

**A Two-Day International Conference  
(Hybrid Mode)**

**On**  
**Cultural Studies in Indian Socio-Literary Scenario**  
**by**  
PG & Research Department of English  
V. O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, India

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## **PREFACE**

Welcome to the proceedings of the International Conference (Hybrid Mode) on *Cultural Studies in Indian Socio-Literary Scenario*, a landmark event that brought together scholars, researchers, and practitioners across the globe to explore the rich tapestry of cultural studies within the Indian context.

The conference served as a platform for interdisciplinary dialogue, addressing a broad spectrum of themes intersecting Indian socio-cultural and literary landscapes. Through rigorous academic discourse and insightful presentations, we aimed to deepen our understanding of the diverse cultural phenomena shaping contemporary Indian society.

The contributions compiled in these proceedings represent a confluence of innovative research and critical analysis. They encompass a range of topics, from traditional cultural practices to modern literary expressions and from historical perspectives to current socio-political issues. Each paper reflects the dynamic and evolving nature of cultural studies and its relevance in analysing the complexities of Indian identity and heritage.

We extend our gratitude to the keynote speakers, session chairs, and all contributors who have made this conference a success. Their dedication and scholarly rigor have enriched our discussions and broadened our perspectives.

We hope that these proceedings will serve as a valuable resource for further research and discussion, fostering continued exploration of the vibrant cultural and literary dimensions of Indian society.

Thank you for your engagement and support.

Sincerely,

**Organising Secretary:**

Dr. R. Ajith, Assistant Professor of English

**Coordinators:**

Dr.R.Mercy Latha, Associate Professor of English

Dr.P.T.Selvi Kohila, Assistant Professor of English

Dr.Anita Albert, Assistant Professor of English

Mr.P.Maruthupandian, Assistant Professor of English

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**V. O. Chidambaram College,**

**Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu,India**

## **Principal's Message**

It gives me immense pleasure to convey that V. O. Chidambaram College has taken up the great challenge of organizing an “International Conference on Cultural Studies in Indian Socio-Literary Scenario”. I congratulate the faculty for their maiden attempt at holding the conference and I am happy with the revered publication of articles. ICCSIS-2024 will play a humble role in bringing together researchers, and young students in an informal environment to discuss the latest advances in various fields. Visit of various researchers under the roof of V. O. Chidambaram College is a matter to pride and immense pleasure to all of us. I hope that this volume which has been brought out by ICCSIS-2024 will be of great academic value for common scholars and readers. I convey my blessings and good wishes to all members of the ICCSIS-2024 family, for their dedicated involvement in this great event. Since its inception, V. O. Chidambaram College has been moving towards the heights of education and serving with quality education. I hope the management is blessed with such endeavours in the future too.

**-Dr. C. Veerabahu**

Principal, V. O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi

## **Keynote Address**

**Dr. Ashok Chaudhary** Vice-  
Chancellor  
Bir Tikendrajith  
University Manipur,  
India

Respected Principal of this Institution, Learned Coordinators of this International Conference, esteemed professors from other universities and the native organisation, dear scholars and Students, Warm Greetings.

It is a great pleasure to address you today on the topic of cultural studies within the expansive and richly layered context of the Indian socio-cultural and literary landscape. As we delve into this subject, we are engaging with a field that is both deeply rooted in tradition and dynamically evolving in the face of modern challenges.

Cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field that examines how culture influences and is influenced by various social, political, and historical forces. It is concerned with the production and consumption of cultural artefacts, practices, and norms, and explores how these elements shape and reflect societal values and identities.

In India, cultural studies encompass a broad spectrum of issues, from the examination of historical legacies to the analysis of contemporary cultural practices. The field provides valuable insights into how cultural narratives are constructed and contested, and how they intersect with questions of power, identity, and representation.

India's socio-cultural landscape is defined by its historical depth and contemporary dynamism. Our cultural heritage, comprising diverse traditions, languages, and practices, forms a rich backdrop against which modern transformations unfold. The interplay between tradition and modernity is a central theme in Indian cultural studies, reflecting the ways in which historical legacies inform present-day experiences.

This dynamic interaction is evident in various domains, including literature, media, and public life. As India navigates the complexities of globalization, urbanization, and technological advancements, cultural practices are continuously evolving. Cultural studies provides a framework to understand these changes and their implications for society.

Literature plays a pivotal role in cultural studies by serving as both a reflection and a critique of society. Indian literature, in its myriad forms, captures the diverse voices and experiences of its people. From classical epics and regional narratives to contemporary works in multiple languages, literature offers insights into the socio-cultural fabric of the nation.

Through literature, we gain access to the concerns, aspirations, and conflicts that shape individual and collective identities. It also provides a platform for marginalized voices and alternative perspectives, challenging dominant narratives and fostering a more inclusive understanding of society.

In an increasingly interconnected world, cultural studies must address both global influences and local responses. The flow of cultural products, ideas, and practices across borders has created new opportunities for exchange and collaboration, as well as new forms of cultural hybridity and conflict. Understanding these interactions is crucial for appreciating the complexities of contemporary cultural dynamics.

At the same time, it is essential to recognize and value the unique cultural contexts and local practices that shape our experiences. By balancing global perspectives with local insights, cultural studies can contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the world.

Looking ahead, cultural studies must continue to evolve in response to emerging trends and challenges. This involves embracing interdisciplinary approaches, incorporating diverse methodologies, and fostering dialogue across cultural and academic boundaries. By doing so, we can address pressing issues such as social justice, cultural preservation, and the impact of technological change.

Cultural studies offer a profound and expansive lens through which we can explore the complexities of the Indian socio-cultural and literary landscape. It challenges us to think critically about culture, to engage with diverse perspectives, and to contribute to a more inclusive and informed dialogue.

Hence, it is highly appreciable that the organisers have come with a topic that is profound in thought and provides a wider scope for authentic academic deliberations.

Congratulations to the Organisers!

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to the stimulating discussions and insights that will arise from our engagement with this vibrant field.

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**Mapping the Influence of French Culture on a Global Scale**

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**Mrs. P.T. Anbu Hannah Dora**, Associate Professor and Head Department of French, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil

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**Abstract**

This paper examines the extensive and multifaceted influence of French culture on a global scale. French culture, renowned for its sophistication, elegance, and rich history, has left an indelible mark on various aspects of global society, including language, cuisine, fashion, literature, art, and cinema. Through an analysis of historical, sociological, and cultural perspectives, this study investigates the mechanisms by which French culture has permeated and shaped diverse societies around the world. By exploring key examples and case studies, this paper illuminates the significance of French cultural influence in fostering cross-cultural exchange, shaping identities, and contributing to the enrichment of global cultural diversity. Moreover, it highlights the enduring legacy of French culture as a dynamic force that continues to inspire and resonate with individuals and communities worldwide.

French culture, renowned for its rich tapestry of artistic, culinary, and intellectual achievements, holds a prominent position on the global stage. From the cobblestone streets of Paris to the sun-kissed shores of the French Riviera, the allure of French culture transcends borders, captivating the imaginations of people around the world. This introduction sets the stage for an exploration of the far-reaching influence of French culture on a global scale. Drawing upon historical narratives and contemporary manifestations, it underscores the pervasive presence of French culture in various domains, including language, cuisine, fashion, literature, art, and cinema. By delving into the intricate interplay between globalization and cultural diffusion, this introduction lays the foundation for a comprehensive analysis of the enduring impact of French culture on diverse societies worldwide.

French culture stands as a beacon of sophistication, elegance, and artistic expression that has captivated hearts and minds around the world for centuries. The influence of French culture extends far beyond the borders of France itself, infiltrating various aspects of global society and shaping diverse cultural landscapes.

French culture exudes an unmistakable aura of sophistication, epitomized by the timeless elegance of Parisian boulevards, the grandeur of historic landmarks like the Louvre and Versailles, and the refinement of French artistic traditions. This section highlights the romanticism and allure that surround French culture, drawing travelers and admirers from around the world to immerse themselves in its beauty and charm.

France's Global Reach France has long recognized the power of cultural diplomacy in projecting its influence beyond national borders. From the establishment of cultural institutions like the Alliance Française to the promotion of French language and culture through diplomatic channels, this subsection explores how France strategically leverages its cultural heritage to enhance its soft power and foster international relations.

French cuisine stands as a cornerstone of global gastronomy, celebrated for its meticulous preparation, rich flavors, and exquisite presentation. From the haute cuisine of Michelin-starred restaurants to the humble boulangeries serving freshly baked baguettes, this section delves into the culinary legacy of France and its pervasive influence on culinary traditions worldwide.

French Style Redefined Paris, the undisputed capital of fashion, serves as a global hub for haute couture, luxury brands, and cutting-edge design. This subsection explores the evolution of French fashion, from the iconic designs of Coco Chanel and Christian Dior to the contemporary innovations of emerging designers, and examines how French style sets trends and shapes the global fashion industry.

French Culture in the Arts French artistic expression encompasses a diverse array of disciplines, from painting and sculpture to literature and cinema. This section celebrates the artistic achievements of French luminaries such as Monet, Proust, and Godard, and examines how French cultural movements like Impressionism, Existentialism, and the New Wave continue to influence artists and audiences worldwide.

French culture embodies a unique blend of sophistication, elegance, and artistic expression that has captivated hearts and minds worldwide. This section delves into the core elements that define the essence of French culture, highlighting its romantic allure and culinary delights. The essence of French culture encompasses the romantic allure of Parisian boulevards and the culinary delights of French cuisine. Through its art, architecture, cuisine, and lifestyle, French culture captivates imaginations and fosters an appreciation for beauty, refinement, and *joie de vivre*. These elements form the foundation of French cultural identity and continue to inspire and enchant people around the world.

Paris, often hailed as the "City of Love" and the epitome of French culture, exudes an irresistible charm through its iconic boulevards, historic landmarks, and cultural landmarks.

The Eiffel Tower, Notre-Dame Cathedral, and the Arc de Triomphe are not just architectural marvels but symbols of romance and grandeur that attract millions of visitors each year.

Parisian cafes lining the streets offer a quintessential French experience, where locals and tourists alike indulge in leisurely conversations over espresso or wine, immersing themselves in the city's vibrant ambiance.

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From the bohemian Montmartre district to the picturesque Seine riverbanks, Paris inspires creativity and artistic expression. Its museums, galleries, and street performers contribute to the city's dynamic cultural scene

Flavors of French Cuisine French cuisine is renowned worldwide for its sophistication, culinary techniques, and emphasis on quality ingredients. It represents a cornerstone of French culture and serves as a testament to the nation's culinary heritage.

French haute cuisine, characterized by intricate preparations and refined presentation, has set the standard for fine dining globally. Michelin-starred restaurants showcase the pinnacle of culinary artistry, offering gastronomic experiences that elevate dining to an art form.

Each region of France boasts its own culinary specialties, influenced by local ingredients and traditions. From the hearty cassoulet of the Southwest to the delicate pastries of Brittany, French cuisine reflects the diversity and richness of the country's culinary landscape.

Food holds a central place in French culture, serving as a means of social bonding, celebration, and expression. The tradition of family meals and the importance of sharing food with loved ones underscore the cultural significance of French cuisine.

French cultural influence extends far beyond the borders of France, infiltrating various aspects of global society and shaping diverse cultural landscapes. This section explores the mechanisms and manifestations of French cultural influence on a global scale, tracing its historical roots and examining contemporary trends

Mapping French cultural influence on a global scale reveals the intricate interplay between historical legacies, contemporary trends, and emerging cultural dynamics. From colonial expansion to digital globalization, French culture continues to evolve and adapt, leaving its mark on diverse cultural landscapes and fostering cross-cultural exchange and understanding. Understanding the mechanisms and manifestations of French cultural influence provides insights into the complexities of cultural globalization and the enduring significance of French culture in an interconnected world.

French cultural expansion has deep historical roots, spanning centuries of colonialism, trade, and cultural exchange. Key historical events and processes have contributed to the dissemination of French language, customs, and traditions across continents.

France's colonial empire once spanned vast territories across Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the Caribbean. Through colonization, French cultural practices, language, and institutions were introduced and assimilated into colonial societies, leaving a lasting legacy that continues to shape cultural identities today.

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Throughout history, France has actively promoted its culture and language abroad through cultural diplomacy initiatives, educational exchange programs, and the establishment of cultural institutions such as the Alliance Française. These efforts have played a crucial role in fostering goodwill and promoting French cultural values on the global stage

**Cultural Influence** In the modern era, globalization, digital connectivity, and the rise of mass media have facilitated the widespread dissemination of French cultural products and ideas. French culture continues to exert its influence through various channels, adapting to changing cultural landscapes and reaching new audiences worldwide.

The advent of mass media, the internet, and social media platforms has enabled the global spread of French culture in unprecedented ways. French films, music, literature, and fashion can now reach audiences across the globe instantaneously, transcending geographical boundaries and cultural barriers.

As cultures interact and intermingle in an increasingly interconnected world, French culture undergoes processes of fusion and hybridization. French cuisine, for example, has influenced and been influenced by global culinary trends, resulting in the emergence of fusion cuisines that blend French techniques with local ingredients and flavors.

French culture, with its rich tapestry of art, literature, cuisine, and traditions, contributes to the global tapestry of cultural diversity. By sharing its cultural heritage with the world, France invites appreciation and admiration for the nuances and complexities of its artistic expressions, fostering a deeper understanding of cultural diversity among global audiences.

French literature, renowned for its depth, complexity, and philosophical insights, offers readers worldwide a window into the human condition. From the existential musings of Albert Camus to the romantic poetry of Charles Baudelaire, French literary works contribute to a broader appreciation of diverse literary traditions.

French art, from impressionism to surrealism, reflects the evolution of artistic movements and ideologies over centuries. The works of French artists like Claude Monet, Édouard Manet, and Salvador Dalí resonate with audiences worldwide, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers to evoke universal emotions and themes.

The French language serves as a bridge that connects people across continents, facilitating communication and fostering cultural exchange. As one of the most widely spoken languages globally, French enhances intercultural understanding and promotes linguistic diversity.

French remains a dominant language in international diplomacy and multilateral institutions, contributing to effective communication and negotiation on

global issues. Its status as a diplomatic language underscores its importance as a tool for fostering mutual understanding and cooperation among nations.

The study of French as a second language enables individuals to engage with French culture firsthand, deepening their appreciation for its literature, cinema, and traditions. Language learning programs, such as those offered by the Alliance Française, promote cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue, fostering connections between people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

France's commitment to cultural diplomacy and international cooperation fosters a sense of global citizenship and solidarity, promoting values of tolerance, diversity, and cultural understanding on the world stage.

France actively promotes its cultural heritage and value through cultural diplomacy initiatives, such as cultural festivals, exchange programs and artistic collaborations. These initiatives enhance France's soft power and influence, strengthening its diplomatic ties and fostering goodwill among nations.

France's efforts to preserve and promote its cultural heritage, including UNESCO World Heritage sites, contribute to global awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity. By safeguarding cultural treasures and traditions, France reinforces the importance of preserving collective human heritage for future generations.

In conclusion, French culture has a significant impact worldwide in areas like art, cuisine, fashion, language, and diplomacy. Whether it's the romance of Paris, delicious French food, stylish fashion trends, or the use of French in global diplomacy, France's cultural influence is felt far and wide.

France actively promotes its culture through initiatives like the Alliance Française and cultural exchange programs, fostering understanding and diversity. By preserving its heritage, France ensures future generations can enjoy its richness.

Embracing French culture teaches us about diversity and the power of cultural exchange. As our world becomes more connected, appreciating different cultures like France's helps us build a more united global community

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**Transfer of L1 literacy capacity to L2: A study at the tertiary level**

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**Abstract**

The use of L1 in an English Classroom (in L2 Contexts) has traditionally been unthinkable, because literacy teaching is, accepted as a monolingual practice. This poses a big problem for students who have low proficiency in the English, especially rural students who sign up for English Literature with the mistaken belief that it will help them learn the language. Finally students memorizing guide books and notes without gaining any literacy capacity. The attempt of the article is based on Cummins Common understanding proficiency hypothesis. The capacity of L1 can be (1984) transferred to L2 thereby enabling them to read, Understand, and appreciate English Literature.

The traditional L2 literature Classroom, Still experiencing a Colonial Hangover does not care much for the use of L1. Even the incidental use of L1 is not by the exports in the field.

Based on the using of L1 to teach these concepts the Literacy theories can be categorical into three groups with focus on (a) text (b) reader (c) culture. The Text as a central concept can make use of L1 in a variety of ways to make these concepts clear to the learners in L2 for Example all Such theories that employ close reading as a technique New Criticism and deconstruction or ideology based on the theories such as terminism, Marism, and post-colonial studies –Can make use of L1 for better understanding use of L1 in the English Literature.

The use of L1 is quite prevalent in L2 literature classroom in the rural and non –elite institution because the learners do not have a functional knowledge of L2. When the text is understood by the learners in L1 later they use L2 to convey the same idea with a good comprehension. Kethkar in a paper presented in a conference at oxford titled. “Translation and teaching of English literature in India “discussion how translation is wellsuited for the Indian English literature Classroom which does not share the typical western anxiety regarding recycled text. He also sees translation as “an excellent task for studying a literacy text”.

It is to ensure the Students from rural background, Who for Circumstances

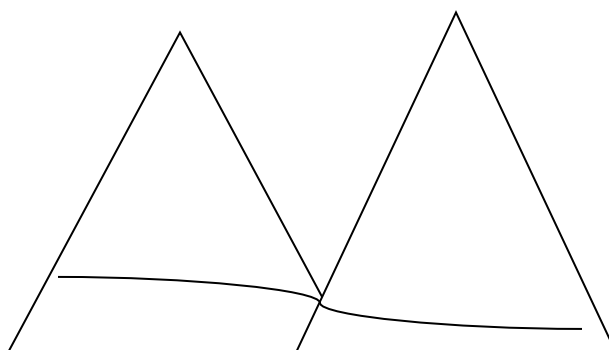
beyond their control, do not have adequate proficiency in L2 and yet are interested in the study of literature in L2. Ought not to be discriminate again .This study discards the popular nation that such students are not meant to study L2 literature. Therefore the students existing knowledge of literature appreciation in L1 can be used in enabling them to appreciate literature in L2.

The learner's Knowledge of L1, Particularly in his /her Understanding in L1 of literature, is seen as an effective tool, rather of learning to appreciate literature what the learner brings to the classroom is treated here as a resource so that he/she can build on what has already learnt , and not discard it thinking that whatever is associated with an inferior ' L1 is not applicable in the source of learning the literature of a 'Superior L2'.

The positive effect of L1 for Cognitive development has come to be widely accepted because of the word of Jim Cummins in ESC /Bilingual research. He advanced the idea that a person who is learning a second language does not actually negotiate a totally unmapped territory. He possesses a common framework of Language structure and functions that can be described as common underlying proficiency (Cup) drawn from the Person's Knowledge of one language to help to learn the L2 .The theory holds that there is interdependence (Cummins,1979) factor between languages . Given that instruction in the L1 is effective in promoting proficiency in L1, transfer of the proficiency in L2.

According to Cummins not L1 the textures of L1 and L2 have common underlying proficiency (Cup) like pronunciation, Fluency etc. but the basic cognitive /academic proficiency help for learning .

Cummins dual iceberg model of Cup



### Common Underlying Proficiency

Individuals who have meaning exposure and experience with two languages

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in school or other environment , develop Cup which enable the development of cognitive and academic skills in both languages .with enough practice and good instruction from a teacher or a more capable peer, the learning of both language become interdependent and at the same time , independent .

