is a journey from nationalism to the search of nation. English education benefited the British for sure, but brought forth many social reforms and innovations to English literature paving the dawn of a new India. Writers like Sarojini Naidu (Santanu Ganguly, 2009), Tagore, Sri Aurobindo Monisha (2009), through their lucid writings poured enthusiasm among the hearts of Indians. Sarojini Naidu tried to re-establish self-esteem within the women of India while Tagore filled the heart of the Indians with the sense of patriotism (Firoj Alam, 2011). There

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emerged a champion of liberty in Raja Ram Mohan Roy who advocated the rights of women. He was determined to give women their proper place in the society. After independence, the Indian literature had an outstanding impact on the creative writing in various regional languages. Post-independence India did see a greater awareness on the part of the reading public as well as the government of the existence of many more and wealthier languages and literatures, outside the limited margin of one's own mother-tongue or province. "The partition of India" did sear an emotional scar in the souls of many writers, mostly in Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Bengali literatures. Many moving short stories and poems have been written on this theme by authors like Amrita Pritam, Kartar Singh Duggal, Krishan Chander, Khushwant Singh, Premendra Mitra, Arundhati Roy and Manoj Basu, to mention a few names (Patel, 1998).

The martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi was another such event, about which soul-stirring poems were written by Vallathol Narayana Menon, Bhai Vir Singh, Shivmangal Singh Suman and others. Several poets revealed the poet's solitary struggle in opposition to the mounting crisis of uprooted identity. They wrote political poetry on the theme of agony and struggle. It was poetry of commitment. Literature now enthused to the downtrodden and the exploited. Likewise the woman has been a focus of many literary works; she is no longer a paragon of virtue and chastity to the extolled poets and philosophers. The Indian women are now making a stir out of their placed solecism. Arising political and social conscious in a fertile milieu have brought them out into the open protest against decimation, dowry, rape and exploitation and the woman in Indian novel now reflects the shift in the sensibility (Santa Krishna Swamy, 2001).

In today's ultra adhunka (post-modern) era, the effort of the contemporary writers is to be natural, to be Indian, to be socially conscious and to be near to the common man. Indian writers like Salman Rushdie, Shahshi Tharoor or Amitav Ghosh came out of the shadow of British English only to decorate the Indianized English distinctively (Patel, 1998). Also the regional languages were freely used in the prose forms; thus breaking, restructuring and adding a new twist and dimension to the traditional narrative patterns. Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi writers followed to the 'modern' and 'postmodern' idiom of writing. For instance, Mulk Raj Anand's work is supplied with Hindi and Punjabi

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words like 'haanaa', 'saalam-huzoor', 'shabash-shabash'. The most path breaking of all, however, is Arundhati Roy's use of untranslated Malayalam words in day to day conversations in her ``The God of Small Things” like 'chacko sir vannu', 'she is very beautiful sundarikutty', 'oower, orkunniley, kushambi.

The impact of the English Literature reflected in the regional literatures of the subcontinent introducing several important changes in women's personal and professional life. Prolific Indian female authors in English like Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, and Shashi Deshpande gave rise to the emergence of feminism in India. Emancipatory women's writing has arisen sturdily in all Indian languages, seeking to subvert the man-dominated social order, forging revisionary myths and counter-metaphors by women writers like Kamala Das (Malayalam, English), Krishna Sobti (Hindi), Ashapura Devi (Bengali), Rajam Krishnan (Tamil) and others (Amarnath Srivatsava, 2011).

A large number of writers are in the process of identifying a pattern of problem-solving within the traditional system and sustain an indigenous process of renewal. English is no more a colonial language, writers are aware of their inheritance, complexity and uniqueness, and it is expressed in their work naturally. Feminism is an ideology that opposes the political, economic and cultural demotion of women to positions of inferiority. Feminists condition in India have an unlike dispensation than that of Western feminism in that the Indian society has always been extremely hierarchical. There is also quite a lot of hierarchy within the family pertaining age, sex and ordinal position, genial and fine bond or within the community referring to the caste lineage, education, occupation and relationship with ruling power etc. have been upheld very sternly. In India the history of the modern Western feminist movements is divided into three waves. Each wave is categorized by means of looking at the same feminist issues in a different perspective (Priya, 2014).

The first-wave refers to the feminist movement that occurred in between 1850–1915. Suma Chitnis, an eminent sociologist, from Maharashtra recalls how the most typical features of this movement was initiated by men like Raja Ram Mohan Roy along with other reformers like Ishwarchandra Vidya Sagar, Keshav Chandra Sen, Matahari, Phule, Agarkar, Ranade, Tagore, Madan Mohan Malviya, Maharshi Krave and the women joined the crusade(Suma

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Chitnis,1993). During the Second Wave (1915–1947) the battle against colonial rule was strengthened. Self-government became the preeminent cause. Gandhi legitimized and extended Indian women's public activities by calling them into the nonviolent civil disobedience movement against the British Raj. He dignified their feminine roles of caring, self abnegation, sacrifice and tolerance; and impressed a position for those in the public field. Peasant women played a vital role in the rural Satyagrahas of Borsad and Bardoli. Women organizations like All India Women's Conference (AIWC) and the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) occurred.

Women were dealing with issues involving to the scope of women's political participation, women's franchise, communal awards, and leadership roles in political parties. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the nationalist and anti-colonialist freedom movement made the mass utilization of women to a fundamental part of Indian nationalism (Firoj Alam:2011). During the third-wave (Post-independence-1947) prior to independence, most feminists accepted the sexual division within the labor force. Nevertheless, feminists of the 1970s dared to raise their voice against the inequalities and battled to reverse them. These included unequal wages for women, demotion of women to 'unskilled' spheres of work, and limiting women as a reserve army. The fruition is seen as in 1966 Indira Gandhi became the first female Prime Minister of India. She served as prime minister of India for three consecutive terms (Guerin et.al, 2013).

The patriarchal society prevalent in India had jeopardized and crippled the Indian mind to such an extent that men thought that no woman was found worthy of education. Men considered themselves independent, superior and even almighty. A man was invariably the breadwinner whereas the woman was supposed only to share what the man had earned with his sweat and blood. It looked as though, a man's world would continue even without a woman. Traits are visible, that in ancient India, women though having an enormous potential, were being unutilized and underutilized. Customarily women were treated as a weakling, dependent on men and confined to the four walls. Thanks to some courageous and daring women, today the table is being turned upside down. As the civilization changes, the societies go through transformation, Indian women too are on a crossroad not to prove themselves but to get out of the shadows of men. Today, women dare to walk shoulder to shoulder with men.

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They are ready to expose the splendour and beauty of the world in which they live have a better role to play than remaining mere spectators within the four walls of the house. The men who thought they were superior to women have now recognized the potentialities of women; women are not just spectators but partners and coworkers and women are not inferior to man in rank or performance in anyway.

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FAMILIAR DISHARMONY AND CLASS CULTURAL BARRIERS IN KAMALA MARKANDAYA'S SOME INNER FURY

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Abstract

Kamala Markandeya was an authentic Indian writer who has writing on the Indian women, especially in 1940's. Women who had gone to foreign lands, and their encounter with the foreign culture. In her novel, some inner fury she focuses how the families are being disintegrated with familiar disharmony and cross culture differences when they visit foreign lands. She traces these differences in her novel, some inner fury. The differences arise between Mira an Indian girl, and Richard, an English man and Kitsamy, a foreigner and Premala, a typical Indian wife. The personal relationships of the couples do not run very smoothly but run in a different way. We can find out a kind of disintegration, disunity and familiar disharmony in their conjugal relationship and in their personal life. There is an autobiographical element in the novel. The catastrophic relations between Mira and Richard reveal these facts.