The importance feature of WP is the Concept learned in L1 is transferred to L2 and the only requirement is learn the Label in the Second Language for that concept

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**Unravelling the Mythological Tapestry: A Cultural Exploration Of  
"Anandabhadram"**

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**Adarsh Reni John**, Student at Cardiff Metropolitan University Cardiff, Wales, UK

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**Abstract**

This research examines the mythology and culture surrounding "Anandabhadram", a 2005 Indian Malayalam romantic dark fantasy horror film directed by Santosh Sivan. The film delves into the realm of ghosts, spirits, and black magic rituals and is based on Sunil Parameshwaran's novel. Using multidisciplinary frameworks from cultural analysis, myth studies, and cinema criticism, the study explores how the film adapts and reworks folklore and conventional mythological tales. Key focal points include the representation of supernatural creatures, magical activities, exotic rites, and the personification of the conflict between good and evil forces. By dissecting these fundamental mythical elements, the study seeks to illuminate "Anandabhadram"'s portrayal of myth as a persistent, living tradition that shapes the Malayalam cultural psyche. The analysis focuses on how the film's portrayal interacts with societal issues related to gender roles, values, and the conflicts between modernization and enduring customs. The study's ultimate goal is to provide academic insight into the complex relevance of myth as a powerful cultural norm that endures in Keralan culture and is represented in modern symbolic media like film.

**Keywords:** "Anandabhadram", mythological, folklore, adaptation, cultural heritage, societal conventions, values, shared consciousness, Kerala, ghosts, spirits, rituals, ceremonies, traditions, gender roles, female perspective, patriarchy, empowerment, modernization, social issues, metaphors, allegories, superstition, urbanization, technological progress, symbolism, semiotics, visual imagery, set design, collective identity, reflection, philosophical aspects, spiritual dimensions, rasa, aesthetic essences, archetypes, cultural symbols, authenticity, tradition, good versus evil, black magic, fantasy, transition, storytelling, supernatural, wisdom.

**Introduction:**

The 2005 Malayalam film "Anandabhadram", directed by Santosh Sivan and

adapted from Sunil Parameshwaran's novel, portrays an enthralling fusion of supernatural, folkloric, and mythical elements. This cinematic journey celebrates Kerala's rich cultural heritage while encouraging a reflective examination of how these mythical motifs shape societal conventions, values, and the shared consciousness. Through its narrative structure, "Anandabhadram" serves as a medium for elucidating the enduring influence of myth as a cultural phenomenon that persists in the present day, prompting viewers to explore the profound ways historical accounts shape contemporary circumstances.

"Anandabhadram" masterfully integrates Kerala's rich cultural legacy with traditional folklore, constructing a narrative deeply resonant with the region's essence. The film's depiction of supernatural beings—ghosts, spirits, and other ethereal entities—is ingrained in Kerala's cultural consciousness and reverence for the invisible realm (Stanciu & Ivanov, 2019). These depictions transcend ordinary imagination, validating these entities' status within the collective consciousness and emphasizing their symbolic value as embodiments of a common lineage (Alex, 2018). The portrayal of ceremonial activities and distinctive rituals in "Anandabhadram" exemplifies the lasting impact of customs ingrained in Kerala's culture for generations. These depictions go beyond historical documentation, portraying dynamic traditions that persistently shape the region, adapting and evolving with modern influences (Mohan, 2017). Through cinematic adaptation, "Anandabhadram" honors this heritage while acknowledging its continuous influence on the shared consciousness of the Keralite community.

"Anandabhadram" adeptly amalgamates mythical components and folkloric origins, presenting a narrative interwoven with myths, legends, and ancient traditions that have shaped Kerala's cultural identity. By reviving these narratives, the film maintains cultural vitality and contemporary relevance, bridging the gap between traditions and the present day. "Anandabhadram" explores the origins and motifs of folklore, showcasing the ability to reinterpret ancient legends while preserving their essential meaning for modern audiences. Through an artistic blend of folklore and mythological elements, the film invites audiences to celebrate Kerala's cultural tapestry. Its detailed depiction of ceremonies, rituals, and supernatural beings is a tribute to the enduring customs that have shaped the Keralite community for millennia (Stanciu & Ivanov, 2019). Moreover, the film revitalizes archaic narratives, demonstrating folklore's adaptability and resilience (Alex, 2018). By employing a modern cinematic framework, the film connects the past and present, allowing viewers to appreciate the timeless significance and wisdom of these narratives.

"Anandabhadram" offers a fresh perspective on traditionally male-dominated storytelling by incorporating both malevolent and benevolent female characters, challenging the male-centric viewpoints prevalent in mythology. Unlike myths that often confine women to limited roles, "Anandabhadram" portrays them as

multidimensional individuals with their own strengths and agency, breaking free from stereotypes. This representation promotes a deeper understanding of gender roles and identities in mythical narratives. By depicting women as fully realized characters with their own goals and capabilities, the film challenges viewers to reconsider their perceptions of gender dynamics in myths. This shift reflects a more nuanced portrayal of gender roles and experiences in mythical contexts.

Furthermore, the film avoids reducing characters to simplistic roles of good or evil, acknowledging the complexities of human behavior. "Anandabhadram" invites viewers to see beyond stereotypes, presenting both virtuous and malevolent women, and encouraging acceptance of their multifaceted nature. This approach challenges narratives that often oversimplify women's roles. By adopting this approach, "Anandabhadram" becomes a thought-provoking work that not only entertains but also challenges audiences to critically evaluate how patriarchal myths shape our perspectives on mythology and gender. By highlighting women in positions of power and autonomy, the film paves the way for future explorations of mythical narratives (Devadas, 2015).

"Anandabhadram" delves deeply into societal issues in its exploration of gender dynamics and traditions. The film reflects on contemporary society's challenges, such as the conflicts between traditional values and modernity and the tensions between rural and urban life, using elements as metaphors and allegories. The movie skillfully incorporates these issues into its narrative, inviting viewers to consider social concerns in a way that feels both familiar and profound (Jayasankar, 2019). The mythological framework serves as a bridge between tradition and modernity, prompting viewers to reflect on societal progress and question the current state of affairs.

Through its depiction of rituals and supernatural entities, "Anandabhadram" makes subtle observations about the persistence of tradition and superstition in the face of modernity. The film's narrative portrays the tension between traditional values and the encroachment of urbanization and technological advancements, challenging viewers to consider how tradition and progress must coexist. In a broader context, "Anandabhadram" symbolizes the struggles and challenges Kerala society faces in balancing its traditional customs with the embrace of modernity.

"Anandabhadram" is notable for its fusion of contemporary filmmaking techniques with ancient mythology. By reimagining myths and legends for modern viewers, the film demonstrates how storytelling can dynamically convey cultural values, conventions, and shared experiences (Prajapati, 2020). "Anandabhadram"'s approach not only honors Kerala's rich mythological heritage but also showcases how these tales can be updated for contemporary audiences. The film's integration of mythological themes with modern cinematic techniques and stunning visuals underscores the enduring power of myths to captivate and resonate with diverse

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audiences.

This ability to adapt and transform is crucial for maintaining the region's identity and relevance in an ever-changing world. By bringing these stories to life, “Anandabhadram” ensures that Kerala's rich cultural heritage remains vibrant and meaningful, inspiring and educating future generations. The film's successful retelling of myths for contemporary audiences highlights the timeless appeal of storytelling as an art form that transcends language, culture, and time to convey shared wisdom and experiences.

“Anandabhadram”'s engagement with mythical concepts also prompts an analysis of the concept of 'rasa,' a fundamental tenet in Indian artistic philosophy. The film's portrayal of events, ceremonial dark magic, and the eternal struggle between good and evil contribute to a multifaceted narrative enriched by aesthetic essences such as *adbhuta* (astonishment), *bhayanaka* (terror), and *raudra* (anger) (Lal, 2020). By utilizing these *rasas*, “Anandabhadram” delves into the philosophical and spiritual dimensions of mythological narratives, surpassing mere visual spectacle. The film's ability to evoke sensory reactions from its audience underscores the lasting impact of mythologies and their capacity to connect with the collective unconscious of a culture.

Moreover, “Anandabhadram”'s exploration of *rasa* highlights the relationship between human experiences, mythology, and artistic expression. By embracing these fundamental elements, the film fosters audience engagement and personal investment in the narrative, allowing viewers to actively participate in and understand the intricate web of myths, symbols, and archetypes that have shaped Kerala's cultural identity. “Anandabhadram”'s exploration of *rasa* serves as a poignant reminder that myths are not mere relics of the past but dynamic forces with enduring significance for the human spirit, transcending temporal and spatial boundaries (Venkiteswaran, 2018). The film's ability to elicit profound emotional and aesthetic responses from its audience underscores the enduring relevance of these ancient narratives in shaping our understanding of the world.

Through its exploration of *rasa*, “Anandabhadram” invites viewers on a journey of self-discovery, where they can access timeless truths and profound insights inherent in these legendary narratives. By eliciting emotions such as fear, wonder, and anger, the film taps into the collective unconscious, allowing viewers to connect with the primordial energies that have profoundly influenced human experiences throughout history.

“Anandabhadram”'s adaptation of ancient myths and folklore into a modern cinematic experience highlights the enduring power of storytelling as a cultural and artistic practice. Through its exploration of Kerala's rich cultural heritage, gender dynamics, and societal issues, the film provides a nuanced reflection on the complexities of tradition and modernity. By engaging with the concept of *rasa* and

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employing a multidisciplinary approach, “Anandabhadram” underscores the timeless relevance of myths and their ability to captivate, inspire, and challenge contemporary audiences. This study's analysis of “Anandabhadram” contributes to a deeper understanding of the film's role in preserving and reinterpreting cultural heritage while promoting critical reflection on societal conventions and values.

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**Diasporic Writing in Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India***

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**Abstract:**

Bharati Mukherjee, a distinguished diasporic author, has established herself as a prominent American writer. An Indian by origin, her works predominantly feature Indian characters, focusing on the experiences of Indian immigrants struggling to adapt to a foreign country, especially the United States. Unlike her previous works set against an American backdrop, Mukherjee's latest novel, *Miss New India* is set in India. This essay aims to analyze *Miss New India* as a diasporic novel, where the protagonist experiences relocation within her native country rather than abroad.

**Keywords:** diaspora, transformation, modernization, culture, identity.

**Introduction:**

Renowned diasporic writer Bharati Mukherjee has extensively explored migratory sensibilities and cross-cultural crises from both Indian and Canadian perspectives. Her novels span vast periods and geographies, particularly highlighting the cultural clash between the East and the West in foreign lands. Mukherjee's works primarily focus on women, delving into their complex psyches. In her latest novel, *Miss New India* Mukherjee introduces Anjali Bose, who navigates a sophisticated, Western-influenced lifestyle in both rural and urban India. This essay examines the diasporic elements in *Miss New India*.

Mukherjee's *Miss New India* completes her trilogy with *Desirable Daughters* and *The Tree Bride*. The protagonist, Anjali Bose, is a vibrant, ambitious middle-class girl from the small town of Gauripur in Bihar. Her American teacher, Peter Champion, recognizes her linguistic talent and encourages her to move to Bangalore to better utilize her skills. The novel explores Anjali's struggle to find her identity in a new environment.

This study examines Anjali's experience as an internal immigrant within India, contrasting it with the traditional diasporic experience abroad. Uprooted from Gauripur and relocated to Bangalore, Anjali faces cultural shock, alienation, nostalgia, and identity crisis similar to those of international immigrants. As observed by Stuart Hall in his *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*:

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It creates a way of thinking about cultural identity which means as one shared culture, a sort of collective one true self hiding inside the many other more superficial or artificially imposed selves which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Their cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us as one people or the sense of oneness. (110,111)

Mukherjee sets the novel against the backdrop of rapidly changing “new” India, emphasizing the cultural and economic shifts in megacities like Bangalore. Upon arriving in Bangalore, Anjali feels as though she has entered a foreign land, struggling with the Americanized environment and linguistic barriers.

In *Miss New India* Mukherjee depicts the American influence in India. Peter Champion, an American who has spent years in India, plays a crucial role in Anjali's decision to move to Bangalore. Anjali, raised in a patriarchal environment, dreams of escaping Gauripur for a better future. Her encounter with Rabi, a character from Mukherjee's earlier novels, highlights the cultural exchanges and identity struggles.

Anjali, torn between her identities as Anjali and Angie, decides to leave Gauripur after a traumatic experience. With Peter's support, she relocates to Bangalore, where she faces cultural shock and alienation. Bangalore's call center culture, dominated by American influence, adds to her challenges. She adapts to her new environment, oscillating between her dual identities. A portion of these Americans went back, while others married local women, stayed, and established connections with India. They were incorporated into India:

America had been wiped from their memory at precisely the time that young Indians were fantasizing about the West, wanting schools and jobs that promised money and freedom. We were hungry for America, but they were sated with it (Prologue, VIII).

Anjali's transformation in Bangalore reflects her integration into the new culture. She evolves from a timid girl into a confident woman, navigating her dual identities and embracing new experiences. Her relationship with GG symbolizes her assimilation into the new culture, while her career at CCI showcases her adaptability.

Despite her challenges, Anjali successfully establishes her identity in Bangalore, embodying the resilience and adaptability of diasporic individuals. Her journey symbolizes the broader cultural and economic shifts in contemporary India.

"Miss New India" by Bharati Mukherjee introduces America to India through the experiences of its protagonist. Anjali's journey highlights the phases of isolation, nostalgia, and assimilation faced by diasporic individuals. Mukherjee portrays cultural dislocation and the hybrid culture that emerges from it, emphasizing the continuous search for identity and new opportunities.

Reflecting on this hybrid culture, Bill Ashcroft notes the dynamic interaction between European hegemonic systems and indigenous ontologies. Anjali's character

embodies this dynamism, rejecting her hometown's limitations and realizing her potential. Through Anjali, Mukherjee illustrates the younger generation's pursuit of liberty and empowerment in contemporary India, achieving personal and professional success.

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**Transitioning Disability Perspectives: A Study of Select Malayalam Movies**

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**Abstract**

This paper delves into the portrayal of disability in Malayalam cinema, focusing on three pivotal films: “Thaniyavarthanam” (1987), “Vadakkumnadhan” (2006), and “2018: Everyone is a Hero” (2023). Through a comprehensive analysis of these films, this study aims to trace the evolution of societal perspectives on disability over the years. “Thaniyavarthanam” examines societal stigma around mental illness, highlighting a protagonist accused of hereditary madness, which leads to his eventual murder by his mother. In “Vadakkumnadhan”, there is a shift towards acceptance of bipolar disorder within the family, but the protagonist struggles inwardly due to his overt fear of social stigma. The film 2018: Everyone is a Hero presents a contemporary and inclusive perspective on disability. Through a comparative analysis of these films, this study identifies the shift in response towards disability in the larger Kerala society.

**Keywords:** Disability, Malayalam cinema, Perspectives, Representation, Society

**Introduction:**

The film industry in Kerala has a rich tradition of storytelling that often dives into the complexities of human life, blending realism with artistic creativity. The portrayal of disability in films mirrors the real-life experiences of people with disabilities. This paper delves into how disability is showcased in Malayalam films and how the social perception of disability has changed over time, given that films are reflections of the society of each period. Interestingly, the depiction of characters with disabilities often falls into stereotypes. It also subliminally reflects the judicial system existing in each period and the resultant social inclusivity. This study traces transitioning disability perspectives.

Malayalam cinema has often featured characters with disabilities varying

from the "inspirer" (inspiring figures who overcame obstacles) to the "burden" (eliciting sympathy). In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift towards more detailed and respectful representations of characters with disabilities in Malayalam cinema. Filmmakers increasingly embrace authenticity, collaborating with individuals with disabilities to ensure accurate depictions and narratives that reflect their lived experiences. Furthermore, advocacy movements and increased awareness about diversity and inclusion have catalyzed conversations within the industry, prompting a re-evaluation of existing tropes and stereotypes. While some representations have helped raise awareness, others have reinforced stereotypes that perpetuate stigmas and misunderstandings about disability. Therefore, studying how these portrayals have evolved is crucial for understanding disability within the social nexus of Kerala. This paper explores three films: "Thaniyavarthanam" (1987), "Vadakkumnadhan" (2006), and 2018: Everyone is a Hero (2023).

The Malayalam movie "Thaniyavarthanam", directed by Sibi Malayil and written by A. K. Lohithadas, showcases the life of a school teacher, Balan (portrayed by Mammooty). Balan is a respectable family man who happily takes on the responsibilities of his joint family. After the death of his uncle, who was locked in the attic for several years at the behest of madness, we see Balan cast out from both society and family due to the fear of hereditary mental illness. The voices around him repeating the same idea over and over again make him hallucinate and imagine that he too is mad like his uncle. The film dives into his struggles as he grapples with the stigma associated with mental illness and the consequent alienation from mainstream society, underlining what Lennard J. Davis projects in *The Disability Studies Reader*: "The disabled are not only devalued for their de-valued bodies, they are constant reminders to the able-bodied of the negative body of what the able-bodied are trying to avoid, forget and ignore" (Davis 268).

Balan's life takes a tragic turn as he is misunderstood and mistreated by his family members, particularly his mother, who is convinced of the hereditary nature of mental illness. Despite his efforts to lead a normal life, Balan becomes increasingly isolated and marginalized. The film depicts the harmful impact of societal perceptions and stigma on Balan's mental health, ultimately leading to his poisoning by his mother, who is driven to hopelessness.

One of the coldest scenes in this movie is the climax where Balan's mother approaches him with food along with poison. Here, the filmmaker simultaneously shows a flashback of Balan's childhood where his mother feeds him with love. The helplessness is reflected in his eyes when he sees the food laced with poison. This helplessness gradually shifts to silent willingness after hearing his mother's question, "Do you still want to live, and do you want Harikuttan and Manikutty to live as the children of the mad Balan? Do you want to spend the rest of your life in this room, alone, without anyone?" Tragedy intensifies when they share the poisoned food and

die together, subsuming the identity of the life giver and the life taker. The mother, who was a witness to the tragic lives of the past generation, forcefully makes this decision as she knows the consequences.

Mental illness in “Thaniyavarthanam” is a cauldron of stigma, highlighting individuals unfairly labelled and banned by Kerala society in the 1980s. This movie can be considered akin to the moral model where disability is seen as a sin and transference of disability is seen as a curse.

“Vadakkumnadhan” , a Malayalam movie directed by Shajoon Kariyal and written by Gireesh Puthenchery, presents a narrative that reflects a transition towards acceptance of mental illness within society. The film centres around the character of Bharatha Pisharody (portrayed by Mohanlal), a professor at Sanskrit University who is diagnosed with bipolar disorder. The protagonist creates a delusional image of an ideal self, one that he has successfully practiced through the years. He tries to prove to both himself and others that he is the "ideal man" (a major stereotype in Kerala). But when he realizes that he has bipolar disorder, his selfhood is shattered and he can no longer self-claim the perfect identity he craved within. The movie underlines that companionship or marriage is not meant for disabled men, and for this reason, Pisharody calls off his marriage.

Pisharody is not brave enough to disclose his condition or its struggles to anyone, and his actions are driven by fears of social judgment. He runs away from his homeland and effectively convinces his family to believe that he is dead. He further escapes into another delusional identity of a Saint (again, a respected prototype in Kerala society). Years later, while being accidentally identified and accosted by his mother and brother, he camouflages his bipolar disorder and fakes being a drug addict, preferring the latter identity to that of his disability identity. When the family members eventually know about his condition and are ready to accept him as he is, Pisharody remains unconvinced and refuses to go along with them.