Keywords: Class, Cultural, Barriers, differences etc

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In some inner fury, the personal relationship of a Richard and Mira, Kitsamy and Premala are not run smoothly from time to time. The novel is coloured with the freedom seeking colonized Indians and colonizing Britishers. The novel revolves round by the continuous domestic struggles of Richard and Mira and cold relationships of Kitsamy with Premala. As the little of the novel suggests their inner furies come out in the form of anger, hate, jealousy, disunity, disharmony, disliking for one another and breaking up of conjugal relations. The novel begins with Mira, attending Richards's funeral where the mob is ruminating over the little silver box containing the remnants of her memories with Richards. From the very beginning of the novel, Mira's actions show linking for Richard and later these actions develop hatred and slowly into a visible flame. They lose mutual respect and confidence in their marital life and a kind suspicion arose in them. Before that Mira was delightful in the company of Richard and she feels

“Slowly my sense awoke and responded, the buds of feeling swelled and open one by one. In the trembling silence I heard the blood begin its clamour, felt its frantic irregular beat. Then the world fell away forgotten in this wild abandoned rhythm lost in the sweep and surge of love” (110)

She becomes warm and contented implying the complexion of sexual act and talks of tenderness that comes to a man after wards. Then violence and disruption are introduced in their love. When the lovers blissfully happy and their love at its peak seems secure against all dangers of the world, Political violence threatens its very existence. Mira tells that an Englishman and an Indian girl have no business to be in love and That East and the West should never meet. Later, Mira parts company with Richard, sacrificing her personal love for the longer love of the nation, and identifying herself with the Indian Mob.

“We had known love together, whatever happen the sweetness of that knowledge could always remain. We had drunk deeply of the choice of Happiness, which is not given to many even to whole. Now it was time to set it down, and go” (158)

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Taken an symbolic level of parting of Mira and Richard is the parting of India and England in contrast to Mira-Richard relationship which is based on love without marriage, the relationship of Premala and Kitsamy could be termed marriage without love. Kitsamy refuses to marry a girl without first knowing her. His love for a silk hair English girl called Syluia could not have been turned into a marriage. His opposition to marry Premala arose in the absence of his acquaintances with her.

Then, Premala begins to live with Richard's mother and Kitsamy comes in contact with her. In the second stage begins with marriage of Premala and Kitsamy and then the latter's efforts to modernize her. Kitsamy likes playing tennis Premala does not. He asks her to put on short's for which she has no liking. She passes for honesty but for Kits signifies nothing. Her desire of playing on Veena is in contrast with absence of liking for classic music, she knows Gita which Kits has forgotten and their natures are opposed to each other. Premala tries for adjustment with her husband But they continue to remain poles apart. Premala's love for Kits is extinguished. Premala's love

Has been one sided it was because of her love that she tried do hard to pleasure him. The absence of her husband's love breeds frustration in Premala. Having none of her own she adopts a child and shares with the village people the wormth of love. This unsatisfactory marriage leads Premala for matrial disharmony, disintegration and disunity.

For mental piece, she involves in social service.

Some Inner furry does not have a typical happy ending in marriage which is an obsessed ideal of the country. The absence of concretized friction of love testifies that human lives are bound to be barren in the forced marriage of the East and the West and more so in the impending struggle between the Indians and British. The deaths of Kitsamy and Richard can be taken as the death of love in which the English man and Westernised Indians are sacrificed for the national interests for Premala's unhappiness is caused by the Westernized as the alters is by the traditional Premala, rather than being lovers, they become symbol of unhappiness, and it causes marital disharmony of family and disunity in their personal relations. Faith is the force of life when it is lost, the bond of the family is lost for ever and it gets fragmented and the union of the family is disintegrated and it never

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runs smoothly . We trace out all these elements in Kamala Markandeya's novel some inner fury, between Richard and Mira , as well as Kitsamy and Premala.

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STIGMA AND PREJUDICE OF WOMAN IN SUDHA MURTHY'S MAHASHWETA AND ALICE WALKER'S POSSESSING THE SECRET OF JOY

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Abstract:

Natural differences that exist between the sexes are based on biological and anatomic factors. However, it also includes the difference based on reproduction and physical strengths. Nevertheless, the differences has to be cherished and celebrated, as right from the birth, both men and women are raised differently with diverse environment throughout their lives. They both possess two different ideal personalities to stay on separate paths. Moreover, it is absolute insanity in comparing a gender with a totally incomparable gender. Hitherto, gender identity has been portrayed in many notable works and this paper highlights on the issue of gender representation in the lives of Anupama and Tashi, protagonists of the two novels of the study. Sudha Murthy, a woman of many dimensions represents a ray of hope for woman, who are physically and psychologically repressed with the social norms. *Mahashweta*, the ultimate work of Sudha Murthy is an exploration of an Indian woman in the background of severe social stigma and prejudices that engulf the innocent lives. The story pivots on the protagonist, Anupama, an unrivalled in knowledge and beauty and as her name itself suggests, 'an incomparable' beauty tranformed to be 'Mahashweta'- 'a white one'. Albeit, leukoderma is just a defective pigmentation of the skin and a curable one, it is considered as a curse in the society. Anupama faces negligence and indifference by each and every one of her family members and she boldly faces her affliction and chooses to life a desired life of her own. Alice Walker is a strong opponent of genital mutilation and *Possessing the Secret of Joy* is an absolute protest novel. The story delves deeply into the psyche of Tashi, an African woman, who made her peripheral appearances in Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple* and *The Temple of My Familiar*. She evolves as a symbol of resistance and the story begins when she is already dead and ends at last when she is executed for committing murder as a brutal act of

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revenge for her dead sister, Dura. In spite of the protests of the missionaries, she submits herself to the cutting of tribal marks on her face and to the female initiation ceremony, in order to demonstrate her loyalty to the practices of the Olinkan people. Implications and circumstances of Dura's death and her own circumcision made a severe blow on her psyche and eventually, faced depression. Sudha Murthy and Alice Walker would never have dreamt in their wildest dreams of transforming the lives of innocent men and women. Notwithstanding, these works have brought a notable change in the psyche of both genders, as an eye-opener.

Keywords: gender discrimination, gendered identity, oppression, leukoderma, circumcision

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Alice Walker dedicates her novel *Possessing the Secret of Joy* to the entire woman populace of the world “...dedicated with tenderness and respect to the blameless Vulva.”. Moreover, she has given a hint for her deliberate choice of the title of the novel and in the words of Alice Walker “There are those who believe Black people possess the secret of joy and that it is this that will sustain them through any spiritual or moral or physical devastation.” Mental agony of Tashi on Dura’s death had a deep wound on her psyche and that has made her to go in search of a *tsunga* woman. After undergoing the female circumcision ceremony, Tashi turned passive and was never seen to be cheerful or impish. In the words of Tashi’s childhood friend and sister-in-law, Olivia, “Her movements, which had always been graceful, and quick with the liveliness of her personality, now became merely graceful. Slow. Studied...her soul had been dealt a mortal blow was plain to anyone who dared look into her eyes.”(63).

Indeed, Tashi regretted that the doctor addressed her as a Negro woman, rather than African, as to him all black people were Negroes. In a conversation with Olivia, Alice Walker brings her own views on foreigners through Tashi “Who are you and your people never to accept us as we are? Never to imitate any of our ways? It is always we who have to change.” (21). In fact, Tashi believed that the tribal marks gave her so much confidence that she wanted for herself to be done. Further, in initiation ceremony, most of the women had been initiated at the proper age, either shortly after birth or at the age of five or six, or by the onset of puberty at ten or eleven. Furthermore, M’Lissa, a *tsunga* expatriates Adam, Tashi has missed her initiation ceremony in her young age as her mother, Catherine had gone Christian. Hence, the grown up daughter has approached her wanting the operation because “she recognised it as the only remaining definitive stamp of Olinka tradition.” (61).

Tashi considered herself completely woman, African and Olinka, after her operation. Unfortunately, when she walked a few steps, she noticed her own steps, her walk had become a shuffle. It vividly shows her mental affliction towards the initiation ceremony and the aftermath of her life. Moreover, women are all different and so the process of circumcision. In fact, there are three forms—in some cultures, they demand excision of only the clitoris, others “...insisted on a thorough scraping away of the entire genital area. A sigh escaped me as I thought of explaining this.” (112). There was a prejudice in the country, if a woman was not circumcised, her unclean parts would grow so long they’d soon touch her thighs; in

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addition, she would turn masculine and arouse herself. Tashi was into a years-long retrogression and rancorous depression, when she learned of Lisette's pregnancy with little Pierre and his father to be Adam. She flew into a rage and tried killing herself and thought of killing her son as well. Besides, she was not ready to lose Adam. Once, Lisette was immersed in reading and gazed at a drawing of a tiny, Chinese woman's foot, and the notation says "the rotten smell was an aphrodisiac for the man, who liked to hold both small feet helpless in his large hand, raising them to his nose as he prepared to ravish the woman, who could not run away. This immobility most satisfying to his lust." (166). It depicts clearly about man's motivation in controlling the power of a woman.

Tashi had a conversation with M'Lissa and learnt that there has always been a *tsunga* and moreover, it was hereditary like the priests. Though the operation is done for a woman, it is certainly done in order to satisfy the sexual need of a man. In fact, even there are certain villages where an uncircumcised woman is not permitted to live. On the other hand, the topic circumcision is considered a taboo that is never been discussed. Alice Walker condemns the society through a minor character, Raye as "Religion is an elaborate excuse for what man has done to women and to the earth..." (218). In the story, Mbatia queried her mother before her circumcision, if her sex organs were considered unclean, then why has she been born with that. Her mother has replied that every woman's vulva is unclean and those have to be removed to lead a good life. Tashi also reveals facts about unsterilized instruments used for the operation "...the little girls who are dying, and the women too, are infected by the unwashed, unsterilized sharp stones, tin tops, bits of glass, rusty razors and grungy knives used by the *tsunga*." (235). Nevertheless, they mutilate even twenty children without cleaning their instruments. There is also a fact that "almost every act of intercourse involves tearing and bleeding, especially in a woman's early years." (235).

Like Alice Walker, Sudha Murthy dedicates her novel, *Mahashweta* to all those women of India "...who suppress their emotions and suffer silently because they have leukoderma. May they be imbued with hope and courage." Through the minor character, Nurse Prabhavathi, the author expresses her opinion though the female child is stronger than the male child at birth, as adults man becomes the oppressor and the woman suffers through various modes. The author also put forth a valid point, at the moment of birth, the only reality is the mother as she shelters and nurtures the baby within her body while the father just witnesses from the

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sidelines. Anupama, the heroine of the story was a powerful stage actor and was very popular in the role of Mahashweta, a lead character in Bana Bhatta's *Kadambari* in Sanskrit. Anupama was the eldest daughter of a poor village schoolteacher, Shamanna and destined to struggle all her life. She has completely survived herself on scholarships as her step-mother, Sabakka has warned her husband not to educate her further as she won't support the family.

After Anupama's marriage with Anand, she became despondent and soon after the marriage, Anand set abroad for his higher studies. Nevertheless, her mother-in-law, Radhakka ultimately believed the purpose of attending any function was not so much to socialise but to flaunt one's wealth. Moreover, Anupama could not go out without taking the car and the driver, and certainly not without the knowledge of her mother-in-law. Before her wedding, she was as free as wind and then turned as a cage bird after her marriage. Her passion was always towards acting, but, when she learnt that she will never be allowed to act or sing thereafter, her heart was heavy with remorse. She had never dreamt in her wildest dream of being idle in her life and her only purpose in the house was to adorn and exhibit herself, as a reflection of their status in the society. Her only ray of hope was Anand and she always felt as a stranger in that house.

Once, Anupama noticed a small white patch on her foot where she had burnt and as the days elapsed, she realised that it was growing bigger and suspected it could be leukoderma, and she was numb with fear. She decided to keep it discreet as her mother-in-law or sister-in-law would create a big havoc. The dermatologist diagnosed it as vitiligo, leukoderma and he is aware that tiny patches has ruined many marriages and broken many engagements. Leukoderma patients were all overwhelmed by the social implications of their affliction. The doctor consoled her “Don't lose courage. This is not a disease. It is caused by defective pigmentation of the skin. Face it boldly—anxiety and tensions may only aggravate it.” (50). When the whole family came to know of her affliction, she had not expected to be ostracized, as she was not allowed to perform puja with the flowers. Sundarakka, neighbour of Radhakka approached her mother-in-law to add pain to the injury by stating “Radha, be careful. Do you know whether it is leukoderma or leprosy? It might be contagious,” (55). Radha got shattered as the doctor has lucidly stated that although the clinical symptoms of leukoderma and leprosy might be similar, they were very different in nature. She was even accused by her

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in-law house that she had the problem even before her marriage, but Anupama's family has disclosed the secret. Finally, she has been sent out of the house to her village itself.

Life in the village was very hard for Anupama, as her step-mother herself considered the white patches to bring bad luck and were contagious. There were many rumours and malicious stories about her health and her life in the village. Anand never cared to write any letter to her and later on, she found out that he has arrived for her sister's marriage and never tried to visit his wife once "The drama of her life had only just begun, and she had no choice but to see it through to the end." (70). Though Anand was a doctor and he knew very well about the impact of leukoderma, he did not care to be at the side of his love, Anupama to support and console her—rather, he was just obeying his mother.

After few days, Anupama got settled in Bombay with the help of her friend, Sumithra and her husband, Hari Prasad. She found a new meaning in her life after attaining a financial freedom and she accepted her life as it is. After few days, she came to understand the real intention of Hari Prasad in helping her at hard times. Her confidence was thoroughly beaten and she began accusing her stars for her misfortunes. Nevertheless, Vasant, a doctor in Bombay who treated Anupama at her emergency remembered one of the poems and it clearly depicts about the imperfect beauty of life.