“Vadakkumnadhan” explains bipolar disorder with Ayurveda, where the medical practitioner, Nambeshan, compares Pisharody's brain to a boat meant for four people suddenly carrying a hundred, illustrating the criticality of having this disorder as his brain is crowded with too many thoughts. As a solution, the medical practitioner advises Meera (Bharatha Pisharody's girlfriend) to be with him, suggesting that her presence and care, along with the prescribed medicines, will aid in his recovery. Additionally, he assures them that he can fully cure this disorder through his treatment, reminiscent of the medical model of disability, which focuses on diagnosing and curing the illness medically.

As time moves from the 1980s to 2006, we can see a growing willingness to accept the person with disability by the family.

*2018: Everyone is a Hero*, a survival Malayalam drama directed by Jude

Anthony Joseph, provides a contemporary lens on disability representation within Malayalam cinema. The people from diverse surroundings unite to survive the natural disaster (2018 Kerala floods), which they eventually succeed. The film brilliantly picturizes a cross-section of the heterogeneous population of Kerala, which includes people with disabilities. Two such characters are Bhasi (played by Indrans), a visually impaired person, and an autistic child, Abin (played by master Pranav).

Despite his illness, Bhasi is independent, owns a shop, and makes his livelihood from it. He is capable of living alone and doesn't seek sympathy or dependency from his surroundings. One of the major characters in this movie, Anoop (played by Tovino Thomas), has a close acquaintance with Bhasi and works in his shop. There is a scene in this movie where Anoop narrates to Bhasi the everyday morning events around them. A subtle reminder of a wholesome relationship. This is further developed while during the flood, unaware of its intensity, and while struggling for breath, Bhasi accidentally drowns Anoop, who had come to rescue him. The movie narrates this as what could occur to any individual, given the circumstances, rather than as the consequences of rescuing a blind man.

Abin, an autistic child, offers an empathetic connection with the audience. We see the drastic change in familial attitude in embracing the disabled identity of an immediate family member. Abin is sent to school with other children on a bicycle. Not just the family, but his classmates and teachers also consider him a fellow being without any sympathetic or judgmental outlook. In this movie, rather than abandoning a child with a disability, the loved ones are ready to die to save his life, reminiscent of the social model of disability that advocates for representation and restructuring of societal norms.

In the movie "Thaniyavarthanam", Balan's mental illness is considered a curse on the family, one to be hidden, removed, and killed. In "Vadakkumnadhan", the disease is diagnosed, and rather than calling it hereditary, the audience is convinced that it is curable with modern medicine. But the protagonist refuses to accept it and feels guilty for his condition. The acceptance of the protagonist is a theme in itself. In contrast, in the movie 2018: Everyone is a Hero, we see inclusivity and empathy. People with disabilities are respected and understood and given the same space as any other person in society. Through a comparative analysis of these films, we can trace the shifts in societal responses towards disability over the decades.

The portrayal of disability in Malayalam cinema has undergone a significant transformation, mirroring the evolving societal perspectives on disability. From the stigma and marginalization depicted in "Thaniyavarthanam" to the gradual acceptance and understanding shown in "Vadakkumnadhan" and the inclusivity and empathy portrayed in 2018: Everyone is a Hero, there has been a notable shift towards a more nuanced and respectful representation of disability. This evolution reflects the broader societal changes towards a more inclusive and accepting attitude towards

individuals with disabilities. The comparative analysis of these films highlights the importance of continuing to challenge stereotypes and promote authentic representations of disability in cinema, fostering greater awareness and understanding in society.

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**Mythical Echoes in Modernity: Sitanshu Yashashchandra's *Jatayu* and the Modernist Resonance of Mythological Symbols.**

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**Abstract**

This research study delves into the intersection of myth and modernity in Sitanshu Yashashchandra's collection of poems titled "Jatayu" (1986). It focuses mainly on three poems from the collection—namely, "The Sea," "Jatayu," and "Orpheus". By analyzing these poems, the research seeks to understand Yashashchandra's method of retrieving cultural nostalgia through mythical elements and combining them with a modernist perspective. The study examines the ways in which Yashashchandra utilizes mythological motifs to address contemporary concerns and existential dilemmas faced by individuals in the modern era. Yashashchandra recontextualizes mythological symbols to reflect the complexities of modern life and evoke a sense of cultural continuity amidst societal upheavals. Yashashchandra's use of poetic techniques, such as imagery, symbolism, and narrative structure, reflects on how he constructs a dialogue between the ancient mythic past and the contemporary present.

**Keywords:** *Jatayu, Mythology, Cultural Nostalgia, Comparative Literature, Modernity*

**Introduction:**

Sitanshu Yashashchandra, a renowned Gujarati poet, dramatist and critic has garnered much acclaim for his innovative use of mythological themes in his poems. Ramanlal Joshi stated that, "Sitanshu Yashashchandra's *Jatayu* is an outstanding example of the use of myth, this time from the *Ramayana*. The struggle for survival on the part of the modern man is artistically portrayed through this poem, which may be result of some intense personal experience of the poet. There are also poems in the surrealist mode in this collection which is the forte of the poet." (67)

In the research conducted, multiple scholarly sources were consulted, including Chinu Modi's *Sanshodhan Kavyagranth*, C.A. Topiwala's *Critical Essays*, and Ramesh Oza's *Kavyasanvit*, for insights into the narrative of *Jatayu*. Due to unavailability of direct English translations, best efforts were made to encapsulate the

essence of their critical analyses of the poem. The central narrative of the *Ramayana* revolves around the abduction of Sita, prompting Rama's quest to find her. The narrative of Jatayu's encounter with Rama is imbued with symbolic significance, reflecting the dichotomy inherent in Vedanta Philosophy between Sat (the Real, Existent) and Asat (the Non-real, Non-existent). This tale serves as an allegorical exploration of the eternal struggle between Dharma, representing righteousness and moral duty, and Adharma, embodying immorality and wrongdoing. Yashashchandra's interpretation of Jatayu transcends traditional mythological motifs, portraying him as a paradigmatic figure of modernity. Through the assertion, "No ten-headed demon in the South, in the North no Ram divine." (Yashashchandra, 88, trans. Khandiwala)

Yashashchandra underscores the contemporary relevance of Jatayu's existential predicament, evoking themes of disillusionment and the search for meaning amidst the complexities of the modern world. The narrative conveys a profound sense of anguish stemming from the realization that no aid or salvation will be coming, epitomizing a poignant existential dilemma. The protagonist's journey transcends surreal realms, where the boundaries between mythology and modernity dissolve and become unified, as a whole. The inquiry arises as to the necessity of retelling myths and the underlying significance of such retellings. Central to this investigation is an examination of the transformative potential inherent in the reinterpretation of mythological narratives and the impact on contemporary readers. Yashashchandra's literary endeavors notably address these inquiries, offering justifications for the mythic retellings within the context of modern discourse. The transformation of Jatayu is evident within the initial lines of the poem, wherein he contemplates the existential dichotomy of *sad-asad*, emblematic of the dualistic perception inherent to human cognition. Amidst this dichotomy, Jatayu grapples with the perplexing terrain of the dark forest, emblematic of the liminal space existing between these opposing dualities. Employing the term "*rank*" to describe the forest conveys a sense of negativity, implying its poor state and insignificance within the poem's thematic context. This insignificance is understood by the forest's failure to discern the constituents of *sad* (existent) and *asad* (non-existent). *Rank* portrays the inability of Jatayu to comprehend the difference between dharma and adharma. "Jatayu" far from poet's usual surreal devices is the new formulation of Gujarati medieval language and metrics, in simple but invincible structuring. It is an aesthetic transformation of subjective suffering into mythopoeic objectivity, displaying at the same time external and internal deviations – unassumingly." (33)

Structurally, the poem unfolds across seven distinct parts. The initial segment delves into a vivid depiction of the forest and its ecosystem, while the subsequent section introduces Jatayu. Progressing further, the third part delineates Jatayu's formative years, highlighting his divergence from the avian community due to his

propensity for extensive flight. The fourth part delves into the constraints imposed by the forest's boundaries, followed by the fifth part which explores the narrative of transcending these limitations. Subsequently, the sixth segment addresses the challenges and consequences precipitated by this boundary-crossing endeavor. Finally, the concluding part chronicles the speaker's gradual descent into a state of non-faith. Within the spectrums of duality, Yashashachandra identified a gap of the struggle, the gap of something and nothing, the gap of something gray which binds these duals, blends these duals yet keeps them separated. The forest symbolizes void, emptiness, loss of faith and meaning. Notably, the term *rank*, initially ascribed to the forest and subsequently to Jatayu in the sixth part, serves as a marker of modernity within the poet's narrative framework, as its usage in describing the forest diverges from conventional norms in the Gujarati language.

The evocative portrayal of "green darkness" epitomizes paradoxical concepts indicative of modern sensibilities, wherein the juxtaposition of greenness and darkness symbolically opens avenues of hope amidst existential ambiguity. The forest creatures carry on the lives confined in the perceptual limitations. They live in a state of contented ignorance, wherein bliss is derived from a lack of awareness. The denizens of the forest inhabit a secluded realm, ensconced within the confines of their own perceptual limitations. Their existence within this insular domain epitomizes a state of contented ignorance, wherein bliss is derived from a lack of awareness. This imagery alludes to the biblical narrative of the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve are cautioned against partaking of the forbidden fruit, thereby facing the consequences of their actions. Notably, the description of Jatayu's eyes as "small" conveys the notion of restricted vision imposed by the boundaries and limitations encircling his world. Similarly, the characterization of his wings as "fluttering" evokes an anxious yearning for liberation from these constrictive constraints. While Jatayu shares an affiliative bond with the forest, it is a relationship predicated upon conditional parameters, reminiscent of the injunction similar to Laxman rekha, beyond which one must not transgress. In this context, the forest represents a metaphorical frontier demarcating the borders of life itself. It is contended that "within the realm of Gujarati Modern Poetry, narratives wherein the intersection of myth and modernity occurs are notably rare." (Topiwala)

The last stanza depicts the inner turmoil and monologue of Jatayu, where a shift from third-person to first-person narration transpires. As Jatayu grapples with fading consciousness, he confronts the stark oppositions emblematic of his predicament—between the realms of North and South, Ayodhya and Lanka—ultimately realizing the futility of his plight. The last line starts with the cry for Rama to arrive early and ends with the conclusion that there is no more Ayodhya and no more Lanka. The perspective in the poem is constantly shifting. The destiny of void persists in Jatayu's life. When there is no value of the dual notions, where the non-

existent also doesn't exist, what meaning can Jatayu derive from life? It becomes representative of the void of the modern man.

Orpheus, renowned for his musical prowess, endeavors to retrieve his deceased beloved, Eurydice, from the Underworld after she succumbs to a snake bite. Despite Hades' concession to Orpheus's entreaties, conditioned upon his refrain from looking back during their return, Orpheus succumbs to temptation, resulting in the permanent loss of Eurydice to the Underworld. Sitanshu's portrayal of Orpheus evokes parallels with this classical narrative, wherein both figures embark on quests marked by profound loss, yet they diverge in their respective manifestations. In the context of Sitanshu's narrative, symbolic motifs are employed to represent key characters: the Eagle symbolizes Orpheus, Lover epitomizes Eurydice, and the Snake embodies Hades. Notably, in Indian Mythology, the Eagle, represented by Garuda, assumes the form of a demigod possessing the upper half of a bird and the lower half of a human. Garuda's mythical narrative is characterized by a solemn vow to eradicate snakes, stemming from an ancient conflict wherein the Snake's mother, Kadru, enslaved Vinita, Garuda's mother. These symbolic associations enrich Sitanshu's reinterpretation of the Orpheus myth, imbuing it with resonances from Indian mythological traditions.

The enchanting melodies associated with *Orpheus* undergo a transformative shift in Sitanshu's poem, replaced by the piercing wails of agony emitted by the eagles in the opening line: "The eagles crying out in sharp shrill notes."<sup>(1)</sup> This introductory scene unfolds at a pivotal juncture within the mythic narrative, where the Orphic eagles, having already lost Eurydice, are now beset by the anguish of their quest. Alongside the loss of Eurydice, they have also forfeited their inherent musical prowess, thereby embarking upon their journey into the realm of Hades not with melodious strains, but rather with discordant cries of suffering. Orphic eagles not only lost Eurydice but their music too. They enter the underworld, of Hades not with the sweet music like Hades but with the shrieks of pain and cries. They are alien to the world they have intruded. The poem gradually unveils itself as an exploration of the lamentable loss of the mythic mechanism of redemption.

Within this poem, the reference to Samudramanthan transcends mere imagery, assuming symbolic significance as representative of worldly chaos and existential reality. Through the dichotomy inherent in Samudramanthan, juxtaposing the forces of Dev and Danav, Fire and Water, Yashashchandra elucidates the role of poetic consciousness and truth. It is known that, "Poetry does not earn its claim to truth by mirroring an external world or by stating discrete, correct, 'facts' about it. Poetry is concerned with truth as a kind of revelation, an 'unconcealing' aspect of existence that lies hidden from us in our everyday encounters with the world. Poetry transforms those aspects of reality it so presents, bestowing value upon them and infusing them with new forms of meaning" (Scruton, 149). Yashashchandra in his

poem *The Sea* says, "When I emerge from the seabed/ I shall not bear fistful of pearls. /I'm not a pearl diver. /I'm a poet. /Whatever there is will be in my eyes only." (7-11)

The mythological allegory of Samudramanathan serves as a poignant reflection of contemporary human dilemmas. The enduring process of churning has bestowed upon humanity both blessings and perils, symbolized by the attainment of valuable treasures alongside the emergence of poison. In the context of poetry, the metaphorical "churning of voices" symbolizes the prevailing uncertainties that characterize the trajectory of poetic expression and its future evolution.

Sitanshu Yashashchandra's poetic reinterpretations of the mythological narratives offer a compelling exploration of existential themes and modern sensibilities. Through his innovative narrative strategies and nuanced characterizations, Yashashchandra challenges conventional interpretations of myth, inviting readers to reconsider the enduring relevance of these ancient stories in contemporary literature. By bridging the gap between myth and modernity, Yashashchandra's poetry serves as a testament to the enduring power storytelling to illuminate the human condition across time and culture.

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**Cultural clash or fusion? Exploring Intersections in the Globalized World: A Study of Chetan Bhagat's novel *One Night @ the Call Centre***

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**Abstract**

Indian English fiction moved its concentration from the general population to the confidential circle after 1960s on account of the mass obliteration brought about constantly Universal Conflict. This brought about a World Writing, which answered the new period, managing the different bleak countenances of current culture. Indian writers likewise managed new subjects of human life and man's mission for self in the entirety of its convoluted circumstances. Chetan Bhagat, a well-known fruitful Indian creator of hundred years, involves his books as devices to communicate his perspectives and conclusions about the social inconsistencies in the general public. His second book *One Night @ the Call Centre* rotates on a gathering of six call place representatives working in Associations Call in Gurgaon, Haryana. The author claims women strengthening as one of the hopeful end results of globalization; and yet, his original surprises our conventional culture which is an inescapable effect of globalization, modernization and corporate abuse. Scholarly genius of Indians has been broadly valued from one side of the planet to the other. The lofty titles beginning from Nobel Prize to Booker Prize, Pulitzer Prize are gave to Indian authors. It turns out to be exceptionally normal peculiarity to assign Indian authors for such distinctions on the planet writing. Chetan Bhagat arose as youth symbol to think up habits of change obvious in youthful age of India. This paper is an unassuming endeavor to follow out effect of globalization in Bhagat's original *One Night @ the Call Centre*.

**Keywords:** Globalization, Corporate Culture, Perpetual Identity, new era., human quest and social contradictions.

**Introduction:**

Chetan Bhagat is a renowned writer of this century who thumps down the book marketplace with incredible achievement. All his five books were successes and they had

been recorded by popular Bollywood chiefs. His energetic and clever approach to depicting stories has propelled perusing habits among numerous Indians. Composing was his obsession. In 2010, his name was enrolled in the Time's magazine as "World's 100 Most Powerful Individuals". His absolute first novel *Five Point Someone* (2004) took him to the pinnacles of acclaim and ubiquity. His second book *One Night @ The Call Centre* (2005) was an extraordinary achievement; and in Hindi it was shot as a film as "Hi" with Chetan as content chief. He likewise won Distributer's Acknowledgment Grant in 2005. In India, the progress of ON@TCC (abbreviation of the title) is an upsetting one as the creator arrived at cheerful finale through a succession of morally blameworthy demonstrations.

Indian English Writing has been reflecting reasonably and imaginatively the sociocultural, political disturbances in the Indian culture. Indian writing particularly fiction gave a stage to record social developments came about as result of the then political, verifiable strategies and occasions. The effect of globalization is a lot of clear in the works of Indian fiction after 1990. The Indian authors were gotten and appreciated with commendation all around the world for their newness in topic and style. Indian English Fiction can be separated into two expansive stages based on subjects demurely talked about. The first stage portrays the frontier and post-pilgrim India and the second stage reflected change in the contemporary Indian culture. Indian autonomy and acknowledgment of LPG are to be taken as defining moments throughout the entire existence of Indians and Indian English writing. The first stage introduced India under the English rule and issues winning in the then Indian culture. The greater part of the books depicts with social issues of station and class ridden progressive system. This introductory stage was more nationalistic enthusiasm as the opportunity battle of India was either brought up or utilized as a setting or scenery to closer view fictitious characters. R. K. Narayan flourished the romantic tale of Bharati in his fiction *Hanging tight for Mahatma* in the comparable style. A few different models can be cited which straight forwardly or in a roundabout way, possibly or midway, profoundly or at surface used the then sociopolitical happenings in their imaginative compositions. The second period of contemporary Indian English Fiction was a scholarly reaction to revolutionary change with regards to globalization. India acknowledged LPG strategy for example Advancement, Privatization and Globalization to help Indian economy. To contend with the world economy and to streamline business valuable open doors, India gave agree to it. Globalization is a multi-faceted and continuous advancement which profoundly influence on each part of your life. Globalization opened up numerous roads for progress to remote and lacking as well as emerging nations for business. Simultaneously these countries opened up their entryways for sociocultural associations with the whole world. It is a shared cycle in nature. It was inescapable that Globalization drove simple and continuous trade of thoughts, societies, and dialects through business valuable open doors. Beforehand it was conceivable just when an Indian or outsider visits other country as well

as the other way around. No country will avoid herself standoffish from this disturbance. Shielding one's universal, nationalistic personality and demeanor in this globalized era will be outdated. Though globalization demurely planned to business or economy, it isn't confined to these circles as it were. It profoundly associated rather interceded the sociocultural organization or ties. Anthony Giddens brings up that globalization is the cycle that shapes overall social relations " intensification of overall social relations which connect far off territories so that neighborhood happenings are formed by occasions happening somewhere far off as well as the other way around" (Giddens, 1990:64) In spite of the fact that globalization is camouflaged under different classification like internationalization, advancement, universalization, westernization, modernization, etc, the effect is profound and undeniable as well. Presently a day, Indian English Fiction turned into a *Centre* piece of world writing. Indian writers got an unmistakable spot by contributing their scholarly genius. From 1990, the world writing was improved by the Indian authors like Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Arvind Adiga, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri and as of late the adolescent symbol Chetan Bhagat. The contemporary Indian English Fiction minutely noticed these changes. The reasonable essayists voiced the issues of character, hybridity, trans culturalism, multiculturalism and so forth through their artistic works. All in all, Indian English Fiction rose above public, social, social limits through their artistic articulations.

Chetan Bhagat stands separated from the practice of his ancestors as far as articulation and issues chose for openness through his fiction. Bhagat addressed the age came about because of the complicated course of globalization. Chetan Bhagat needs no exceptional prologue to the contemporary reader local area because of his ubiquity as youth symbol. Notwithstanding his high profile, he wandered into full time composing calling. His books are broadly perused for newness in style as well as subject. He investigated his fictional world without losing the ground reality. He is exceptionally adulated in India as well as abroad for his open way of composing. The youthful age relates themselves effortlessly. Indeed, even TIME Magazine regarded him by setting in the rundown of 100 most influencing individuals in 2010. The world perceived rather understood and valued the pen craftsmanship of Indians as Chetan Bhagat. L P G made ready to outrageous social, social communications ever before throughout the entire existence of humankind. The headway in the field of transportation and correspondence shrank the whole world into a globalized town of social variety. Geological limits and distance became lines on guide and numbers separately. Web spanned remote corner of the world on a solitary snap. The augmented reality is none the not as much as reality in customary mode. India enticed the super economies as the most likely market for their business extension. The new terms like MNC (Worldwide Organizations) or BPO (Business Cycle Re-appropriating) became trendy expressions. India arose as possibly efficient human hotspot for MNCs. So countless BPOs were laid out to give 24\*7 help at lower compensation. India adjusted another culture famously referred to as 'corporate



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culture' as a result of globalization particularly in metropolitan urban communities.

The idea of night life is an imported idea for Indians. Because of globalization, all time help through call place was a clever thought or work culture for customary Indians. The framework, clothing regulation and business hours were completely westernized. Clearly the night life has its own advantages and disadvantages from Indian situation. The protagonist and his partners deride their occupation profile as transporters. Shyam mourns his objection a smidgen by contrasting himself and specialists playing out their night obligations. The protagonist Shyam describes:

By now we had let the call *Centre* and were now on the highway. Apart from a few trucks, the roads were empty India has a billion people, but at night, ninety-nine percent of them are fast asleep. This land then belongs to a chosen few: truck drivers, later shift workers, doctors, hostel staff and call *Centre* agents. We, the nocturnal, rule the roads and the country. (Bhagat: 2005, 175) However Priyanka bursts into sarcasm as she opines, ... hell, even that does bitch works at night (Bhagat:2005,187)

Chetan Bhagat minutely noticed social injuries of youthful age working in BPOs. The call centre focus turned into the conference ground for East and West societies as well as ways of life. Greater part of characters in this fiction are valid delegates of socially baffled adolescents. They need to perform double job which is exceptionally disconnected in nature. Esha looks her occupation as a potential chance to carry on with another life brimming with independence from the grasp of social restrictions. Going against the norm, Radhika is in predicament to pick either her job of average Indian wedded woman or to follow Esha. This personality emergency is clearly communicated in their correspondence.

'They don't make me do anything, Esha. I am willing to follow their culture. All married women in their house do it,' Radhika said. 'Still it is a bit weird,' Esha said. 'Anyway, I took it as a challenge. I love Anuj and he said he came as a package. But yeah, sometimes I miss wearing low waist jeans like you wore the day before.' (Bhagat: 2005, 52)

The word 'package' is no more indianised implication for a family. It is a term presented as a piece of commercialization. The word package likewise suggests a thought of agreements related with it. Esha is prepared to think twice about any expense to lay out her desire as a model. Priyanka's choice to leave Shyam is profoundly commonsense. She favors Mr. Ganesh Gupta, a computer programmer with better possibilities for marriage. Her choice of dismissal and determination of her life accomplice dispose of the job of feeling. Her demeanor and conduct don't look like Indian culture and disposition. The Indian representatives working in a worldwide Call Centre need to take on another personality by disposing of their unique character. For American clients, they need to imagine like American by disguising their regular tone and first language and complement. For example Shyam Mehra becomes 'Sam Merci', Varun Malhotra becomes 'Victor Mell', Esha Singh

needs to become 'Eliza Vocalist' and Radhika Jha is called 'Regina Jones'. Subsequently they need to live in a dual personality in their own country. The novel starts with the issue of character when Shyam acquaints himself with the readers,

Hi! I am Shyam Mehra, or Sam Marcy as they call me at my workplace, the Connexions call centre in Gurgaon. American tongues have trouble saying my real name and prefer Sam. If you want, you can give me another name too. I really don't care. Anyway, I am a call centre agent. There were hundreds of thousands, probably millions of agents like me. (Bhagat, 2005, 11)

Bhagat extended the defiant demeanor of his characters against social and social restrictions winning in India. Their perspectives and activities are far away from Indian social code. Early sex is not any more an ethical pass to them. In the traditional Indian culture, sex is related with marriage and its authenticity or social acknowledgment is a sensitive issue. The sex among Shyam and Priyanka on her drive is astounding. They got motivated from the film 'Titanic'. They embrace this purported recent fad to demonstrate their innovation against Indian morals. This change in perspective in profound quality standards is the consequence of digital culture and the effect of globalization.

Love has different implications for this cutting edge youthful age. It changes according to the circumstance and plans. Shyam loves Priyanka yet when there is a parttime separation issue with her he flirts Shefali, a call place specialist. Vroom has begun feeling something about Esha. At the point when Shyam gets some information about his exes, Vroom says, "those young women are not generally so significant as Esha. They resemble Stations you surf while searching for the genuine program you need to see (Bhagat: 2005, 116). Their articulations and sentiments about existence accomplices are a greater amount of style instead of energy. Young women are taking a gander at young men as stepping stool to progress while young men treat young women as objects of double-dealing and joyful making. Bhagat's characters demonstrate the reality: His characters are social radicals and represent their essentialness. People are not any more seen through the old idea which classifies men as predominant and women as mediocre. As by result of globalization and modernization people are given their due spot and regard, in their own acumen and capacities, they are believed to be working or concentrating on side by side. (Nusaiba, 2015:193) Love has different implications for this cutting edge youthful age. It fluctuates according to the circumstance and purposes. Shyam loves Priyanka however when there is a parttime separation issue with her he flirts Shefali, a Call Centre specialist. Vroom has begun feeling something about Esha. At the point when Shyam gets some information about his exes, Vroom says, "those young women are not quite as significant as Esha. They resemble Stations you surf while searching for the genuine program you need to see (Bhagat: 2005, 116). Their articulations and feelings about existence accomplices are a greater amount of design instead of energy. Young

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women are taking a gander at young men as stepping stool to progress though young men treat young women as objects of double-dealing and joyful making. Bhagat's characters demonstrate the reality: His characters are social dissidents and represents their essentialness. People are not any more seen through the old idea which sort men are predominant and women as substandard. As by result of globalization and modernization people are given their due spot and regard, in their own acumen and capacities, they are believed to be working or concentrating on side by side. (Nusaiba, 2015:193)

Food habits are firmly interlinked with culture as India has been rumored for her range of cooking styles everywhere. The spot of India has been treated as a rich wellspring of flavors throughout the entire existence of cooking. Anyway the said fiction projected a completely different image of India enjoyed Pizza Hutt, McDonald, coffee houses, vodka and so on under the influence of globalization. Another time of unhealthy food, cheap food overshadowed desi cooking styles from the menu of youthful age of India. To help their decision, Vroom makes sense of the dietary benefit of Pizza with the assistance of web bites. 'No way. Pizzas are the ultimate balanced diet. Look at the contents: grain in the crust, milk protein in the cheese, vegetables and meat as toppings. It has all the food groups. I read it on the Internet—pizza is good for you.' (Bhagat:2005,98)

The present world is loaded with potential open doors for the individuals who have a degree, great correspondence expertise and great references. However, call focus is a paradise to the people who simply have a degree or school training with familiarity with English. Anyway stress in workplace in view of odd working hours with different sexes and wellbeing chance might prompt other undesirable attributes like smoking, drinking, substance addiction and so on. The social and sex issues bring about impact of shows and contemporary life. Chetan Bhagat depicts love recommendations and dismissals in a sound and easy-going manner. Indeed, even after dismissal, the man and woman proceeded with sound fellowship which showed the adjustment of the mentality of youths. The way that early sex for them isn't by any stretch a liable demonstration is stunning. The socially fortified values had no qualities in corporate areas. However, what Bhagat needs to say is, this specialized period regards women as sexual items though new Indian women have compromising demeanor that outperforms the present adolescents. Pavan K. Varma sees such activities as possibly hurtful for the Indian working class, "truly threaten[ing] to make the universe of the working class a subordinate copy of the prevailing standards of western culture" (xxiv). In India, where "good" positions for women have generally been confined to educating, nursing and secretarial work (Singh and Pandey 684), the perceivability of women in the IT-empowered area is standing up to moderate areas of society. Albeit unfamiliar venture and business open doors have been generally praised, "the subsequent social change isn't effectively reconcilable with specific moderate parts of Indian life" (Nadeem 107).

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In nutshell, Globalization is a continuous common cycle possessing practically all circles of your life. The shades of nearby uniqueness are under the dull shadow of globalization. Writing is no more confined under territorial, etymological or public names. The effect of globalization is strikingly reflected through portrayal, choice of subjects and style of new Indian writers. Chetan Bhagat introduced habits of change obvious in youthful age of India. Bhagat's books are audience centric and not literary critic. The subjects include the tensions and frailties of the rising Indian working class women, including inquiries regarding vocation, deficiency, marriage, family clashes in an evolving India, and the relationship of the youthful Indian working class to the two leaders and normal clients whom they serve in the U.S.A. There is a part of self-improvement in the book as the writer welcomes readers to distinguish parts of themselves and their lives that drive them mad and that they might want to change. In any case, women business is entirely unexpected from women strengthening. Pressure emerges when their autonomy and independence struggle with conventional, social and social qualities. However his women characters show westernized ways of life, some look for nearer relationship with their better half, guardians than their advanced way of life. Be that as it may, as a rule, the mentality of the cutting edge popular young women should be patched as conflicting with the desire of social limitations and getting achievement placed them in more noteworthy intricacies.

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**Culture Clash via Food in Joanne Harris's "Fish"**

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**Abstract**

Joanne Harris, a well known British author who is remarkable for her unique style of writing with alluring thoughts. She has penned novels, cookbooks, memoir and short stories. *Jigs and Reels* is one among her short story collections which is clever and uproarious. "Fish" is about the young married couple namely Jack and Melissa. Jack has his roots in Italy, whereas his wife belongs to England. Both the characters are from different cultural background, when they decide to go on a destination to Naples, at this juncture the culture clash emerges between them and they contradict with one another even in the choice of food. This research paper focuses on how food and culture are interlinked in every aspect of human lives which imbues as tradition and family.

**Keywords:** Culture, Food, Culture Clash, Tradition, Family

**Introduction:**

British Literature covers different genres such as novels, plays and short stories, depicting with much connectivity to its culture and with the hint of creative imagination to it. Joanne Harris is one such writer who instills her culture through the short stories. Her stories highlight the societal elements which one can visualize in the normal day to day human life. She is a multifaceted author who gives importance to food as well via culture. She has got influenced from her maternal grandmother to write in the aspect of food. *Jigs and Reels* is one among her short story collection which contains twenty two stories. "Fish" is the twentieth story. The primary characters in this story are Jack and Melissa who have got married recently, hardly less than two weeks. It was a lavish wedding with " five hundred guests, white roses and gypsophilia; two carats in yellow gold; a cake designed with rather more

architectural than most office buildings and twenty-four cases of champagne, all paid for by the bride's parents ("Fish" 246).

Melissa was a young girl of twenty six, who was not professionally ambitious about her life. She had a reputed family background, and her father owned multiple supermarkets. Jack, Melissa's husband on the other hand was a young and successful financial advisor in the city. Their marriage was like "the perfect mixture of business and pleasure" (247). The couple soon after their marriage went on with the honeymoon to Naples, Italy. It'd been only three days Jack got agitated and irritated by his wife Melissa because of their cultural differences. Melissa being raised in England doesn't know anything of Naples. Jack chose this destination for their honeymoon because he was a quarter Neapolitan.

When the couple went to the Neapolitan restaurant, Jack accustomed to the food so well and more over he was extremely fond to taste it hence it relished his memory. But Melissa couldn't eat for the three consecutive days of their stay there, for the restaurant seemed unable to comprehend "Melissa's vegetarian, lactose intolerant and, above all, wheat free diet" (247). After their dispute they both mutually decided to have fish in a small restaurant called The Casa Rosa. They ordered their food of their choice, Melissa went for a small piece of grilled sea bass, Jack felt hungry and chose oysters, lobster tagliolini, and red mullet. Their order was served by a plumpy and cheery woman called Rosa. She came with yet another dish of specialty to the couple, when Melissa made a complaint, Rosa felt being a Neapolitan, she didn't serve them with much hospitality and obliges to serve them the best throughout. As Jack states to Melissa:

She's a Neapolitan. Her sense of hospitality obliges her to make it up to you. "How ridiculous," said Melissa. "I certainly shan't eat any of it." "Then I shall eat it all," said Jack. "I can't and won't refuse her hospitality." To refuse the food, he knew from his grand-mother, would be the worst kind of insult; already Rosa had been shaken by Melissa's casual complaint; to turn down her apology would be inexcusable. (254) Savannah Evans states,

In Italy, for example, food is not just about sustenance, but also about family, community, and tradition. Italians have a rich culinary history that dates back to ancient times, with important traditional dishes such as pasta and pizza. The Italian food experience centers not only on taste, but on sharing meals with loved ones, the pleasures of cooking, and pride in their culinary heritage. (*SLO Food Bank*).

Jack continued to appreciate and ate the food with much delight and enjoyed his stay in Naples. On the other hand his wife Melissa, who was uneasy with her stay in Naples and the culture she couldn't understand and accept. Jack, as a Neapolitan tried and accompanied Melissa with his culture on how to eat, taste and admire the delicacies of his cultural foods. But, due to their dissimilar cultural background, both Melissa and Jack as a family, one tries to portray the cultural heritage of one's

background, at the same time the other couldn't apprehend it. Even though Melissa left the restaurant, Jack had a perfect and complete dinner, by showing respect to his culture via food.

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**Literary Evolution in Cultural Studies: Tracing Paradigms,  
Perspectives, and Implications**

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**Abstract**

Literary evolution within cultural studies involves a complex interplay of paradigms, perspectives, and implications. This research explores this complexity across historical, theoretical, and contemporary dimensions. It begins with a historical overview showing how socio-cultural shifts, political movements, and technological developments have shaped this evolution. The paper also investigates current trends in literary evolution within cultural studies, examining its impact in the era of globalization, digital media, and transnational relations. It explores emerging topics such as eco-criticism, indigenous studies, and disability studies, discussing their influence on cultural evolution's direction and focus. Overall, this paper offers a comprehensive discussion of emerging themes within cultural studies, emphasizing theoretical outcomes and potential impacts.

**Keywords:** Literary evolution, Cultural studies, Paradigms, Globalisation, Eco-criticism.

**Introduction:**

Literature is often seen as a reflection and manifestation of cultural values, undergoing significant evolution over time. This evolution within cultural studies is a dynamic process influenced by various factors including socio-political changes, technological advancements, and cultural dynamics. Understanding how literature evolves within specific cultural contexts is crucial for comprehending shifts in cultural expression and social dynamics. The purpose of this research paper is to explore the paradigms, perspectives, and implications of literary evolution within cultural studies.

The rise of cultural studies has revolutionized literary analysis by emphasizing that cultural production cannot be studied in isolation from its societal context. Unlike traditional approaches that treat literary works as self-contained entities, cultural studies contextualize them within broader cultural frameworks. This



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approach enables a deeper understanding of how texts reflect and perpetuate dominant social ideologies.

Cultural studies encompass a range of themes including cultural criticism and the intersection of identity and culture. These themes critique societal norms and explore how cultural products shape collective identities. For instance, feminist scholars have analyzed literature to deconstruct gender roles, while post-colonial and queer theories have challenged colonial narratives and normative societal constructs.

Literary evolution within cultural studies is framed by various theoretical approaches such as structuralism and post-structuralism. Structuralism initially focused on language and sign systems but was later challenged by post-structuralist theories that emphasized the multiplicity of meanings and the construction of power relations within texts. Feminist, post-colonial, and queer theories further enriched literary analysis by exploring themes of gender, colonialism, and societal norms.

In the age of globalization and digital media, literary evolution has taken new directions. Digital technologies have facilitated the global circulation of literary texts, fostering hybrid cultural expressions. Emerging fields like eco-criticism, indigenous studies, and disability studies have expanded literary analysis by incorporating environmental, socio-cultural, and political dimensions.

The implications of literary evolution within cultural studies are diverse, impacting cultural understanding, public discourse, and societal injustices. Cultural studies not only enriches literary scholarship but also promotes interdisciplinary dialogue and challenges oppressive discourses in society. The future of cultural studies holds promise for further innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration in the study of literature and culture.

The evolution of literature within cultural studies is a multifaceted process influenced by historical, theoretical, and contemporary factors. By critically engaging with diverse paradigms, scholars can deepen their understanding of cultural manifestations and drive future research in literature, culture, and society. This paper calls for continued exploration and dialogue to uncover new avenues for research in cultural studies.

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**Diaspora and Feminism in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Arranged Marriage***

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**Abstract**

An Indian-American writer Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's works which chiefly deal with the existential quandaries of expatriates tackle two problematic areas of contemporary post- colonial theory - 'diaspora' and 'feminism'. Drawing on her own rich experience as an immigrant, Divakaruni projects the struggle, rootlessness and anxiety as also the adaptation and assimilation of foreign cultures by the Indian diaspora. Divakaruni delicately portrays how expatriate women, naturally endowed with the feminine ability to relate simultaneously to two homes, employ wisdom and compassion to empathize with two different cultures Indian and American, and to heal the fractured selves (their own and those of fellow-beings) by synthesizing the moderate and the best in the two cultures. Thus, in addition to the mandatory 'double' vision that diasporic writers possess, Divakaruni, inspired by both Indian and foreign feminist writers, projects a 'third feminine vision' - one with far-reaching social implications, especially in India where the attempt to assert feminine identity has met with brutal violence from the orthodoxy and patriarchy. Divakaruni's empathetic and genuine rendering of the lives of third world women may also serve as a corrective to the usual Eurocentric bias of Western feminist theories. This paper focuses on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's popular first collection of short stories *Arranged Marriage* (1995). An attempt has been made to analyze her presentation of Indian-born women living new lives in America, as also her depiction of the institution of marriage and man-woman relationships in the diasporic setting. One of her earliest works of fiction, these stories attract attention by virtue of the fact that they act not only as an indication of her enormous literary potential as story-teller and character-painter but also as a compass pointing to the 'women-centric' direction her future works would take. Also, the short-story format gives Divakaruni the freedom to explore a myriad locales and characters across space and time, drawn from varied age-groups and walks of life, both in India and the U.S. A host of terms which

dominate contemporary post-colonial discourse and are manifestations of the peculiar diasporic condition, such as, multiculturalism, hybridity, exile, displacement, marginalization and dislocation find concrete examples in her work.

**Key Words:** Arranged Marriage, Post-Colonial theory, diaspora, feminism, Indian and American cultures, marriage, expatriates.