*“There is no perfection in anything in life.
Even in the great river Ganga there are black serpents.
The beautiful Saraswathi has jet-black curls;
The moon has a dark spot
Because evn in nature perfection is not possible.” (99).*

Anupama considered courage and confidence as the real wealth in life and education can improve the chances of success. To her, conscience was guru and it guided her in a right path. She felt content with having good friends and great students and moreover, she thought blessed to be economically independent. She accepted her life as it comes without regretting over the past and worrying about the future. In Bombay, she resumed herself as a stage actor and felt utmost happiness in her choice. There was a total contrast between Anand and Vasant in their attitude, as Anand was fell in love with Anupama at first sight and valued the external

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beauty in his life. He went abroad to pursue his higher studies without thinking of his lovable wife, Anupama. Vasant valued Nature as the permanent beauty and also of a view that beauty of a person is seen or calculated only through one's nature and whoever is compassionate and ready to serve others possess the real inner beauty. His passion is to do service to the villagers with a very meagre amount as the fees. Even after knowing Anupama's skin disease, Vasant was willing to marry her and live his rest of the life with her. However, Anupama decided to live a life of her own without depending on anyone.

This paper proposes to analyse the theme of gender inequality and injustice that prevails throughout the world. These novels give the idea of how women are considered as a secondary sex and how they are unfairly treated because of their gender. In fact, these two novels were the first of its kind to throw light on the controversial issues, 'cosmetic' disease, leukoderma and circumcision. Being the women writers, Alice Walker and Sudha Murthy have deftly captured the psychic trauma of the protagonists of their novels. Despite being touching sky at one side, woman also face multitude of slavery in terms of physical, domestic and psychological level. These two novels are profoundly shocking yet uplifting tale of woman's quest for identity.

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WOMEN WRITERS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO LITERATURE

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Abstract

Women are the most beautiful creation of God and a blessing to mankind. She is the reason for the continuity of human race. Women writers brought to limelight the oppressions they met and the strength by which they overcame them and established their rights. Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication On The Rights Of Women* (1792) is a landmark treatise that paved the way for many women. The voice of gender bias next echoed in the works of Jane Austen. She portrayed the life of the English country society. Virginia Woolf was an influential and inspiring writer who boldly expressed that, “For most of history, anonymous was a women”. One of the most famous feminist writers of the 21st Century was Maya Angelou. Her famous works ‘*The Reunion*’, ‘*Still I Rise*’ still continue to inspire. The contribution of women writers towards literature goes endless.

Keywords: women, contribution, literature, English, gender

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“Every word a woman writes changes the story of the word, revises the official version.”

–Carolyn See

Women are the most beautiful creation of God and a blessing to mankind. She is the reason for the continuity of human race. Even the word ‘men’ is contained in the word ‘women’. She makes the world a beautiful place. She is mighty enough to provide energy to the whole world. Woman is a symbol of sacrifice and struggles, patience and tolerance. During middle ages, women underwent hardships and subjected to suppression. Women began to hold the torch of liberty through literature. Their writing has acquired a strength and tone which points towards the onset of a new era of women liberty and self-reliance.

Women have been long denied equal rights in all walks of life. However, expression through literature has become the powerful voice of the women. Women writers have put in lot of efforts to contribute towards literature. Women are no longer dependent on men for everything. They have gathered courage and are giving words to their inner being. Traditionally male dominant discourse is no longer the suppressing force for the creative ideas of women writers. Women writers brought to limelight the oppressions they met and the strength by which they overcame them and established their right. Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication On The Rights Of Women* (1792) is a landmark treatise that paved the way for many women after her to not only publish their works of literature but also to engage in the overall critical discourse surrounding the issue of women in literature

The voice of gender bias next echoed in the works of Jane Austen. She portrayed the life of the English country society. She has six famous novels to her credit, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*. Her range was narrow and as she never ventured beyond her own experience and powers, she achieved as no other English novelist ever has achieved, an even level of perfection. Her books are composed of the most commonplace materials. Therefore, they are slight in texture. But her touch was so sure, her humour subtle, her characterization life-like, that all competent critics regard her as one of the finest artists that English fiction has ever produced. Benjamin Disraeli, the former British Prime Minister said, “I am fond of reading Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*. I have read it more than five times.” Many call her novels “Tea table novels”, but

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she presented the plight of women during her period. Sense and Sensibility shows how Edward Ferrars made romances with both Lucy Steele and Elinor. Willoughby was flirting with Marianne but at the end deceived her. Marianne had to marry Colonel Brandon who was twice her age. In Pride and Prejudice she satirises the English Property Law. In the story, Mr. Bennett had five daughters and no one got married yet. According to the law, if he dies all property will go to the dearest male relative and they will be kicked out of their houses. What an unjust a law! So the mother tries to marry off her daughters to rich persons as soon as possible. In those days women had no education and in order to establish economic security, they should marry rich men. Thus Jane Austen pictured the crisis underwent by women of her time. She is a class by herself.

After the death she marries Ladislaw even though her first husband declared that she will lose all her inherited property if she married Ladislaw after his death. George Eliot succeeded in putting forward the ideology of feminism in the novel. Virginia Woolf was an influential and inspiring writer who boldly expressed that, “For most of history, anonymous was a women”. Her essay entitled *A Room Of One's Own* (1929) is widely cited as an example of early feminist cultural ideas. Woolf's essay examines the educational, social as well as financial disadvantages women have faced throughout history. It contains Woolf's famous argument that ‘A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction’. She explains the unresolved problems of women and fiction.

In chapter two, the narrator recounts her experience at the British Museum, where she went to collect information on the topic of ‘Women and Fiction’ on which she proposed to give a talk at the women's college. The narrator was horrified to find that many great writers were frankly anti-feminist. The eighteenth century moralistic poet Pope is known for his aversion to women. He said in a fit of misogyny; ‘Most women have no character at all’. Virginia Woolf also praises the women writers. Mrs. Aphra Behn was a trail blazer. Though widowed, she supported her family by writing for money. She was the first to show that women could practice writing to eke out their livelihood. Virginia Woolf also points out the partiality of the society in exaggerating the lapses of women and encouraging the sins of men. She cites the example of how Tolstoy committed sins but was not scandalized but George Eliot was tarnished due to the lapses in her personal life. Virginia Woolf concluded that women should

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not be self-satisfied. They should not be depressed by their poverty and obscurity. They should strive hard for their upliftment. One of the most famous feminist writers of the 21st Century was Maya Angelou. Her famous works '*The Reunion*', '*Still I Rise*' still continue to inspire. I quote her “Each time a woman stands for herself, without knowing it possibly, without claiming it, she stands for a women”. The contribution of women writers towards literature goes endless. Still many female writers strive hard to enhance literature. Thus women writers continuously raise their voice against injustice and contribute not only to the reformation of society but also to the enrichment of literature.

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THE PORTRAYAL OF 'ANARKALI' IN IMTIAZ DHARKER'S LEAVING FINGERPRINTS

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Abstract

Literature is a reflection of man or woman's life in society. Indian women writers' contribution, while portraying women is significant. Often they notify their feelings and experiences, observations and opinions in their works. They present many women characters from epics, society, and history as well as role models or as silenced voices. In this research paper, I would like to present Imtiaz Dharker's depiction of Anarkali a supposed historical character. 'Anarkali (Nadira Begum) is a quasi-mythical character of a slave girl in love with the imperial heir Salim (Jahangir), which was passionately shared by the Prince. However, his father, Emperor Akbar, did not approve of it and walled her up alive in 1599, while the Prince was away. The reflections of Anarkali found the place in Imtiaz Dharker's "Anarkali" in her fifth collection of poems Leaving Fingerprints. It has no connection with Salim or Akbar. It is about the philosophy of life and death through the mouth of Anarkali, She evokes Anarkali applying historiography to emphasize the ambiguous relationship between past and the writing of the story of Anarkali from a tragic figure to an enlightened soul i.e. a Sufi.