**References:**

“Diasporas, the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions, is a central historical fact of colonization” (Ashcroft 68-69). European imperialism first initiated the process of Europeans migrating to colonies and later resulted in the colonized migrating to the homelands of the colonizers or to other colonies. The Indian diaspora is now a vital and inseparable part of American life, culture and literature. Indian-American writers have made a simultaneous and substantial contribution to both Indian and American literatures. Their writings are a testimony to the complex blending of East and West, convention and modernity, Indian tradition and American independence, especially in the lives of Indian immigrants in the United States. As Prof. Jasbir Jain writes,

Expatriate writing occupies a significant position between cultures and countries. It generates theory and defines positions as it constructs a new identity which negotiates boundaries and confines and relates to different temporal and spatial metaphors. Cultures travel, take root or get dislocated and individuals internalize nostalgia or experience amnesia. Writers living abroad live on the margins of two societies and cultural theory are today being created by people who live on the margins (Jain 11).

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (born Chitralkha Banerjee in 1956) is an acclaimed Indian- American writer based in Houston with her family. Born in Kolkata, she moved to the States for her higher education. A prolific and versatile writer, she has won several prestigious awards for her poetry, short stories, essays and novels. She writes for both children and adults and her fiction covers multiple genres - realism, history, magic realism and fantasy. A professor of creative writing at the Houston University, she is also a popular reviewer and columnist. Her works focus on the experiences of South Asian immigrants to the U.S. and her predominant thematic concerns are pro- feminist, rebelling against the victimization suffered by Asian women. This concern is reflected in her real life role as an activist with several

women's organizations and as the co-founder of *Maitri* (1991) a helpline for South Asian women dealing with domestic abuse. A list of her works would include – poetry collections such as *The Reason for Nasturtiums* (1990), *Black Candle* (1991), *Leaving Yuba City* (1997), short-story collections and novels such as - *Arranged Marriage* (1995), *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), *Sister of My Heart* (1999), *The Unknown Errors of our Lives* (2001), *Neela: Victory Song* (2002), *The Vine of Desire* (2002), *The Conch Bearer* (2003), *Queen of Dreams* (2004), *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming* (2005), *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), *Shadow land* (2009), *One Amazing Thing* (2010), *Oleander Girl* (2013), and several essays.

Divakaruni's works which chiefly deal with the existential quandaries of expatriates tackles two problematic areas of contemporary post-colonial theory - 'diaspora' and 'feminism'. The Indian diasporic community is one of the most heterogeneous especially with regard to race, religion, region and language. It is caught between a sense of homelessness on the one hand and a sense of networking and solidarity on the other hand, in a virtually endless attempt to bridge the gap between native and adopted cultures. "The word 'diaspora' is literally a scattering carrying within it the ambiguous status of being both an ambassador and a refugee. ... While one requires the projection of one's culture and the ability to enhance its understanding, the other seeks refuge and protection and relates more positively to the host culture" (Jain 11-12). Drawing on her own rich experience as an immigrant, Divakaruni projects the struggle, rootlessness and anxiety as also the adaptation and assimilation of foreign cultures by the Indian diaspora. On the other hand, the Indian feminine, physically and mentally enslaved by traditions in her native country, often encounters overwhelming experiences in a foreign land. Divakaruni delicately portrays how expatriate women, naturally endowed with the feminine ability to relate simultaneously to two homes, employ wisdom and compassion to empathize with two different cultures Indian and American, and to heal the fractured selves (their own and those of fellow-beings) by synthesizing the moderate and the best in the two cultures. Thus, in addition to the mandatory 'double' vision that diasporic writers possess, Divakaruni, inspired by both Indian and foreign feminist writers, projects a 'third feminine vision' one with far-reaching social implications especially in India where the attempt to assert feminine identity has met with brutal violence from the orthodoxy and patriarchy. Divakaruni's empathetic and genuine rendering of the lives of third world women may also serve as a corrective to the usual Eurocentric bias of Western feminist theories.

This paper focuses on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's popular first collection of short stories *Arranged Marriage* (1995) which won an American Book Award (1996), a PEN Josephine Miles award (1996), and a Bay Area Book Reviewers Award (1996). An attempt has been made to analyze her presentation of Indian-born women living new lives in America, as also her depiction of the institution of marriage and man-

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woman relationships in the diasporic setting. One of her earliest works of fiction, these stories attract attention by virtue of the fact that they act not only as an indication of her enormous literary potential as story-teller and character-painter but also as a compass pointing to the 'women-centric' direction her future works would take. Also, the short- story format gives Divakaruni the freedom to explore a myriad locales and characters across space and time, drawn from varied age-groups and walks of life, both in India and the U.S. A host of terms which dominate contemporary post-colonial discourse and are manifestations of the peculiar diasporic condition, such as hybridity, exile, displacement, marginalization and dislocation find concrete examples in her work.

The book has eleven stories, each revolving around the choices made by women caught in difficult circumstances. Ten of the eleven stories are set in the United States. The central characters are all Bengali women. Divakaruni succeeds in creating a lovely atmosphere that blends sights, smells and memories from the villages and cities of Bengal, from Calcutta and Burdwan, as also New York, San Francisco and California. Divakaruni's beautiful and powerful stories give expression to the emotions that arise out of the conflict and blending of cultures, even as her heroines struggle to maintain a fine balance between old treasured beliefs from India and surprising newfound desires in America, to start anew whilst riding the surf of American independence and adventurism without losing the moorings of Indian wisdom and ethics. Her portrayal of the journey of their souls to maturity is remarkable for its authenticity and sensitivity.

The first story titled 'Bats' is the only story in the collection that is set completely in India. The narrator speaks of growing up in Calcutta, as the daughter of a woman physically abused by her husband. The intense trauma of the mother who is a victim of domestic violence is transmitted to the innocent daughter who is not even fully aware of her father's cruelty. As the narrator recalls, And again, "Father always slept late in the mornings...I didn't see him much. I heard him, though, shouts that shook the walls of my bedroom like they were paper, the sounds of falling dishes" (AM 2).

The story is aptly named 'Bats' because the mother and daughter who are driven out and then return again and again to the husband and father, due to social pressure as also their own love and longing, are like the bats in the countryside mango orchards who come only to be poisoned and killed. An excellent study in the psychology of traumatized childhood and the pangs of lost innocence, of the male ego that gets a high by crushing women thus ruining domestic life, this sets the tone for the rest of the collection wherein it is amply clear that life is not easy for women in India. However, it is also gradually revealed that women in America too face numerous problems, on account of their gender, albeit at a different level.

The second story 'Clothes' is the story of Mrs. Sumita Sen, a young girl

from Calcutta, married off to Somesh, a store-manager in California. Sumita testifies that marriage is the centre of existence for Indian girls who are destined to embrace the unknown, to belong to their in-laws, and, their greatest fear is that of rejection by suitors. Hailing from a land where even marital rape is part of the 'wifely duties' and forced to re-locate to an alien land, Sumita is lucky to get a caring husband who encourages her to come out of the rigid traditional mould. But, all their dreams are shattered when Somesh is shot dead in a midnight robbery. Sumita realizes that there is an ugly side to life in America - the land of freedom and hope. But, the young widow decides to stay back, drawing resilience from her married off to Somesh, a store-manager in California. Sumita testifies that marriage is the centre of existence for Indian girls who are destined to embrace the unknown, to belong to their in-laws, and, their greatest fear is that of rejection by suitors. Hailing from a land where even marital rape is part of the 'wifely duties' and forced to re-locate to an alien land, Sumita is lucky to get a caring husband who encourages her to come out of the rigid traditional mould. But, all their dreams are shattered when Somesh is shot dead in a midnight robbery. Sumita realizes that there is an ugly side to life in America - the land of freedom and hope. But, the young widow decides to stay back, drawing resilience from her husband's unfulfilled American Dream. Clothes play a major role in the story, exquisite saris from India, bold dresses from America, symbolizing the strengths and weaknesses of each culture. From wearing pink, blue, red and orange - the colours of transition, possibility, marriage and new beginnings, Sumita is forced to wear white - the colour of widowhood and endings. But, Sumita's final choice of a long flowing skirt gifted by her husband proves that she has been able to synthesize the best in both cultures. Divakaruni also offers a poignant glimpse into how cruel Indian society can be to widows, so heartless that death becomes an attractive option when compared to life. Sumita's choice to live and to live on her own terms is heroic -... I cannot go back. I don't know yet how I'll manage, here in this new, dangerous land. I only know I must. Because all over India, at this very moment, widows in white saris are bowing their veiled heads, serving tea to in-laws. Doves with cut-off wings I tilt my chin, readying myself for the arguments of coming weeks, the remonstrations. In the mirror, a woman holds my gaze, her eyes apprehensive yet steady (AM 33).

'Silver Pavements, Golden Roofs', the next story, gives expression to the desires and ambitions of Jayanti, a young girl from a conservative Bengali family who wins admission to the University of Chicago. She is excited by the glitter of the first world and immensely relieved to escape from the terror of an arranged marriage. She resides as a paying guest in the house of her Aunt and her Uncle Bikram whose long stay in the States can be summed up as the shattering of the NRI dream. Reduced to poverty by racist violence, Bikram is a frustrated man. Aunt Pratima is a woman whose beauty and talent are wasted and who is not allowed to step out of her house by

her husband who fears she may be attacked by racists. Jayanti thinks of her Uncle as a tyrant until she herself experiences racial violence. It is then that she realizes how the mutual affection and understanding of the couple and their nostalgia for India had enabled their marriage to succeed in a hostile land. It is a classic case of 'exile', indicating "a compulsory isolation and a nostalgic anchoring in the past" (Jain 12). This story presents two contrasting views of America and suggests that reality is a mixture of the good and the bad. While Jayanti visualizes America as a magic land with silver pavements and golden roofs, her uncle Bikram calls America a witch who pretends to give and then snatches everything back. Yet, even after her encounter with the ugly reality of racism, Jayanti's view of the beautiful snow-covered landscape leads her to the realization that the beauty and pain of life in America are one and the same:

'A Perfect Life' is the tale of Meera, a highly successful Indo-American businesswoman. Admired by her employers and colleagues, independent and confident, leading a stylish and luxurious life, she has a perfect American boyfriend too. Her rigid attitude to marriage and motherhood as a bondage and burden surprises even American women. One day, all this changes as she takes pity on a seven-year old injured, starving, physically abused orphan whom she finds hiding in her apartment. The young boy, whom she names Krishna awakens the Indian mother lying dormant deep within her. As time passes, a strong bond develops between the two. However, she is forced to give up the boy for adoption to state agencies. The separation shatters both mother and son. Krishna runs away from his foster home and Meera keeps searching for him forever. Henceforth, no joy can re-compensate for the gaping hole Krishna has left in her life. The story boldly contrasts the ways in which motherhood is looked at, in Indian and American cultures. Both fullness, which is the highest aspiration of every Indian woman, asserts its power unequivocally.

The eighth story titled 'Doors' is a perfect example of how a perfect marriage is ruined by the clash of cultures. Preeti, an Indian girl brought up in the US, falls in love with and marries Deepak, an Indian boy who has come to the US very recently. Despite the fears of family and friends both of them adjust perfectly to each other. However the only problem is that while the Americanized wife loves to guard her privacy and keep all the doors shut, the Indian husband loves the opposite. Things get complicated further when the husband's friend Raj comes from India to visit them. Raj's easygoing uninhibited ways trouble Preeti until she becomes almost psychotic and paranoid. The story underlines the vital differences in Indian and American cultures that are seldom reconciled. It is also a study of how old cultural habits never die and any marriage, whether arranged or otherwise, demands a painful effort to transcend the self.

Above all, the stories reveal that Divakaruni has never really left India behind and, away from home, she, like her fellow-expatriate women, treasures India in her



heart perhaps much more consciously than those living in India. Her work thus serves as a bridge between Indian and American cultures which have a reciprocal influence on each other, sometimes positive and sometimes negative. 'Arranged Marriage' delves into the unique way of life and the cultural diversity that the Indian diaspora brings into the American setting. It also explores the impact of the powerful American culture upon Indians. Interestingly, it highlights not only the differences but also the similarities between Indian and American cultures. The struggles of the Indian-American women in these stories symbolize the common aspirations for freedom and fulfillment shared by women from both continents. Divakaruni's heroines seem to profess that extreme of rigidity and of license are both equally harmful and the secret to happiness lies in the golden mean. Neither conservatism nor liberalism can be perfect. Often, the exploitation of women continues across cultures whether orthodox or ultra-modern and it is only the form and manner of the oppression that changes with change of place. As Deepika Bahri writes in her essay "Feminism in/and Postcolonialism", "Globalization offers unprecedented opportunities for transnational feminist activism, but seizing these opportunities will depend upon feminists' ability to read sameness and difference on a global scale. It will require that we learn to read literature by and about "Third-World" women as more than informal sociology, even as it will enjoin upon us the need to read global experiences and events as complex, intricately interwoven social texts. We would then read women in the world not as the same but as neighbours, as "near-dwellers" whose adjacence can become more meaningful. Through this logic - a logic that might usefully be applied to the general orientation of postcolonialism- we would read the world, not as one (in the sense of being already united), but as belonging together" (Bahri 220).

To sum up, it might be said that, with her finely drawn and extremely real characters and her liberal and apt use of words and literal translations from the vernacular, her nostalgic evocations of pulsating images from the heart of Bengali culture and landscape, her accurate descriptions of lower, middle and upper class American life and of the sights and sounds of the American setting, Divakaruni makes a lasting contribution to the rich symphony of cultures in Indo-American literature. Works like *Arranged Marriage* which shed new light on diaspora and feminism, herald a bright dawn in fiction-writing by Indian women in English.

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**Amitav Ghosh's Select Works: A Perspective on Environmental Humanities in India**

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**Abstract**

The objective of this research paper is to find how the selected works of Amitav Ghosh exhibit a subtle human-nature bonding that weaves diverse themes and creates a rich tapestry of human experiences in the planet we live. The horrific effects of climate change conditions due to anthropocentric human civilization have been focused with reference to the selected works of Amitav Ghosh. The study aims to explore the present climate change conditions with reference to the selected works. An attempt has been made to explore how nature in Amitav Ghosh's selected works, "The Great Derangement", "Gun Island", "The Hungry Tide" and "River of Smoke", depict an intricate relationship with human beings. Theoretical concept of ecocriticism has been used in this study for examining the combined roles of human beings and the natural environment. This study uses a content analysis method and the study reveals the complex relationship between nature and human beings with respect to the environment and the rural-global dynamics.

**Keywords:** Climate change, human-nature relationship, environment, anthropocentrism, cultural exchange, environment

**Introduction:**

Environmental humanities, as a global intellectual movement and a new interdisciplinary matrix has been emphasizing the important role that the humanities, arts, interpretive social sciences can play in bringing about solutions to environmental problems and understanding the reason of the origin of those problems and finding solutions to improve environmental outcome from the concerned problems. The environmental humanities subsume a connectivity ontology and a commitment to two fundamental axioms relating to the need to accept the ecological laws into practice and to bring humanity as part of a larger living system. In this paper, attempt has been made to interpret Amitav Ghosh's selected works, "The Great Derangement", "Gun Island", "The Hungry Tide" and "River of Smoke" in the light of environmental humanities where issues of environmental concerns, climate change, effects of

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environmental hazards, the reasons for environmental degradations have been located in the proper perspective.

In his non-fiction, “The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable” (2016) Amitav Ghosh explores the climate change conditions, its effects on the present global scenario and the possible changes that literature, history, psychology and understanding of human-nature politics can procure for bringing about changes in the orientation of the reader’s way of perceiving and acting in relation to the natural resources available. The non-fiction brought under discussion seeks to highlight on the concept of sustainable living by making aware of the future outcome of the indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources for materialist pursuits. The work also brings to focus the present climatic condition, its effects on human beings, all living beings and the environment we live in. Amitav Ghosh, in his work “The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable” laments that the present generation has failed to scale and range the climate change in the field of literature, philosophy, history and politics.

Amitav Ghosh’s ground breaking work, “The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable” is a call for more works of imaginative cultural enterprise that can illuminate the climate change crisis of the present generation. In this work Ghosh critiques the material forces that plunder earth’s natural resources and acts as a plea to preserve the ecosystem, conserve the rich biodiversity of the land and make an advocacy for a sustainable planet. Ghosh also brings up the fact that certain phenomena like hundred- years storms, heat-waves and cyclones have appeared in science fiction and fantasy novels but traditional literary works have shunned these. As a result of this contemporary modes of thinking have elapsed its grasp into the serious consciousness that can experience such things in the present scenario.

Ghosh’s eco-critical non-fiction, “The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable” relies on the belief that literature as a cultural form bears vital potential to confront the climate change challenges by sensitizing people and exposing them to the present environmental crisis from their blinded cocoon of comfort zones where they think only of individual profit. Ghosh here questions the nature of modern civilization, consumerism principles, and the relationship of human beings with the environment. The artist’s ignoring of the climate change conditions and attempts to mitigate it through public sensitization would be the ‘great derangement’ as the title of the work suggests. Ghosh also argues that humans have always been aware of the consciousness and intelligence of nonhumans. The only fact is that human beings tried to suppress them. Ghosh is also critical about the modernist’s segregation of science fiction from the traditional literary culture due to its adherence to the scientific field. He rather stresses that the mitigation of the climate change crisis with the aid of traditional literary culture is better suited than

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the science fiction genre provided the focus is on the right track to the climate change effects.

Amitav Ghosh is against the Eurocentric idea that modernity dispersed from the West. Citing Burma and China he contends that ideas and technologies circulated globally during the early modern ages. Fossil fuels like coal, natural gas, oil, petroleum and others were extensively used in China and Burma. Amitav Ghosh contends that the Industrial revolution could have taken place in Asia just as easily as in Europe, had Europe not colonized Asia and Africa by the time the technological advances occurred. Amitav Ghosh, thus, concludes that imperialism delayed the onset of the climate crisis in the colonized countries. He also connects Mahatma Gandhi's attempt to discourage the introduction of technology based items production to Asian resistance to industrialization that ultimately resulted in late industrialization that affects climate change in the long run. He also adds that arguments for climate reparations for Asian countries have ethical and historical value.

However, Ghosh also acknowledges that it is difficult to bring in such arguments within the sense of interconnectedness of human societies in the age of climate crisis. It is also brought into focus that the politicization of global population increase has not brought desired awareness of the climate change effects. Moral political ethics focus on individual moral journey rather than collective or nation's journey, and thus a politics of climate change cannot exist. It is argued that the framing of the climate crisis as a moral issue is problematic for three reasons- first, it exists like a global problem as the product of individual choice; second, morality of individuals are relative; and third, even the most dedicated individual can mitigate the crisis. It is also predicted that the more-powerful carbon emitting nations like the United States will take drastic steps to prevent immigration from climate refugees and frame their governmental policies accordingly which will in turn result in the death of millions of people from Asia and Africa. It is agreeable that poor countries may be better suited to absorb the shocks and stresses of the climate change effects than Western nations but, that would be unethical to expect disempowered people to sacrifice in order to maintain the status quo. Amitav Ghosh is however optimistic on the religious sects who are engaging with climate activism and hopes for a better time where the global citizens will be free from the 'great derangement' and find their connections with the nonhuman and the environment in new art, culture and literature.