Keywords: Historiography-Anarkali- -enlightened spirit- Popular culture-Sufism

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Literature is a reflection of man or woman's life in society. Indian women writers' contribution, while portraying women is significant. Often they notify their feelings and experiences, observations and opinions in their works. They present many women characters from epics, society, and history as well as role models or as silenced voices. In this research paper, I would like to present Imtiaz Dharker's depiction of Anarkali a supposed historical character. 'Anarkali (Nadira Begum) is a quasi-mythical character of a slave girl in love with the imperial heir Salim (Jahangir), which was passionately shared by the Prince. However, his father, Emperor Akbar, did not approve of it and walled her up alive in 1599, while the Prince was away' (Alain Desoulières). This incident takes place in Lahore at the Mughal court. Later Jahangir constructed a splendid grave in her memory in 1615 in a pomegranate garden Anarkali... It seems thus she derived her name. Her name is a combination of Persian 'Anar' i.e pomegranate and Hindi 'Kali' means bud. On the top of the grave are inscribed the 99 attributes of God, and on the sides is engraved the following Persian couplet, composed by Jahangir, her royal paramour:

Ah! could I behold the face of my beloved once more,
I would give thanks unto my God until the day of resurrection.

-Majnuun Salim Akbar

But modern historians argue that it is not Anarkali's tomb.

The famous Urdu writer Imtiaz Ali Taj wrote a drama Anarkali in 1922. He tried to make a silent movie of his drama with the title Anarkali: Loves of a Moghul Prince by a Bengali duo Prafulla Roy and Charu Roy in 1928. Later in the second edition of his drama, he tried to add some embellishments with the help of two local historians named Ghulam Abbad and Chirag Hassan. This attempt blurred the lines between historical fact and fiction. Akshay Chavan in 'Liveindiahistory.com' writes:

"Imtiaz Ali, to give a face to the legendary heroine Anarkali, also requested his close friend and noted painter A.R.Chughtai, to paint a portrait of Anarkali, which was printed in the 1931 edition as a cover page"¹

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From then on the pathetic love story of Anarkali took a life of its own. Movies were made with this story from 1935 onwards. Most famous was A.K.Asif's Moghal-e-Azam starring Madhubala and Dilip Kumar, which became an inseparable part of popular culture. The original tragic ending of the girl is changed in the film. Anarkali escaped through a secret door in the wall, following the command of the emperor who showed mercy on the poor girl's mother. It might be to keep up Akbar's reputation for being a kind ruler. Thus the story became legendary blurring the lines between fact, fiction, and folklore. The historical realism of this tale is blended with a popular tale of Sassi Punnu in Punjabi.

Taj's historical drama is based on precise historical context. In the preface to his drama, Taj concludes about the reality of Anarkali: "my drama is 'only related to [oral] tradition. The reflections of Anarkali found the place in Imtiaz Dharker's "Anarkali" in her fifth collection of poems Leaving Fingerprints. It has no connection with Salim or Akbar. It is about the philosophy of life and death through the mouth of Anarkali, a popular historical character. Imtiaz Dharker (1954), a Pakistani/Indian/British poet is a versatile persona, an entity, poet, painter, filmmaker, and a conscientious human being. She evokes Anarkali applying historiography to emphasize the ambiguous relationship between past and the writing of the story of Anarkali from a tragic figure to an enlightened soul i.e. a Sufi. Pierre Nora, a French historian comments:

" Critical historiography focuses on the relationship between the personality of the poet and her life choices in the process of engraving a historical character". 2

So Dharker who has faith in Sufism sketches the character of Anarkali in the subsection of the collection in Leaving Fingerprints (Bloodaxe Books Ltd: 2009), not as a victim but as a lover of freedom with her universal love, a philosopher, who believes that the punishment meted out on her as a blessing. She feels that this gave a chance to intermingle with all creatures in the universe. With a matured mind she visualizes the reality of Death and the greatness of life after death and reincarnation. While framing Anarkali, Dharker seeks a touch of the real and extends it to make a part of popular culture.

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Generally, Historians see "a nation's literary history as an expression of its evolving spirit. Like Tillyard they try to establish the interconnections between the literature and the general culture of a period." (Raman Selden:2007). Following this trait the poet molds the character of Anarkali in the socio-cultural background of women in the Moghal period. Women received better treatment in the reign of Akbar. Some of them played a key role in the society or harem like Ruqaiya and Salima Begum Akbar's wives and Maham Anga, political adviser of the teenage emperor. Living in that sort of environment Anarkali might have grown her individuality. Her Sufi philosophy refers to the faith of Akbar in that religion, which is the faith of the court also. Referring to the historical traces of Anarkali, Akshay Chavan writes:

"The French historian Alain Desoulières in his research paper "Historical Fiction and Style: The Case of Anarkali" has traced the origin of Anarkali's story to the accounts of different 17th century English travelers to Lahore such as William Finch, Edward Terry, and Bishop Herbert. These travelers wrote of a supposed incident, which they heard from the locals where Akbar had his favorite wife, mother of Prince Daniyal, buried alive for having an affair with her stepson Salim.³

But historically it was untrue. Alain Desoulières believe that the myth of Anarkali was based on the construct of an 'Oriental despot putting a fair maiden to death', which was popular and promoted by the Victorians after the revolt of 1857 to highlight the 'brutal' rule of the Mughals in contrast to the 'kind and benevolent' rule of the British. There is another view of the historians is that Anarkali after the death of Akbar was recalled by Salim (Jahangir) and they married and was given a new identity of NurJahan. Though believed a mythical character Dharker makes her a great personality by attaching magnificent philosophy to her dialogues in the poems of this section. The songs of 'Anarkali' consists of various themes of existence i.e. the realities of life, death and reincarnation, effectively.

The static meaning of life and subsistence in the course of extinction is the hypothesis of 'Anarkali' poems- "When they walled her in", "Walling her in", and "Anarkali inside". The incident of walling in and the song of Anarkali about erased history are the theme of these poems. 'Anarkali', the symbol of beauty and sacrifice, an icon of love and courage is commemorated. When the builder has come to build a wall, 'Anarkali lifted her head and

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began to sing'. In the beginning, the builder does not pay any attention to her and began to 'build a wall around a song'. She sang about love, lost courage, missing people including the builder. She sang about erased history, list of faded empires like Srinagar, Baghdad, Kabul, Gaza, about gardens, poets like Faiz and Darwish, who came to live with her behind the wall, the tomb. After listening to this song of loss the builder died of a broken heart. After some time people also forgot the tomb. The poet enlightens in "When they walled her in":

In the long days and the long nights

the wall was just a wall, no one could tell

that inside there was a song.

People sat in its shadow, leaned bicycles on it,

made phone calls pissed against it.