Climate change affects human beings and the planet in varied ways. Climate change effects are rampant and it spawls everywhere. Just as the two world wars left a massive impact on human lives, the effects of climate change are creeping into a catastrophic end with the fear of mass extinction, food insecurity, loss of biodiversity, devastations caused by floods, droughts and extreme climate conditions. Human beings are constantly in conflict with nature and the environment. The climate change conditions are responses to the eco-colonial anthropogenic effects on the

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environment. Consequently human beings are responsible for the present climatic degradation and its consequences due to which life on earth has been at stake. The specter of climate change swirls in the whole texture of Amitav Ghosh's novel, "Gun Island"(2019).

The setting of the novel revolves mainly around the Sundarbans, the marshy wetland between India and Bangladesh, where Deen Dutta, a New York based book dealer comes in search of a shrine and the truth behind the myth of Gun Merchant and Mansha Devi, the goddess of snakes. And the Sundarbans are one of the regions that are very badly affected by climate change and its ongoing disaster. Amitav Ghosh's novel *Gun Island* seeks to surface out that while pursuing endless desires, anthropocentric culture lands into severe climate change conditions and environmental degradation. This literary tapestry dealing with the relationship between human beings and the environment seeks to enumerate the devastating consequences of changing climatic conditions and the instances of degenerating ecosystems and their overall impacts on the human beings and the non-human world. An exploration of the novel from the perspective of environmental humanities showcases how human life at the extreme margins has been affected by these cataclysmic consequences.

The novel ultimately comes to locate how anthropogenic effects have fuelled the global climate crisis in the seventeenth century by decoding the myth of *Bonduki Sadagar*, translated as Gun Merchant. Dananath's exploration of the 'Manasa Devi dhaam' in the novel, locates the current situation of the Sundarbans and brings the changing living conditions of the human beings, aquatic animals, terrestrial population and the horrific climate change conditions to the limelight. Ghosh leaves the human beings responsible for this eco-colonial imperialism. Anthropocentric greed is enough to destroy the world. Dinanath's visit to the Sundarban 'dhaam' of The Gun Merchant reveals the ugly consequences of capitalism caused by human beings by robbing nature and natural resources. The barrenness of the Sundarbans reveals the exploitative quests undertaken by the human beings. As a consequence of the excessive exploitation, nature and the environment take their control. Nature, treated as the 'other' takes control over the Sundarbans through furious climatic disasters. Nature and the environment in the Sundarbans turned hostile towards human beings. Nature, the creator becomes the destroyer when exploitation of nature and its resources crosses its limits. Nature's revenge on human beings led to not only terrestrial barrenness but also brought about poverty, destruction, migration, extinction, trafficking, and displacement of human beings. Attempts to dig wells for drinking water were thwarted by arsenic poisoning in the water, attempts to make embankments were foiled by overriding high tides, and fisheries were plundered and spoiled due to mass pollution and excessive fishing. Facilities of water transport and other advantages of the Sundarbans attracted insiders and also outsiders to eco-

colonize the land. Through the mouth speech of the characters- Piya and Nilima in the novel, Ghosh strives to disperse the message of the vulnerable condition of the colonized planet and that it is high time to decolonize the mind of the human beings first so that the planet can be decolonized from the anthropocentric disposition of the human beings.

Nilima's attempt to bring 'dhaam' in *The Gun Merchant* into light arises from fear and concern for the displaced people. Piya's concern for the aquatic animals reveals her inclusion of the non-human within the domain of the equal space of the planet shared by the humans. Piyas' saving of the dolphin Rani from the nylon net and Rani's expression of appreciation to Piya and her perception of the rivers "Each of these rivers ... is like a moving forest, populated by an incredible variety of life forms... it carries traces of everything that happens upriver" (97 -98), giving birth to a new world, free from ecological colonization. As soon as Piya set free Rani, the dolphin had begun to make eye contact with her, ...a manner that suggested something more than mere recognition"(95).

The materialistic tendencies of human beings towards nature not only affected human's existence but the existence of other living organisms as well. In Sundarbans, it is not only the human beings who are stricken badly but the living organisms in the river like dolphins, crab and other organisms too due to anthropogenic factors. Due to the discharge of chemical fertilizers and factory effluents, river dead zones are created making these zones no more habitats for living organisms. The creation of such dead zones causes migration of living organisms that once inhabited the place. Migration is terrible for aquatic beings, especially dolphins like Rani.

Nevertheless, the novel ends with a ray of hope. As the title, "Gun Island" suggests, 'island' is a place of refuge and a place of security for a better future, Ghosh gives a call for a better sustainable environment to exist in the near future when the conflict between human and nature would dissolve and melt into unity.

Set in the world's largest mangrove ecosystem-the Sundarbans, comprising both water and land and the intersection of landscape, aquatic regions, human beings and their cultural confluence tinged with utter poverty, Amitav Ghosh's novel "The Hungry Tide" centers the experiences of an Indian-American scientist, Piyali Roy who expresses the interconnectedness between human beings and the non-human beings. She is anti-anthropocentric in her attitudes towards nature and the environment. As a researcher on dolphins, she realizes that the existing knowledge of the dolphins was incomplete and that there are much more things to discover about the dolphins and she seeks the purpose of her life in discovering the new relations of dolphins and their interconnectedness with human beings and the environment at large.

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The tide which is always hungry comes in twice daily, resulting in a constant reshaping of the land and uprooting and wiping out anything permanent. The tides in Sunderbans reach nearly three hundred kilometers inland and every day thousands of acres of forest disappear underwater, only to reappear and re-emerges hours later. The island is reshaped almost daily by powerful hungry tides. Amitav Ghosh recreates the history and weaves it to the contemporary situation for building the plot of the novel. The lurking dangers of the Sunderbans with the man-eating tigers, submerged crocodiles ready to pull their prey into deeper waters, connect the strife between human and the environment. The non-human world with ferocious tigers and deadly crocodiles reenact the history where human beings are duped in the midst of apparent safety. It reminds of the history of massacre of East Pakistan refugees who had run away from the Dandakaranya refugee camps to Morichjhapi island being unaware of the lurking danger there.

Amitav Ghosh's novel, "The Hungry Tide" addresses the powerlessness of human beings against the mighty Nature, the fragility of human created segments of society and the transitory life of human being in comparison to the long-lasting Natural phenomenon. In the wake of irresistible natural disasters like earthquakes, forest fires, drought, famine and flood, it has become clear that the power of Nature is uncontrollable and that human beings are bound to bow down and face humiliation to Nature.

Human beings have usurped the habitats of the non-human beings by extending their capitalist goals. Human settlement in the place meant for plants and animals, reclamation of coastal areas for the construction of buildings, and destruction of mangroves which are habitat for seabirds, amphibians and the aquatic animals are traced out as the root cause for the ecological and environmental problems and the source for hungry tides, Tsunamis and earthquakes. But the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess is of the view that humans are neither the rulers nor the centre of the universe, but are embedded in a vast living matrix and are subject to the laws of reciprocity (292). This is explicit in this novel that focuses on man's indomitable struggle with nature. Life is precarious in the marshy land of Sunderban, an archipelago of islands, spread between the sea and plains of Bengal, there are no borderlines to separate fresh water from salt, river from sea and land from water. Survival is an everybody's battle for the settlers of the Sunderbans who have learned to strike a balance with nature.

Amitav Ghosh's second series of the Ibis Trilogy, "River of Smoke" (2011) reveals the circumstances of sailors carrying opium in ships. The opium trade in the fictional space of Ghosh's *Ibis Trilogy* is cast with a cloak of fatality as it affects the lives of family members associated with opium production and trade. "Sea of Poppies"(2008) dealing with opium production in Bihar, India and " River of Smoke"(2011) centering on sell of Indian opium in China and the import-export of



opium across the Indian Ocean - all highlight the capitalist and materialist pursuit of human being, realized at the cost of colonizing of natural resources. Excessive trade resulted in excessive ecological imperialism. Graham Huggan explained in “Greening Postcolonialism: eco-critical perspectives” that it is unavoidable that postcolonial literature will include these aspects of manifest destiny in a spreading topic on ecological and environmental friendly questions on a worldwide scale. It addresses issues related to the inseparability from the historical legacy of capitalist and tyrannical abuse of current dilemmas of environmental mismanagement. Huggan's views on increasing traffic in eco-critical and postcolonial studies are important to be considered here. He remarked that the green reverse of post-colonialism suggested that modern imperialism and colonialism could hardly be analyzed without the large scale of ecological devastation required by them. Ghosh's “River of Smoke” reveals a depletion of the natural environment and environmental damage caused by the British colonial rule in the nineteenth century. The rivers in the fictional region indicate that native plants are destroyed and also opium poppies were forced to be grown to benefit the commercial market. The work of Ghosh is characteristic of postcolonial ecology, where the literary form ends up as a fundamental contribution to the revelation of human-nature binary. Ghosh is also trying to demonstrate how state policies to establish drug free-status at the cost of inadequate farmers routinely frame initiatives at the expense of inadequate farmers' incomes and exploit nature. He slams the policies and practices of post-colonial regimes where federal programs favour poor peasants by implementing environmental-friendly policy labeling in the name of the common good.

He cautions the present generation of writers that many cities and places have been engulfed in a rapidly changing world with a sea level, it is time to find new forms of art and literary works that disclose the predicament at hand. Gun Island reminds us that we are going through a man-made existential crisis that threatens one's own existence and that of other living organisms. The novel warns us not to be a bait to ‘greed’. Mankind's desire to conquer is bringing far reaching undesirable changes in the climate which are detrimental to human beings as well as other living organisms. These novels demonstrate the non-human perspectives like trees, rivers, mountains and animals and their relevance in the total understanding of the environment. Ghosh's literary undertaking is an innovative one and also serves as a stimulant for social action. Ghosh's eco-centric approach will allow the people to think deeply about the crisis of the environment and the human beings and find out a remedy for it.

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**Depiction Of Marginalized Culture in *One Part Woman***

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**Abstract**

Culture always refers to the ideas, customs, knowledge, morals and social behaviour of a particular community in a society. It is a particular way of life of people in a society. It is the depiction of way of life in food, clothing, religious worships, cultivation, rituals, myths etc. culture is the totality of the values acquired by the community and is transmitted to the next generation, gets accepted by the society and turns out to be an established one. Literature carries the seeds of culture in every piece of work. Many authors have traced such culture in their literary creations. The present paper focuses on one such work by Perumal Murugan. The controversial novel *One Part Woman* depicts the culture of Kongunadu region of Tamil Nadu with contemporary relevance. It explores the power and impact of culture and tradition in the identity of a community. The paper attempts to examine how Perumal Murugan has represented the ancient Tamil culture in his most popular novel *One Part Woman*.

**Key words:** Culture, Perumal Murugan, One part Woman

**Introduction:**

The word 'culture' is often used without knowing its original meaning. The word 'culture' is not a very easy term to define or it does not carry a simple interpretation. Rather, it has many references and significances. The word 'culture' has been derived from the Latin word 'cultura' which means growing or cultivation. Though in its origin the word 'culture' was related to cultivation and farming, later on it relates itself with the cultivation of literature, art, laws and customs. Culture is a way of life. The food that one eats, the dresses one wears, the language one speaks and the God one devotes all are characteristics of culture. It is said that culture is the embodiment of the way we think and do things. To signify the word one should throw some light on the works of Mathew Arnold who has written a book on it. In his book *Culture and Anarchy*, Arnold has explained the term 'Culture' as a special intellectual or artistic endeavors or products of any social group. He emphasizes that sense of culture which is more closely related to the aesthetics than to social science. Edward Tylor in his book *Primitive Culture* demonstrates that culture includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and even other capabilities and habits acquired by

man as a member of society (89). Another interpretation of the culture is given by Matsumoto in his book *Culture and Psychology* where he has defined the term culture. He says that the culture is the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people which would be communicated from one generation to the next. Raymond Williams calls culture as one of the two or three most complex words in the English language. Williams has suggested two or three usages of the word 'culture'. At first, the word 'culture' specifies a general process of rational, spiritual and artistic development. Secondly, it advises that a particular way of life whether of a people or a period or a group. Culture as a particular way of life includes various rituals and practices in a community.

Perumal Murugan is a contemporary Tamil writer, scholar and research chronicler. He has made several contribution to the academic study of Tamil language and research specific to the Kongu nadu region of tami Nadu where he was born. His work are soaked with the rich cultural heritage of Tamil Nadu. Since his writings are realistic, he has been praised as the most accomplished of his generation of Tamil writers. He has upheld the ancient religious culture and the struggles of the marginalized Hindu peasants in his novels. His *One Part Woman* is a novel based on ancient and supposed cultural practices among Tamil Hindus. It is a story of a childless couple with a strong desire of having a child, depicted with sensitivity, anguish and gentleness. In this work, Perumal Murugan has used actual names of places and communities. In the backdrop of the ancient rural culture of an interior south-Indian village, Perumal Murugan sets the story of his novel *One Part Woman*. In this novel, the author has given a pen-picture of the life style of a certain community. As the novelist himself has his place to the Gounder community, he has raised here the social and religious philosophy of this community- their fight for existence, their griefs and sorrows, cultivation and food habit, and their religious customs and beliefs.

In this novel, the writer has projected the interior villages of the district Kangunadu where he was born and had seen the humdrum life of common peasants. The author has moulded those experiences and realizations seen and realized throughout his life, into a unified whole. He has not highlighted any popular culture of modern India rather, what he has exhibited here is the folk culture of ancient India's social life. Thus, in this novel the author has presented the long-preserved aura and glorious tradition of ancient India. It is an inquisitive irony that even as progressive Indians would like to eliminate the caste system, they have little or no understanding of the lived truth of specific caste groups in their traditional mother country. Even as these communities are stalked and often dispossessed by the forces of modernization, they remain hostage to the ways of the past that have sustained them for centuries. Perumal Murugan has at least shown the readers a foretaste of what the collective scuffle may be about. *One Part Woman* has become a cult phenomenon in the

subcontinent, captivating Indian readers and jump-starting conversations about caste and female empowerment. The novel is set in South India during the British foreign period but with powerful reverberation to the present day. *One Part Woman* is a powerful examination of a loving marriage stressed by the prospects of others, and a spell on the rigid rules of caste and tradition that linger to constrict opportunity and happiness.

In *One Part Woman*, Kali and Ponna have been wedded for twelve years without being able to get pregnant. They both are deeply in love with each other, but have been childless after their wedding and as a consequence, remain worried fearing that the future of their heirless family possessions. They have tried all the possible options including praying to gods and making sacrificial offerings to remove family curse. But everything was in vain. Then it so happened that in the place where the stayed, every year there is an annual festival is celebrated in the Ardhanareeswara temple. On the fourteenth day of this Chariot festival all the social rules are broken. The childless woman would come alone to the area. Each woman was liberated to couple with a male stranger of her option, who was believed an embodiment of god. The children born out of this relationship were considered as God's child and admitted as such by the family. It is a socially accepted myth to conceive a child for a woman whose husband is impotent. The novel ends abruptly that Kali came to know that Ponna has gone to the Chariot festival.

In the following paragraph, the significance of the title *One Part Woman* is explored. The novel has given a vivid picture of ancient religious culture of Tiruchengode, a city of temples, and its surrounding locality in Tamil Nadu. The very title of the novel *One Part Woman* suggests that the story of the novel has some kind of affinity with the mythical form of Ardhanareeswara (translated as 'One Part Woman'), an idol of Lord Shiva who has given the left part of his body to his spouse Parvati. When the readers go through the novel, the readers understand that a great deal of light is thrown on the religious faith of people regarding the temple of Ardhanareeswara. This temple has a great influence and somehow comes to acquire importance in all matters of life of the villagers. Here Perumal Murugan, the veteran novelist, has brought out the significance of ancient religious culture which had a great impact to the social culture of Tamil Nadu. Unlike his contemporary Indian writers who are inclined to. As the events unfold, Ponna visits the temple during the chariot festival. Finally, Kali now doubted the entire public of women. He was now convinced that women were terrible creatures. Mother tells her son Kali to send his wife to another man. Ponna too replies that she is ready to go if Kali and his mother consider it as good to sending her to another man. Kali's mother and Ponna's mother and brother conspire together to send Ponna to the chariot festival. They lie to Ponna that Kali has agreed to the idea of the chariot festival, and on the other hand, they send Ponna's brother, to distract Kali.

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Chariot festival is one of part of the mythical age-old customs followed in Tamil Nadu. Perumal Murugan shows the typical Indian woman with her desire for in need of a child, with her caste based rituals, old-ceremonies to have a child. The author in this novel viewed and valued, not for who they are, but for their ability to attain motherhood, and their commitment to the family unit. Trichengode Kailasanathar temple is the main refrain in this novel and its adoring methods captures the psychological and emotional conflicts that annoyance the couple making them tears them apart.

Many examples can be taken. One fine example is Ardhanarishvara “the lord who is half woman and half man”. He is considered as a god of destruction and at the same time regeneration. It represents the inseparability of female and male drives in the universe, the truthfulness of marital union and the power of lushness of nature. Though there are several episodes in the puranas about the origin, Lord Brahma created the universe and make the human beings in order to enjoy their lives with offspring, soon Ardhanarishvara manifested, the Lord Brahma deemed “half and half” perfect, like Perumal Murugan’s *One Part Woman*. Jehovah (Hermetic Kabbalah) According to Kabbalah Adam was not a male, but both a male and a female. He was vertically divided, one face forward, one face behind. Eve was made from one of Adam’s rib: it is said that the Hebrew word ‘tzela’ is misinterpreted as ‘rib’ but actually means ‘side’, anyway since Adam was made in resemblance of God, it is deduced that the letter is a Hermaphrodite.

There is no male without female and no female without the male. The world goes on only when they come together it is said by the great philosophers. In search of motherhood Ponna followed the old-custom to have sex with others in the name of festival and their family allowing and encouraging her to do so except her husband Kali. Finally, Ponna went to the chariot festival. She had a sexual union with a complete stranger. It is only in the morning that Kali came to know about it when he found his in-laws house locked. He realized that Ponna had cheated him. He lost his control and started to scream her as a whore. Adrienne Rich is of the view that the power of a mother has two facets: the biological potential and the magical power endowed in women by men, whether in the form of Goddess-worship or the fear of being restricted and overcome by women. She says that a woman is seen a Goddess till the time she stays with the norms laid out by the patriarchal culture and more specifically, within the norms laid out by the man in her house, her father, brother, husband and son. If she fails to do so, she automatically becomes the shame for the family and is given names like a witch or a whore. Similarly, when Kali realises that Ponna has gone to the chariot festivals, he lost his control. He screamed her as a whore and cursed her that she would not be happy in her life. He wobbled along slowly all the way back to his home.

The novel ends abruptly as Kali learns that Ponna has gone to the shrine

despite him not being very prepared of it. Thus, the novel brings out the stigma faced by a childless couple in the society of India. The condition of a childless woman suffers a double jeopardy. She faces the taunts of the society, including both the men and women, who think of her as only *One Part Woman*. In the end, the desire to fulfill the demand of the society leads the couple on the crossroads of their own relationship and finally they suffer a broken marriage. Both Kali and Ponna were victims of the society's plot. The anti life forces are always stronger than the protagonists in a tragedy. The negative forces consider women as profitable as cattle that breed and plants that multiply and yield. The children are considered as products, capitals for generating wealth. No one cares to see that love is for more significant to life than having children without love for anyone. A sense of the real pathos involved in the story could be seen in these lines. The humiliations that Ponna faced in her life don't have any end. She was not ready to go out even to the fields during sowing season for fear that other would broach the topic. So, she isolated herself inside the house without going out anywhere and Kali didn't understand her feelings and pains.

*One Part Woman* questions the notion of parenthood and woman in society by placing the character Ponna in an extramarital circumstance through the traditional chariot celebration of Maadhorubaagan. The book explores the mentality of the entire community that they are part of; it is a social criticism on the rural community which runs by its traditional and out-dated practices that collectively by their interference causes the devastation of a loving couple. The existence of a collective identity in our society makes us defensive about our traditional and conventional practices rather than questioning it. *One Part Woman* examines how the writer criticizes the social pressures of parenthood in society and how Ponna defies the notion of a woman in society. It also questions how important are a collective consciousness in society and its relation to censorship and how does censorship of any kind deteriorate the quality of any society. Through the analysis of the novel *One Part Woman*, by placing it in its current social and political context, the readers can interpret and find meanings to the above questions.

Infertility and its significance in the Indian society is a major theme in the entire novel. Barbara Higgins talks about the socio conditions of childless couples, the inconsiderate and inaccurate comments by well-meaning friends and relatives to childless couples. They emphasize the expectations that society places on families to have children. These pressures include religious, cultural, and social values which can promote guilt and feelings of failure for infertile men and women. This is one of the major themes that run throughout the novel and is a driving force for the plot. The novel is picturised in the town of Tiruchengode, built about a temple to the deity Maadhorubaagan, the half female god. There are many statues on the Thiruchengodu hill, each one competent of giving a precise boon. One of them is the

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Maadhurubaagan also called as Ardhanareeswara, an idol of Shiva who has given the left part of his body to his partner, Parvathi. It is said that this is the only place where Shiva is worshipped in this mythical form.

Perumal Murugan was deserted on encountering quite a few men in the region past the age of fifty who were known as Ardhanari (Half-woman) or Sami Pillai (God-given child). On digging more, he explored out that till as lately as fifty years ago, on a meticulous evening of the yearly chariot festival in the temple of Ardhanareeswara, childless women would come alone to the area alive with festivities. Each woman was liberated to couple with a male stranger of her option, who was believed an embodiment of God. If the woman was pregnant, the child was believed a gift from God and admitted as such by the family, together with her husband. As a farming society, the Gounders tend to be unsettled by childlessness especially by the lack of male heirs for the family property. In the Gounders' perception, the hard work put in by a Gounder male in his adult life is worthless if there is no son to succeed to the fruit of his labours. As a consequence, childlessness is cruelly stigmatized in this scrupulous community.

In the following paragraphs the theme of childlessness and parenthood in the select novel are analysed in order to understand the collective consciousness of a community. The theme will be discussed and described in detail using instances from the novel. Various social and cultural factors influence the meaning and reaction related to childlessness. It is merely seen as having either no biological or adopted child. Childlessness is a complex phenomenon, which involves various biological, cultural and environmental factors that should be studied at various cultural and societal levels.

In India, motherhood is considered the sole aim of a women's life, so a childless woman is often stigmatized by the various perspective the men and women of her own society hold for her. Infertility in India is neither considered a health problem, nor a subject of mental and psychological research. It also attributed certain other factors like socio-economic status, education level and cultural background. However, the main blame of the childless couple is attribute to the women, who is tagged as being barren, infertile and possession a lack. Further, being childless is considered a cultural problem, having grave social and religious consequences. This is so because of the cultural and religious importance that people in India relate with having a child, especially a male child.

Research conducted in the area suggests that having a baby is considered valuable for women. It is not a symbol of motherhood, which is considered the primary function for them; It also privileges their status in the eyes of their in-laws. Therefore, inability to conceive and give birth to a child is so painful that it often leads to various psychological outcomes. People fail to perceive the real cause of childlessness and often blame the women, when a couple goes childless. The main



cause for this is the existing gender and cultural norms of the patriarchal society of India. A childless woman is often judged and insulted and words like barren, infertile, fruitless are used for them, which go on to become their identity. As a result, a childless woman may suffer social stigma, depression and distress, domestic violence, abandonment and finally divorce.

As a result, motherhood is an important event in their life. Once they attain puberty, the next major event for them is bringing forth a child. Rich comments that in order to have borne and brought up a child is to have done that thing which patriarchy joins with physiology to provide into the meaning of femaleness. Furthermore, women cannot exist alone in the world. She needs someone to whom she can be related as such she can be someone's daughter, sister, mother or wife. Any identity beyond that simply does not exist. Perumal Murugan in the novel brings his fact out as he states that both a woman without her husband and an inheritance without an heir are the same. Ponna was seen as an incomplete woman because she did not have a child, who can render her into being a female and teach her to be one. Even her mother commented Ponna that Ponna's child would teach her modesty. Further, there was a festival in her society, where the daughter of the family received money from her parents. Ponna in the initial years received the money with full enthusiasm like other girls in the society. However, later, Kali asks Ponna whether, she had asked money from her parents, to which she replies that it was the only thing lacking in her life. Then she says that she would demand money rightfully from her father and brother if she had a child in her arms, a child in her waist and a child in her womb.

As, she was childless and had not completed her duty, which renders her as a complete woman in her society, even the other men in her society tried to seduce and lure her. In an incident, Kali's friend Karuppannan tried to tease and seduce Ponna. She is not able to understand as to what hints she dropped at her husband's friend, who thought she was a prostitute. The only explanation that comes to her mind is that she is a childless woman. So the people are looking at her in the different ways and even the dogs are thinking her as a stone standing at the street corner. She prays to god to bless her with a child soon just to put an end to all her sufferings that she was facing in the society. As the number of years increased, the taunts of the people became more pronounced. People publicly started humiliating her for her lack. Ponna gets frustrated and starts to ask questions that why the people are so pride to know the other people's stories and how it is possible for them to humiliate others in the public place. She also says that something will be lacking in everyone's life and it is not necessary for everyone to have everything. Also, Perumal Murugan has brought out the pride and happiness flowing on the faces of women who is managed to have a child within a year of their marriage. Whenever they see Ponna, they do overreact in front of her.

As the life of the couple revolved around their inability to bear forth any heir,

they both did everything it took to conceive a child. The people constantly told Ponna about the importance of a child in one's life and asked her to do everything what it takes to accomplish that. So, Ponna did the whole thing it took to get a child, no matter what everyone told her, she did it more or less immediately. She started to visit the astrologer, palmist, went to several temples and had done all kinds of sacrament and Pooja. Ponna's mother-in-law, who remained silent for first six months after the couple's marriage, started keeping a watch on Ponna's menstrual cycle and started her own treatments after that. She told Ponna to drink the juice of some shoots on the morning of the third day and told her not to eat anything else even by mistake. As the juice was bitter, Ponna felt difficult to drink the juice. Later, she used to it as she was started to drink different potions and eat different shoots. Her tongue became numb to all the bitterness. As her goal was to beget a child, she was ready to do anything to attain her goal. However, all her efforts could not bear her a child.

The result of her infertility and childlessness was so augmented by the insults and mocking of the society. The people started to humiliate her in different ways with the subject of the child. Though she tried to escape from the words and humiliation of the people, she felt that she had become a prey to distress and depression. As a result, she folded her hands and prayed God to give her a child. After every remedy she undertook, she prayed God to give them life and not to cheat them. Kolappan comments that the research done previously has discovered that a few women associate having biological children to happiness and satisfaction of life. When a woman with strong desire and personal goal, cannot bear biological motherhood, she as a result may still feel the same sense of loss as someone confronting the pressures of stigma associated with her lack of ability to bear biological children. In an incident, Ponna was insulted for coming late by her neighbour Sarasa to her brother-in-laws's marriage. Sarasa mockingly asked Ponna that whether she was busy in getting her daughter's ready in front of the entire wedding party just for her late arrival to the party. Ponna feels so humiliated by this incident that, thereafter she stopped going to any festivals and weddings or funerals. If any of them enquired about her absence in any festivals or funerals, she would respond them in their own style. She would reply to them that her family members can't conduct any function in her house as she is a barren woman. Even she says that if no one is ready to carry her after her death, it is better for them to let her just like here and rot. She says strongly that she is not interested to go anywhere and no one needs to come to her house as she wants others to leave her alone.

Adrienne Rich comments that the motherhood is divine so long as it's off springs are rightful that is, as long as the child bears the name of the father who legally reins the mother. In India, legitimate means that it is a biological child, not an adopted child. As result both Kali and Ponna were not keen on adopting a child. In fact, both their perspectives on adoption show the thinking of the men and women in the Indian

society on the subject of adoption. Kali did not want to adopt child because he started to ask many questions. He questioned whether adopting a child would stop people from talking about his impotent and Ponna's bareness. He also asked whether the people would invite them for all the occasions and would give them respect in all gatherings. Finally he said that the people will not change in the society. He said that the people would say that he has become a father to someone else's child and would still call him as an impotent man and his wife as a barren woman.

Therefore, all efforts by Kali and Ponna to bring a child into this world failed. The only option then for them was to conceive a child through the chariot festival of Maadhorubaagan (the half-female God), a festival, the society allowed union between any many and women. A tradition that was going on for centuries now in the name of God's work, where girls are made to believe that they are going to be with whosoever appears like God to them. As a result, Kali's mother tries to influence Kali by saying that the people around them are seeing what he hasn't than what he has. She wants her son Kali to hold his head high in front of those wretched people. But, Kali is still hesitant and he asks Ponna whether that she would like to go away from him. In frustration, she replied back that if Kali would like to send her to go for the sake of the wretched child, she is ready to go to her home. This reply changed everything for the couple hence on. Even Ponna thought that she has said the wrong words and to remedy everything, she rushed to him in panic and layed her head against his cheek. She waited for the words of consolation from him. After all, the core of their relationship consisted in using consoling words.

A community that accords motherhood as the definition of success for a married woman and accumulating a sizable inheritance for one's own offspring as the greatest accomplishment of a man, the lack of a child, even after twelve years of marriage, is seen as some sort failing. The most ordinary practice of the community was farming. They ploughed in a specific order, working together in everyone's fields. While working on Vellivel's field, there had been no rain for five days. But they went ahead and sowed the seeds. Since Vellivel's wife came down with a severe leg pain Ponna did all of the tasks of the day that her legs were exhausted from all the running. The following year the community did not include Kali and Ponna in their sowing team. They didn't know the reason at first but then they heard that Vellivel did not get a good yield the year before and anything he got was of poor worth. Among the group, someone told that the crops had not grown just because the barren woman Ponna had touched the seeds.

The taboos and false notions the community features to the couple, forms a part of the collective consciousness which regards them as being unfit members. An inborn realization of the importance of bearing a child to establish one's worth as a human being in the world by the entire community places unbearable strain on their relationship. Perumal Murugan questions this collective identity of parenthood that

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exists in the society that leads individuals to partake in deeds that go against their will.

The only way out for Ponna from all the torture and pressure from society is to take part in the chariot celebration of Maadhorubaagan. Ponna's mother and mother in law constantly beg with the couple to attend this festival as it was the solution to the problem. Their constant pestering and finally tricking Ponna into accepting fulfilled the role they had to play in the community, products of an unquestioned collective identity. They convinced her by telling her that it was God's work and the person whom she was going to be with is god to her. Ponna's unresistant acceptance to go to the chariot festival in the temple on the eighteenth day changes the entire being of the couple's relationship. Placing Ponna out of the setup of marriage Perumal Murugan shows the extremes society drives its members in order to gain acceptance and conform to its notions. The chariot celebration which is the answer to Ponna's problems also demonstrates the insincerity of society. The chariot festival is almost based on the philosophy of a carnival, when societal rules are relaxed, where for one night the consensual union between any man and woman is permitted this gives an opportunity to Ponna to end their suffering and humiliation but also puts their marriage to ultimate test.

Indian culture the idea of motherhood revolves about the idea of bearing and rearing the male child played a vital role in the socialization process of Indian women. A uniqueness of motherhood entirely reflects all other identities of Indian women and therefore Indian women were raised in a culture that qualified her to be an ideal mother from premature childhood. The impression of motherhood is also seen as incredible, central to the social configuration of a community. It is characterized by a glaring dichotomy regarding patriarchal dominance, adoration without empowerment. Charu Gupta in her book discusses about how the construction of a homogenous community operated within and through a reworked and updated patriarchy whereby it became crucial to control women. By placing the character Ponna out of this patriarchal setup and into the chariot festival partially due to her will she is in way empowered. This is a clear breakaway form the collective, traditional and conventional notion of women in that community and a reason for the uproar behind the book.

One of the main targets of the Hindu groups has been the representation of women in arts and culture wherein notions of obscenity or chastity and traditional or modernity have come to be contested. Not wanting to know operates within the individual and throughout a culture as it may disrupt an existing stability. This sort of self-censorship gives us reason to restrain our knowledge in as much we are willing to know less in order to belong to the collective identity; to diverge is to risk membership. Existing notions of parenthood and sexuality embedded in the minds of every individual in the community and is called to question when writers like Perumal

Murugan critique it through their works.

The following section tries to examine how patriarchy oppresses female sexuality by viewing its very purpose to be motherhood. Feminism is a socio-cultural political movement that demands equality, justice of the sexes. A key argument that feminism postulates is that gender roles are predetermined and preconceived and women are forced to fit in to these roles. Women are often portrayed as docile weak, innocent, seductive or as mere pro-creating machines and have much less power and rights as compared with their male counterparts. Religion, family, education, are all social and cultural 'structures' that fortify these 'fixed' roles.

The novel explores how patriarchy and customs related to patriarchy turn particularly against women, making them victims of 'gender essentialism'. Gender essentialists believe that sex, gender, follow a set of specific attributes, and are very necessary for their identity construction and to function in a society. Various feminists and activists have revolted against the very idea viewing gender. Judith Butler, a well-acknowledged theoretician completely rejects this 'essentialist' notion; she argues that these identities are socially constructed. In *Gender Trouble* she argues that the intermittent practices based on performative theory of gender acts that interrupts the categories of the body, sex, gender and sexuality and instance their subversive delignification and propagation beyond the twofold fame. Butler views that gender is performed through various set of acts, gender identity is the product of various actions and behavioural patterns, and that is 'performance'. Judith Butler also declares that speech patterns, customs, gestures, dress codes, taboos, representations, behaviours all functions together to create the essentialists claim.

Kali and Ponna, despite being in a loving and satisfying marriage, are the victims of haunts and backlashes from friends, family and relatives for their incapability to conceive a child. In a patriarchal society, the sole essence of a woman lies in motherhood, and Ponna is also entrapped in this idea and she is constantly being questioned and asked to prove her role. A constant reminder to a woman that she cannot give birth to a baby can at times be quite exasperating. They have done all the pujas and penance to fulfill their only wish to have a child. They have left no stone unturned to make their dream come true. The plight of Ponna is the plight of so many other women in India and across the world.

Ponna and Kali offer prayers and takes part in various rituals in order to get pregnant. Ponna even consumes bitter medicines, suggested by her mother in law for the sake of it. Kali and Ponna give up a goat, lit lamp and walks around the rock, betting her life. The constant pressure to get pregnant from her family and mother in law make Ponna to participate in the fourteen day chariot festival at Ardhanareeswara Temple, where the rules are 'broken' or 'relaxed' and consensual union between men and women are sanctioned. Kali confronts Ponna and asks her opinion. She says that if he is ready to send her to go for the wretched child, she is ready to go. This reply

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astounds Kali. Ponna is pressured by the society to bear a child and is in the notion that Kali and Ponna will fail as a 'man' and 'woman' if they cannot give birth.

Their childlessness is also interlinked with their status, they belong to Gounder caste and their power is assessed by the number of sons. Ponna also goes through the pressure to bring an heir to inherit their property. There is an occurrence when Ponna and Pottupatti goes to fair and buys peanuts, pottupatti states that,..

You have bought so little. Do you have a child crying at home? Your husband and you are protecting an inheritance that God knows which wretched dogs will claim later. Why don't you eat what you like? Whom are you being miserly for? A woman without a husband and inheritance without heir are the same, they say. (52)

Perumal Murugan intensely explores the patriarchy deeply rooted in the system and how it is forced on individuals and how status, culture, religion, also helps to tighten these roles. Ponna's need to bear a child, puts their loving marriage at stake as Kali doesn't want her to participate in the Chariot festival and have intercourse with other man, whom he fears might be an untouchable. If Ponna gets pregnant, it will question Kali's 'Masculinity' and his impotency. On the other hand, Ponna's 'Female essence' is often cross examined; she needs to get pregnant in order to prove her female essence and also to give an heir and thereby upholding their status and power. Gender identities are socially constructed and if not performed will be criticized severely. The novel questions on how patriarchy oppresses female sexuality, by viewing its only purpose as to bear a child.

Instead of appreciating women, who are ready to sacrifice their soul, heart, and body for the wellbeing of their husbands, society stigmatizes them as fallen creatures. So, the writing of Perumal Murugan has also dealt with the status of women in the 21st century, besides dealing with the custom that once prevailed in a particular region. Instead of looking at Perumal Murugan's *One Part Woman* from only one perspective, it should be viewed from the broad perspective of art, creativity and imagination. Otherwise, art in any form cannot survive and constitutionally provided rights will not be ensured.

A woman is completely woman when she gives birth to a child that is the old-traditional myth, which is followed in Tamil Nadu and all over India. Ponna is not an exceptional case of a woman, so her struggles make her to follow the old traditional, mythological view in her life, even this decision is not making happy to Kali her husband. So the villagers living in India believed a myth based life. Through Perumal Murugan's book *One Part Woman* the readers can get overall traditional values and their origins.

To conclude, *One Part Woman* is a rooted and passionate novel, as the blurb explains precisely the plight of the two central characters Kali and Ponna. Perumal Murugan questions the entire collective identity of a community when he criticizes the notion of parenthood and woman in the community. Through a variety of

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instances in the novel he criticizes the social pressures and offenses that the society thrusts on the couple for not fitting in with their perception of a family. It explores the individual and the collective with great detail and point out the power held by the collective over the individual. Using a simple and painful narrative technique the author explores highlighting features of the village life with all its outdated traditions and notions without romanticizing the past he criticizes the etched ideologies that wreck the connection of a childless couple. The lack of knowledge and unawareness by the mob censured the novel as their traditional outlooks on marriage and women did not match with Perumal Murugan's characters. Topics like sex and caste which still remain taboo in the Indian society served as triggers to go against the novel. The real solution to social progression is to develop the individual, to carry on the evolution of freedom inward until mental freedom will lead to political and religious liberation. This requires breaking social boundaries that restrict knowledge and thinking and expanding consciousness beyond the limitations of any culture. Only a culture that transcends itself can transmit itself which is accurately what our Indian culture is.

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**The Portrayal and Social Confrontation of Dalits**

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**Abstract**

The present research paper, titled "The Portrayal and Social Confrontation of Dalits in Bama's Novels," aims to depict the lives and struggles of Dalits. Literature, as a medium conveying the thoughts and feelings of the common man and the working class, gains popularity by transcending class limitations. Through reading and interpreting literature, readers can deconstruct and analyze factors involved in social change. From this perspective, Bama's voice and works portray the realistic lives of the downtrodden. Her writings possess a unique capacity to reveal various truths of life. Dalits continue to strive to escape numerous struggles and torments. Dalit literature includes many writers from very low backgrounds whose works focus on the inconvenient lives of Dalits in India. The selected writer, Bama, is a Dalit woman author. Her novels "Karukku," "Sangati," and "Vanmam" depict the realistic lives of Dalits and the tribulations of Dalit women. Bama, who served as a nun for seven years, took holy orders to combat caste-based discrimination. Her mission aimed to advance poor Dalit girls. This study provides an overview of Bama's ideas and perspectives on Dalits over many decades and suggests solutions for achieving equal rights.