They treated it like any other wall. (P. 55)

Anarkali's song remained eternal though she was dead but not what she spelled out. Her spirit took life again:

One day a crack appeared. Another day

a pomegranate blossom burst through.

Someone looked at it and said,

there, that must be a letter from Berlin,

a word from prisoner 46664,

a song from Belfast, a poem from Dublin. (P. 55)

Life regenerated in the form of a pomegranate blossom, like a letter from distant lands, astonishingly.

In "Walling her in" the builder's expression of the prisoner, Anarkali is related. He listens to her song and finds the names of his family in the list of missing things. As it was habitual to kill the builders after the conclusion of the edifice, he understands the reality. He thinks 'What is happening to her could happen to him also'. He understands that death is common to all life on earth whether it is an emperor or a commoner, whether it is a great city or an ordinary town, all collapse. After some time that life returns and flourishes with another name and form. In "Anarkali, inside" Anarkali narrates how she is 'learning to grow with the other

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creatures' inside the wall. She has to live and gradually lose identity as Anarkali. She continues:

The emperor can only build a palace, he can order
a wall. Will, that protects the thing he loves?
Of all that we are making here, nothing is lost.
The earth is keeping us safe
until we take new shapes and live again. (P. 57)

Suspecting her of a criminal conspiracy with his son, the Emperor ordered her to be buried alive. She was consequently positioned in an erect position at the selected place and was built around with bricks. She came to life again through her song. So the poet concludes that Anarkali is not dead. She is alive in every art form, music, cinema, fashion, and she is even 'Alive, inside you'.

Every living object has the right to live and each existence leaves its traces in the world, whether one identifies it or not. Dharker through the voice of Anarkali expresses her philosophy of life, which insists that life continues even after death. If one understands this s/he can live a happy life, respecting every object. The knowledge of this kind of attitude makes the man a universal entity, with a cosmopolitan outlook. The sentiment of 'hope' and the universality of love keep Anarkali in the state of immortality. She declares her immortality in the poem "Anarkali inside":

The whole world will sing me
in the bazaar, into babies' ears.
You will hear it again and again,
my name is spoken aloud,
Anarkali, Anarkali
in the open marketplace,
in the courtyards and in bedrooms,
in darkened cinemas.
(Leaving Fingerprints, p. 57)

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The poet opines that Anarkali does not blame anybody for her fate but happy for the chance given to live along with all the creatures. She was not sad because she died as a single entity and returned with multiple identities and became a universal personality. She equates humans and worms and birds because the life force in all these is identical. Her impartial love towards everything in this universe makes her a universal figure in literature.

The hope of life and the permanence of prolongation is the main theme of this collection. In the poems written in 'Anarkali', the legendary 'slave girl', explain the theme brilliantly. The Emperor, Akbar ordered Anarkali to be buried/walled in alive. She was not sad but felt happy because she was given a chance to live with every worm and every living creature in the tomb. Anarkali poems relate the phases of dying and being resurrected. When this reality encounters, Anarkali forgets all grief and lives in happiness even in the grave. She is not sad because she is going to die but happy to be born again in another form. In "Anarkali, inside" she proclaims:

I am learning to grow with the other creatures,
the snails, the snakes, the slugs, the worms,
my hair a net where ants save stories
and stories save ants, where poets
store the words of songs.

.....
..... My eyes will be filled to the brim
with living things, my hands rich
with salamander bangles and lizard rings.

.....
Of all that we are making here, nothing is lost.
The earth is keeping us safe until we take new shapes and live again.

.....
Alive, inside you,
I will be found. (P. 57)

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Anarkali speaks about the company she keeps there in the tomb and her idea of reincarnation has social relevance. Her ideal of love towards the creatures grows from an emotional level to a higher level, i.e. love for all living things and mankind. 'Ultimately it comes to a love for the one being in everyone, and finally reincarnating comes to an end.' Anarkali confirms her existence in all living creatures and especially in every human being. She also shows her respect for different species, and response to other races, classes, people, and forms of life. Haraway thinks that 'to belong to a species is the ability and willingness, to respect and respond. Derrida calls it 'I recognize my own human-ness'. According to Donna Haraway: 'even when we speak of people, the animal/human/living/nonliving category separations fray inside a kind of encountering worthy of regard.⁴

Dharker believes in Sufi philosophy that all life in this world is a part of the universal life. Every form of life has the right to live and no one has any permission to kill it. All life force in different form lives performs its duties and dies and again returns in a different form to perform a new action. This is cyclic and continuous. Rumi symbolizes this truth in Whirling dance, 'Sama'. It represents 'a mystical journey of spiritual ascent through mind and love to the perfect one'. In this journey, the seeker symbolically turns towards truth, grows through love, abandons ego, finds the reality and arrives at the perfection. The seeker then turns from this spiritual journey, with greater maturity, to love and to be of service to the whole of creation without discrimination with regard to beliefs, races, classes, and nations.

In some verses of Masnavi, Rumi describes in detail the universal message of love: 'the lover's cause is to detach from all other causes/love is the astrolabe of God's mysteries'. Rumi's visions, words, and life tell one how to reach inner peace and happiness. Dharker understands his sayings and finds the joy within. However chaotic conditions may exist in the world, one can attain peace when one understands the reality of life. She depicts this belief through the voice of Anarkali, the legendary slave girl.

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SAROJINI NAIDU AND KAMALA DAS AS POETS OF LOVE-AN OVERVIEW

Dr. K.Surya Chandra Rao

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Abstract

While making any evaluation of Indian women poets' writings one should notice remarkable changes and widen in their thematic interests. Sarojini Naidu and Kamala Das are two important poets who expressed themselves freely in the English language. They represented the aspirations of Indian women in English and expressed in their poetry. Love is the predominant theme in the poetry of these two poets. Sarojini Naidu was called Nightingale of India for her poetry melody. Kamala Das was also hailed as love queen of Malabar. A touch of feminism was seen in both these poets. This paper throws some light on the common theme of love in these two great Indian women poets.

Keywords: Indian imagery, feminism, Oriental splendour, love-longing, skin communicated thing

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In Pre- Independence India Sarojini Naidu and a host of other poets produced the best kind of poetry. Toru Dutt observes sufferings of women but does not extricate the feelings of women. Sarojini Naidu, the woman, the mother, the Patriot looks into the buried and broken heart of a woman. Her two collected poems, namely, The Golden Threshold, and The Broken Wing consists of the sensitive beauty of holiness. With these works, she became the nightingale of India. It was Sarojini Naidu who carries forward the task left incomplete by the early death of Toru Dutt. She achieves single success in the handling of Indian Imagery and the expression of Indian poetry.

Sarojini Naidu and Kamala Das are eminently representatives of their respective generations. Born and brought up in a Bengali Bhadrolok 19 the Century family, Naidu naturally subscribes to the Victorian idea of womanhood, which in her case was grafted on the Indian tradition which she shared. In both these traditions woman was mostly seen as a weak, delicate, clinging creature, wholly dependent on Man. And this is how Naidu seems to view a woman, though in her own personal life she did break the mold. On the authority of French Feminism Helen Cixous and Luce Irigaray, it may be suggested that words like 'fountain', 'floodgates' and 'drowning' refer to female participation in love-making. If this is so Naidu emerges as a pioneer in feminist writing.

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The theme of love predominates in Sarojini Naidu's poetry. Every kind of love-experience and every possible mood of love finds its place in her poetry. The longing of lovers for each other is expressed with truly oriental splendor in, A Rajput Love Song:

Haste, O wild -deer hours, to the meadows of the sunset!

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The world of Rajput Chivalry and royal splendor has been successfully evoked in this lyric. There is a group of love poems at the end of her last volume, and the twenty-four poems that form the group are significantly given the collective title, The Temple. The deep mystic fervor that inspires them is stressed with the subtitle, "A Pilgrimage of Love". And the pilgrimage towards the temple is carefully worked out in three stages of eight poems each. The pilgrimage begins with The Gate of Delight and the poems of this stage are calculated to demonstrate that in Love's bondage is true freedom, and true bliss in the sacrifices it demands. But issuing through The Gate of Delight, the pilgrim of love must tread The Path of Tears-tears of humiliation. True love, love-suffering and self-denying must overcome pride. Accordingly, in the eight poems that make up The Path of Tears, the faithful lover bewails the others' pride and disdain and cruelty. In the third group entitled The Sanctuary, it is told of the sanctuary at which the lover must be prepared to worship with the utmost devotion, even to the point of a joyous surrender of life itself.

In spite of all trials and tragedies, love remains a prime value for Naidu. In closing pages of The Sceptered Flute, she asks " why should my true love falter or fear or rebel?" and declares, " so shall my yearning, Love, at last,/ Grow sanctified/ thro sorrow find deliverance/ From mortal pride/ So shall my soul redeemed re-born/ Attain thy side" (ISF,231)

Another noted Indian poet Kamala Das, who has published only three slender volumes of poetry, Summer in Calcutta, The Descendants, and The Old Playhouse and Other Poems, has established "her reputation as the femme fatale" of Indian English poetry.

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Her poetry deals with unfulfilled love and celebration of Sex. The uninhibited and frank description of sex characterizes her poetry. Search for love is the principal preoccupation of Kamala Das poetry. To her love is not only the physical union of bodies but also minds and bodies. Emotional and spiritual fulfillment required in love or it becomes a skin communicated thing. Thus Das wants to experience eternal bliss in a marital relationship.

While assessing both as poets of love, M.K.Naik tries to focus on modern love which "has more perplexities and paradoxes that could be dreamt of in 19th-century philosophy." In his concluding part, Naik says that Naidu's love poetry represents, by and large, the songs of the innocence of Love ... Kamala Das, on the other hand, is the poet of the 'songs of experience'. She has her moments of innocence and even naivety, but she is essentially a poet who has looked upon the Gorgon face of Love, and has lived to tell the tale: "Ah, why does love come to me like pain/ Again and again and again?" ("The Testing of the Sirens"). T.S Eliot has pointed out in Contemporary Criticism that Comparison and analysis are the chief tools of a critic. Accordingly, both Sarojini Naidu and Kamala Das poetry has been compared and analyzed in this paper.

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SARU’S JOURNEY FROM SELF NEGATION TO SELF ASSERTION IN SHASHI DESHPANDE’S THE DARK HOLDS NO TERROR

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Abstract

Shashi Deshpande occupies a significant place as a women novelist in post independent India. The novel The Dark Holds No Terrors deals with the sexual exploitation of Saru, the protagonist. This research article portrays Saru’s inner sufferings due to gender discrimination as a child and being a victim of sexual assault imposed on her by her husband. It also emphasis on her struggle to find refuge in her father’s house to escape from the trauma. The sexual assault on Saru is a dark veil which engulfs her completely. This traumatic experience gives her a mental suffering and urges her to carve out for self, a free life, free from her husband Manu’s domineering attitude. The article brings out how she wishes to evolve out of this ‘dark’ and desperate life and moves into a ‘light’ of her own space.

Keywords: Gender discrimination, exploitation, dark, terror, light

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Shashi Deshpande occupies a prominent place among the contemporary women novelists who deals with the problems of women and their search for identity. Though her heroines are sensitive, they are intelligent and career-oriented. Shashi Deshpande was born in 1938, in the small town of Dharwad, Karnataka. Her novels reveals a deep understanding of the female psyche especially women of the educated, urban and the middle class. Deshpande's women confirm to the traditional role of a housewife and are more responsible in dealing with their problems.

Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terrors* portrays Saru, the protagonist as a victim of gender discrimination which still prevails in today's world. She suffers first as a daughter and later as a wife. Her mother shows more preference to her brother which drives her to a sense of restlessness and alienation. Saru's mother blames her for her brother's death who mutely watches her brother drowning accidently in the pond without going forward to help him. The thought of being responsible for her brother's death leads to psychological insecurity in Saru.

Saru hates her mother and goes to Bombay to study Medicine. Her psychological insecurity and lack of attention makes her to fall in love with Manohar, a post graduate student and an active member of the Dramatic society. Sarita marries Manohar and becomes a victim of sexual assault by her husband. Sarita, the 'two in one woman' is a successful doctor during the day and a 'trapped animal' at night. She gains recognition as a doctor in contrast to Manu who is an underpaid lecturer in a third rate college. Her profession and recognition in the society disturbs her marital life.

Saru's high status in the society makes her neighbour to become aware of her professional identity. She is respected by her neighbours which disturbs the traditional equilibrium of the superior husband and an inferior wife. Manu gradually undergoes a change from a romantic hero to a brutal husband for his wife's steady rise in status. Saru's success brings to light the failure of Manu as a breadwinner.

Things become worse when a reporter from a woman's magazine interviews Saru and asks Manu, "How does it feel when your wife earns not only the butter but most of the bread as well?"(200). This question makes Manu conscious of his lower status in the society. Whenever Manu is reminded of his lower position he asserts his power through sexual sadism

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imposed on Saru. Saru calls it as: "a monstrous onslaught on her person and personality." (201) Later Saru becomes aware of his inferiority complex for her high status.

Saru's career is Manu's problem. Saru determines to play the role of a housewife which may reduce her sufferings psychologically and physically. Since her self is negated. She decides to act according to her husband's will. Saru gives a talk on 'Medicine as a profession for Women' to some college student and makes up an imaginary speech which sums up the condition for a successful marriage.

The anger described in the above quoted words clearly reveals how intensely her suffering has anguished her heart. Saru is conscious of the fact that she is superior to her husband in terms of qualification and social status. But in her heart she strives to be subordinate to her husband. She decides to resign her job. But her husband shudders at the thought of her resigning the job due to economic needs.

Shashi Deshpande proves that an economically independent woman is still bound in shackles and must live in fear of hurting the emotions and ego of her husband. As Saru observes bitterly : "a+b they told us in mathematics is equal to b+a. But her a+b was not, definitely not equal to b+a. It became a monstrously unbalance equation, lopsided, unequal, impossible." (42).

Manu's monstrous behaviours become even more worse by the suggestion made by a friend, when Saru and Manu plan to go to Ooty as a trip. They meet a colleague of Manu and his wife who had been dreaming of going to Matheran for years but could not afford it. The wife remarks: "If you had married a doctor.....you'd have gone to Ooty too." (111) This remark creates a sense of bitterness in both Saru and Manu. That night Manu assaults Saru brutally. She can feel "the hurting hands, the savage teeth, the monstrous assault of a horribly familiar body." (112). The next morning, Manu is as usual, feel relaxed and talks to Saru as if nothing had happened in the previous night.

Saru's individuality and identity is trampled by Manu's sexual assault and ego. She feels humiliated at the thought of being used and the endless nights of torture make her put it crudely. "my husband is a sadist" (48). Unable to bear her husband's brutal treatment, she leaves her house, children and husband. She goes to her father's house after a gap of 15 years.

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Saru yearns for security and emotional attachment. She expects her father to support her. But her father just leaves her to face her own problem.

Saru's homecoming helps her to understand the ultimate human reality. She receives letters from Manu but reads none. Later she hears Manu's arrival. She wants to leave her father's house to avoid her encounter with him. But her father urges her to face the situation courageously. She realizes that she had failed to talk to her husband about the sexual assault because of her angry silence. With that comes the realization that 'The Dark Holds No Terrors.

The dark terror existed in her mind all these days. But now she asserts to come out of the dark veil which is the sexual assault imposed on her by her husband. She liberates herself from the shackles of male oppression and realizes her inner self through self affirmation. In the words of S.P Swain “ Saru's journey is a journey from self-alienation to self identification, from negation to assertion, from diffidence to confidence. She learns to trust her feminine self.”(39)Someone knocks at the door. It is her neighbour who wants her to treat her child. She tells Baba to ask Manu to wait and sets out to attend to her patient which is an indication of Saru's assertion of her career, without any compromise. Saru resolves to face her life and the darkness of the night, fear leaves her. She decides to step out into the world calmly and courageously.

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CHARACTERIZATION OF WOMEN IN LITERATURE

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Abstract

In 1750-1830 are witnessed as Women's Writing in Britain. In the 18th century women consolidated their significance as poets, novelists, playwrights, etc., Women created and supported the movements like Blue stocking intellectualism, the call for abolition, understandings of the new class, religion, literary styles. Sensibility of the novels, elegiac sonnet, ballad etc. The efforts of several generations of Indian authors writing in English got international success like publication of *Midnight's Children* (1981) by Salman Rushdie. It is accepted as literary endeavor. Arundhati Roy got Booker Prize for her 'The God of small things' in 1997. Usually the work of Indian Women writers has been undervalued due to the patriarchal assumptions by the male experiences. Most of the women writers about the enclosed, domestic space and perceptions of their experiences. This is the reason ranking low to the women's writings. Another problem for the Indian women writers in English is their regional counterparts. So that the majority of the novel depicted on the psychological suffering of the frustrated housewife.

Keywords: intellectualism, abolition, sensibility, elegiac, religion, literary styles, psychological, frustrated, an ambitiously, anonymously etc.,

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According to Ages:

Women in Greek Mythology perceived as sexual objects than individuals. Here the Women's rights were very limited and they were not allowed to express their freedom. In this period women were blamed for wars, destruction of towns and death of men.

Elizabethan Literature: misogyny and superiority of men were common in their writing. Virgin Mary character showed a lot of impact on women. This distrust of women lead to most works degrading the female race.

20th century Literature:

Modern Literature served as an outlet and sounding board for women's rights and feminist pioneers. Women in Modern Literature often include strong independent. *According to Tanner admits the images or stereotype has some truth as stereotypes often do (Tanner, 1986:1)* Olgen (1999) asserted that men's duty was to support the whole family and women were left at home to deal with housework and children caring. D.H. Lawrence concentrated on the study of the women characters in his selected novels. He examined the use of misogynistic ideas and compared and contrasted the women characters. D.H. Lawrence presented his women characters as sophisticated modern women and liberated and powerful. In *Sons and Lovers*, Clara is a friend of both Mirriam and Paul. They are mother contrasting characters. In *Women love* the main characters in the novel are Ursula and Gudren. We notice Ursula's hidden passion for Birkin, Gudren's relationship with Gerald.

In the *Rainbow* and *Lady Chatterley's lover*, we observe Laurence's hostility to willful women. In the story of *Constance Chaterely* emphasizes the emotions of a lonely woman trapped in a marriage and love for the robust game keeper of her Husband's estate. The Lawrence main theme of the novels is Man-woman relationship. In order for the research to be productive, it is essential for the researcher to choose a manageable number of novels. It is important to understand that, the notion of women and the element of power in other works of his author may differ. In the history of Indian Writing in English the fiction writing began with Bankimchandrachatterjee in 1860 and stretched to Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan. Indian perspective, woman's position is still dubious, and in the West they have succeeded in acquiring the same honor and respect as their male counterparts. The prejudice against the women writers becomes much stronger when they use realistic narrative

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mode to express society and its periphery. The class of women writers is generally credited with conservative tendencies. Women writing in literature play a definite role in constructing her image and may avail opportunities to redefine herself and find her own voice, so that creativity could find full threatened expression. According to Anita Desai--- "*I find it impossible to whip up any interest in a mass of women marching forward under the banner of feminism.*" The history of Indian Woman novelists in English begins with Torudutt who dies at early age lesser than John Keats. After the second world war, the history of women novelists got a new track, a new vision.

Literary man is much a product of his society as his art is a product of his own reaction to life. Literature imitates life and is, in large measure, a social reality. So it is an admitted fact that literature has arisen in close connection with particular social institutions. In the history of literature the character of a woman remained unnoticed and is in search of her identity by which she can prove binaural motive in society with the ideology of man not to associates equally with female power provided her opportunities to make a protest against the set code of society in which she has taken for granted against her own interest. Feminism is not a term to define. It is the reaction of female body against set rule of society which somewhere down the line considers woman inferior than her male counterpart. Feminism in an effort with a motto to grow awareness among women regarding their desires, sexualities, self-definition and destiny of women.

The Characterization of Women in Literature:

If you go through the character of Lizzie Bemett in Pride and Prejudice, she is strong, smart and knows what she wants. Lizzie lived in a world that just wasn't fair to women, but she never let that stop her from speaking her mind. Nancy drew in Nancy drew mystery stories, she was smart, clever and fiercely devoted to solving crime. Even though she faced more ordeals she'd go back to more detective work. The character of a Sabriel, she was brave who fought monsters and went an adventure. The character of Matilda always loves the idea of her overcoming adversity by reading book. She taught herself telekinesis and messed with people in hilariously clever ways. Anne Shirley: Anne of green gable

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Anne was imaginative, ambitious, competitive, smart, love of reading and writing. She made the best of bad situations and was never afraid to speak her mind or stand up for herself. Hellen Keller—The story of my life with her determination as a girl to learn to communicate but also her social role as an adult. Meg Marry is the main character in *Madeleine*, a science fantasy novel. She uses the Tesseract to travel to the planet to rescue her father.

Conclusion:

Through this Indian Woman writing in English, Indian Women as long-suffering wives and mothers silenced by patriarchy are portrayed. The narrative speech can be a useful guide to interpreting women's responses to patriarchal hegemony. Silence is a symbol of oppression where speech signifies self expression and liberation. In the earlier novels female characters from the 1985 onwards assert themselves and defy marriage and motherhood. But recent writers depict both the diversity of woman and the diversity within each woman rather their limitation. They also re-interpret mythology by using new symbols and sub vesting the new versions. Finally the work of Indian women writers insignificant in making society aware of women's demands and providing a medium for self-expression and re-writing the History of India.

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