**Keywords:** Social Confrontation, Dalit Empowerment, Inhumane Treatment, Voiceless Victim.

**Introduction:**

Bama was born in Tamil Nadu to a Roman Catholic family from the Parayar community. She is the sister of Dalit writer Raj Gauthaman. During her time as a nun, Bama witnessed the poor treatment of people, leading her to leave the nunnery after



seven years to write and advocate for Dalits and Dalit women's self-respect. The study's aim and purpose are to help Dalit women become aware and fight against oppression. Ambedkar sought to eradicate the stigma of untouchability by dismantling the caste system and securing equal socio-economic rights for Dalits. According to D.R. Nagaraj in "The Flaming Fillet and Other Essays: The Dalit Movement in India," Dalits can never attain the status of their visible community, which is in the minority, unless there is a structural change or overhaul of society (40). He essentially supports B.R. Ambedkar's drive to liberate untouchables from severity by adopting a new faith and religion to escape the "misfortune of being born with the stigma of an untouchable" (41).

Bama's writing does not present a historical narrative of events nor support any particular political group. Instead, her narrative blends journalism, political treatise, and fiction, portraying a Dalit feminist perspective that communicates a philosophy of liberation emphasizing inter-caste solidarity and Dalit agency as means to transform caste politics in India. Dalit women lag behind men from their own societies, with significant disparities in essentials like education and health. The state of Dalit women is deplorable compared to Dalit men and women from other communities.

Bama's novels can be understood as the cultural biography of a community, presenting a powerful Dalit feminist narrative of the double marginalization of Dalit women based on gender and caste. This self-reflexivity on gender and caste issues is the predominant theme in Tamil Dalit feminist literature. Bama's works articulate the individual and collective experiences of Dalits in a caste-dominated society. The torment of casteism in her novels illustrates the pitiable plight of Dalits in their survival campaign. Bama, with her rebellious nature, questions institutions such as family, church, school, and government, strongly believing that only the collective struggle of her people against social discrimination will lead to their emancipation.

To resist social prejudices, Dalit women need to view themselves positively. Bama's narratives inspire women, particularly Dalit women, to struggle for freedom and resist being victims. Her life narrative not only raises awareness but also encourages women to speak against injustice and resist biased social structures, learning to live as independent women while retaining and strengthening maternal links. These life narratives act as agents to create an identity and space for Dalit women in both literature and society. They generate Dalit women's experiences, constituting a multidimensional discourse embedded in caste, class, and gender traditions.

Bama portrays Dalit society and women's marginalization through unparalleled social thoughts, illustrating how gender disparity affects Dalit women from birth to death. Dalit women face violence based on caste, sexual abuse, gender discrimination, and religious disparities. This study shows that irrespective of

nationality or race, women suffer oppression, challenging their sustenance and growth. The solution lies in suppressed women fighting together against the evil. Sivakami and Bama recommend education and the metaphor of sisterhood and cooperative effort to combat the subjugation of Dalit women.

The caste system guides an individual's life from birth to death, creating intrinsic societal differentiation. In "Vanmam," the conflict between the Parayar and Pallar communities is almost a re-narration of Bama's depiction of women's identity struggles in her earlier works "Karukku" and "Sangati." In "Vanmam," young women approach the police, drive carts to carry their dead, and dig a mass grave. Police raids often involve sexual threats and physical violence against young girls. Dalit women, not allowed to leave the village for work, nurture their children by selling dairy milk and live together to subvert police torture through gendered bonding. However, when the situation normalizes, boys return to college while girls are forced to stay home. The impact of caste strife on women is more acute, with even pregnant women, lactating mothers, old women, and school-going girls being rounded up, jailed, and beaten by the police.

Sivakami highlights how denying affection and comfort within the family is oppressive to women. Family operates as an oppressive structure of power, denying women affection, comfort, sexual freedom, inheritance rights, and education. Poongavanam, a character created by Sivakami, brings relief into the saga of sufferings. She falls in love with Duraisami, who cheats her and absconds. When Duraisami suggests marriage upon his return, Poongavanam rejects him, bringing a break in the story.

Gender discrimination, a severe form of oppression, subjugates women. Patriarchy and allied social evils promoted discrimination, making suppression of women seem natural. Feminism, a socio-cultural and political movement, strives for women's liberation. Dalits are judged mainly through outward appearance. Despite their efforts to present themselves decently, upper-caste people still treat them as inferior. Dalits are cast away due to the bigotry that they are unclean and uncivilized.

This research addresses Dalits' encouragement and seeks solutions for their economic backwardness, emphasizing education and political participation for emancipation. Government welfare schemes, active political and social participation, and SC/ST welfare associations improve Dalit lives.

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**Exploring The Role of Folklore in Identity Formation Among Adivasi Communities in India**

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**Abstract**

*The Adivasi will not Dance* by Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar, a collection of short stories delves deep into the intricacies of folklore and oral literature that succeeds in the formation of the identity among the Adivasi community, an indigenous group of people in India. It deals with the dynamics of cultural expression, identity formation and socio-cultural elements. This research paper underscores the cultural nuances in which they preserve the folklore as their identity within the Adivasi context. In addition to this, they conserve their heritage, resistance against cultural erasure and the assertion of the marginalised voices. Through vivid imagery and comprehensive analysis, this research examines the textual analysis and sheds light on the theoretical framework by bringing it to the spotlight. It further digs into the roots of the socio-political changes and cultural transformations of their identity. This research moulds perceptions, employing empathy and amplifying marginalised voices in the pursuit of social justice.

**Keywords:** Folklore, Adivasi, Identity, Oral Literature

**Introduction:**

Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar is an Indian author known for his insightful way of expressing social issues through voicing out for the Santhal tribe and shedding light on the struggles of the indigenous groups in India in his works. He gained fame with the publication of the novel, *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* in 2014. Further, he also writes short stories, essays, and plays. His works significantly highlights the contemporary Indian society by bringing the issues such as tribal rights, gender dynamics, and the impact of modernisation on traditional ways of life in the spotlight. He serves as a broadcast where he vocalises the rights of indigenous people and marginalized communities in India.

*The Adivasi will not Dance* underscores the struggles of the Adivasi community by focusing on the Santhal tribe of Jharkhand. It narrates their folklore, identity, and resistance. It unravels the harsh realities of displacement and

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marginalization. He appreciates the spirit of resistance that endures within the marginalised communities.

The culture of the traditional dance that is being preserved by the Adivasi community serves as a folklore that is passed down from a generation to generation. This folklore stands as a testimony of their deep-rooted traditions, land, beliefs, and customs of their community. Their preservation of dance is not a form of entertainment but a form of sacred ritual that reflects their identity, history, and spirituality. The author never failed to portray their folklore being commodified by the outsiders. Through the folklore of dance, he unravels the complexities of cultural identity and power dynamics. Furthermore, it acts as a powerful symbol and a fundamental aspect of identity, where it embodies their struggles, triumphs, and a collective memory passed down through generations. It also depicts their cultural erasure by external factors to exploit their lands. This paper explores the role of folklore in identity formation and it revolves around the idea of folklore being commodified and folklore as a mode of communication and expression, as resilience and resistance.

Several writers have discussed and researched on different perspectives. "Quest of Erased Identity: A Revisiting of Subalternity with Special Reference to Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar's *The Adivasi Will Not Dance*" by Satarupa Mukhopadhyay quotes the dominant societal norms and ideologies, "Indeed, when Spivak puts the overwhelming question, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', she actually does not intend to invite any kind of reply but to state the impediments of the subalterns. Yet the answer comes in the forms of mosaic of stories framed under the collection *The Adivasi Will Not Dance* by Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar." Furthermore, he emphasizes the themes of displacement, disillusionment, and resistance against exploitation and societal norms, "*The Adivasi Will Not Dance* is an account of pervasive immiseration in the light of displacement, disillusionment, and the agonistic sufferings of Adivasis."

In the "Unheard voices of the Voiceless: Analysing Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar's *The Adivasi Will Not Dance*" by V. Kavitha and Dr. C. Alagan, they insist the theme of displacement of marginalized communities, impact of globalization, exploitation, and loss of livelihood, cultural exploitation, environmental degradation, and health impacts in the context of developmental projects, particularly focusing on the plight of the tribal community, as portrayed in *The Adivasi Will Not Dance*. They state the developmental projects that resulted in the displacement and marginalization of the indigenous communities which is evident in the statement, "in the name of economic development, the indigenous peoples are involuntarily removed from their lands and homes without any meaningful efforts made for their proper rehabilitation (Mathur, 2008)." In addition to this, this paper further points out the exploitation of their culture and traditional art of folklore by quoting, "All our certificates and

shields, what did they give us? Diku Children go to schools and colleges, get education, jobs. What do we Santhals get? We Santhals can sing and dance, and we are good at our art. Yet, what has our art given us? Displacement, tuberculosis. (p.178)". Humans often tend to note the physical appearance as an identity. For instance, if someone is short or wear glasses or dark skinned, they mention it to refer them. Similarly, the Adivasi community lost their physical identity that their children are covered with fine black dust and are dark skinned as a result of the coal company and this paper proves it by quoting, "The mining company takes tonnes of coals every day, kept the village at dark. A cloud of blackness surrounds the entire village. The trees and shrubs bear black leaves. Everything appears black including stones, sand and tiles on the roofs. Children look even more darker. 'Our children- dark-skinned as they are- are forever covered with fine black dust. When they cry and tears stream down their faces, it seems as if a river is coming across a drought stricken land' (p.175)."

The traditional dance of the Santhal community is being commodified by the outsiders. They are called to perform in weddings for money but they are not given attention or respect for their folklore by the outsiders. Their folklore stands as a sacred ritual to them but it is being sold for the sake of hunger and poverty. The narrator calls himself "foolish" since he expects everyone to pay attention to his dance. He unravels the sad reality where most of the Diku await their performance to end at high-profile functions. He further quotes that they need money. Further, in the midst of the troubles, their practice still continued, which reflects their desperate need for money for their basic needs. Moreover, the narrator specifies the coal business that they do, where they get the coal easily and sell it for a very less amount which is enough only for their clothes and drink, since they have no idea about the value of money out of it.

The folklore that is being practiced by the Adivasi community is passed down from generation to generation orally. Furthermore, their resistance to dance reflects their emotional turbulence on their land being sold, in which their action acts as a mode of communication to the higher officials. They communicate their story through their folklore. Their resistance to dance by stating, "We Adivasis will not dance anymore" (p 170) led to the physical ill treatment by the police. The Adivasis' voices are left unheard and they are terribly beaten up which caused them to beg for mercy. Their rights to resist to dance are snatched away by the higher officials.

The folklore performers are treated as toys where they are supposed to perform when someone presses the "ON" button or turns a key on their back, which portrays that they are not performing it according to their will and reveals the form of objectification and dehumanization. Their cultural value lost its deeper meaning and significance. Furthermore, it highlights the issues of exploitation, objectification, and cultural appropriation faced by indigenous communities like the Adivasis.

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The narrator begins his journey as a farmer and then he becomes a folklore performer, who composes songs and perform. He might have faced struggles such as land degradation, inadequate access to resources, or fluctuating market prices for agricultural products, which made him to end up in performing folklore. The transition of a farmer to a folklore performer is because of the rediscovery and reconnection with the cultural roots that interests him. This transition further plays a role in his shift in identity which provides him a new identity. The practice of performing folklore serves not only as forms of entertainment but also as mechanisms for reinforcing their identity as members of the Adivasi community. Through participation, individuals reaffirm their connection to their cultural roots and make their sense of belonging in the community stronger.

Moreover, folklore serves as a repository of collective reminiscence for the Adivasi people, preserving their history, struggles, and triumphs. Within the narrative, we see how certain folk tales and songs recount past stories of oppression, resistance, and resilience, imparting a framework for understanding their place in society and shaping their worldview. By sharing those narratives with more youthful generations, elders skip down knowledge and wisdom that help to instil a sense of pride in their heritage and empower them to navigate the demanding situations they face.

Additionally, folklore serves as a shape of resistance against dominant cultural narratives and structures of oppression. In *The Adivasi Will Not Dance* the characters often use traditional songs and dance as a way of protest in opposition to injustices perpetrated through the state and mainstream society. These cultural expressions turn out to be mighty tools for asserting their agency, reclaiming their autonomy, and challenging the hegemony of external forces that seek to marginalize or erase their identity.

Furthermore, folklore performs a role in fostering solidarity and community cohesion among the Adivasis. Through shared cultural practices and collective rituals, people forge bonds of kinship and mutual assist that go beyond individual differences. The sense of belonging derived from participating in these communal activities allows to reinforce social ties and foster an experience of harmony among community members, allowing them to confront outside threats and adversities collectively.

In conclusion, *The Adivasi Will Not Dance* illustrates the multifaceted function of folklore in shaping the identity of the Adivasi community and individuals from this community. From retaining cultural heritage to resisting oppression and fostering solidarity, folklore is way of life that serves as an effective medium for self-expression, collective empowerment, and cultural resilience. We gain insights into the complicated dynamics of identity formation and resistance in the context of marginalized groups, with the help of in-depth analysis in which a folklore operates

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within a narrative. In *The Adivasi Will Not Dance*, Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar portrays the intricate relationship between folklore and identification formation in the Adivasi community. Through vivid imagery and profound analysis, this short story explores the cultural nuances that define the Adivasi people, highlighting the significance of folklore in retaining their heritage, resisting cultural erasure, and asserting their marginalized voices.

The conclusion drawn from this exploration underscores the pivotal function of folklore in shaping the identity of the Adivasi community. Across generations, traditional songs, dances, and rituals serve as more than mere kinds of entertainment; they are sacred rituals that replicate the Adivasi's deep-rooted traditions, beliefs, and customs. Shekhar's narrative unravels how these cultural expressions serve as a testament to the community's struggles, triumphs, and collective reminiscence, passed down through storytelling and performance. Moreover, folklore emerges as an effective tool of resistance towards dominant cultural narratives and structures of oppression. Through traditional songs and dances, the characters in the short story assert their agency, reclaim their autonomy, and venture the hegemony of external forces seeking to marginalize or erase their identity. The narrative underscores the resilience of the Adivasi community, who use their cultural history as a method of protest in opposition to injustices perpetrated by the state and the mainstream society.

Furthermore, folklore fosters unity and community cohesion among the Adivasi community. Shared cultural practices and collective rituals forge bonds of kinship and mutual assist that go beyond individual differences. By taking part in these communal activities, community individuals strengthen their sense of belonging and solidarity, enabling them to confront outside threats and adversities together.

In essence, *The Adivasi Will Not Dance* serves as a poignant exploration of the multifaceted role of folklore in shaping Adivasi identity. Through Shekhar's narrative, we gain insights into the complicated dynamics of identity formation, resistance, and empowerment within marginalized groups. By amplifying marginalized voices and shedding light on the cultural resilience of the Adivasi community, the story calls attention to the importance of retaining and honouring indigenous traditions in the face of ongoing cultural pressures and challenges.

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**CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE LESSER – KNOWN HISTORICAL MOUNMENT THE SERFOJI PLACE, THANJAVUR AND ITS RELEVANCE IN THE SOCIO – LITERARY SCENARIO**

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**Abstract:**

Cultural heritage refers to the legacy of physical artifacts, traditions, beliefs, practices, languages, and knowledge that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present, and passed on to future generations. It encompasses both tangible and intangible aspects of human society and includes items such as monuments, buildings, artworks, literature, music, rituals, festivals, languages, and customs. These are expressed at several places. Thanjavur, the capital of the erstwhile Thanjavur Maratha kingdom, has several historical sites associated with Serfoji II, including the Thanjavur Maratha Palace, also known as the Thanjavur Palace or Serfoji's Palace. This palace complex, located in the heart of Thanjavur, is an important cultural and historical landmark. The concept of socio-literary scenario typically refers to the social and literary landscape within a specific cultural or historical context. Literary evidence plays a crucial role in studying historical monuments for several reasons such as contextualization, description, interpretation, chronological documentation, cultural and social context, interdisciplinary analysis, preservation and conservation, legacy and memory.

This research study is part of the ICSSR Minor Research Project 2022-23 on Identification and Appreciation of Lesser-known Historical Monuments that Promote Tourism, History, Heritage and Economy with Special Reference to Tamil Nadu. This research study on the CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE LESSER – KNOWN HISTORICAL MOUNMENT, THE SERFOJI PLACE, THANJAVUR AND ITS RELEVANCE IN THE SOCIO – LITERARY SCENARIO will focus on the history, geography and architecture of the Serfoji Palace. It will also give details of how this lesser-known historical monument can promote, tourism, history, heritage and economy in Tamil Nadu as well as the aspect of promotion of the Cultural heritage in the Indian socio literary scenario.

**Keywords:** Lesser-known, Historical Monument, Socio-Literary scenario, Serfoji Palace, Cultural Heritage

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**Introduction:**

The role of culture is a form through which a society reflects on us, where we've been and where we hope to be. -Wendell Pierce.

The legacy of tangible artefacts, customs, beliefs, languages, practices, and knowledge that have been handed down from previous generations to the current one and forward to future ones is referred to as cultural heritage. It covers both material and immaterial facets of human civilization, such as structures, monuments, artwork, books, music, festivals, languages, and customs. These are expressed in several forms at different locations. The Thanjavur Maratha Palace, commonly referred to as Serfoji's Palace or Thanjavur Palace, is one of the historical sites connected to Serfoji II in Thanjavur, the former capital of the Thanjavur Maratha kingdom. Situated in the centre of Thanjavur, this palace complex is a significant historical and cultural site. The term "socio-literary scenario" usually describes the literary and social environment found in a certain historical or cultural setting. For a number of reasons, including contextualization, description, interpretation, chronological recording, cultural and social context, multidisciplinary analysis, preservation and conservation, legacy, and memory, literary evidence is essential for researching historical monuments.

**OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

This research study is part of the ICSSR Minor Research Project 2022-23 on Identification and Appreciation of Lesser-known Historical Monuments that Promote Tourism, History, Heritage and Economy with Special Reference to Tamil Nadu. This specific study on the CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE LESSER – KNOWN HISTORICAL MOUNMENT, THE SERFOJI PLACE, THANJAVUR AND ITS RELEVANCE IN THE SOCIO – LITERARY SCENARIO will focus on the history, geography and architecture of the Serfoji Palace. It will also give details of how this lesser-known historical monument can promote, tourism, history, heritage and economy in Tamil Nadu as well as the aspect of promotion of the Cultural heritage in the Indian socio literary scenario.

**ROLE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Cultural legacy is essential for forming both individual and group identities, maintaining a sense of continuity and belonging, and advancing mutual respect and understanding amongst various cultures. It is a reflection of the inventiveness, tenacity, and inventiveness of people throughout history. Maintaining cultural variety, encouraging social cohesion, and supporting sustainable development, all depend on the preservation and protection of cultural heritage. Threats to cultural heritage, however, include unsustainable tourism, urbanisation, armed conflicts, pollution, climate change, and natural disasters. Governments, local communities, non-governmental organisations, cultural institutions, academia, and international organisations like UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural

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Organisation) are just a few of the stakeholders involved in efforts to preserve and protect cultural heritage. Documentation, conservation, restoration, lobbying, education, and legal protection measures are a few of the initiatives that could be used to defend and promote cultural heritage for future generations.

### **SOCIAL CONTEXT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE LITERARY SCENARIO**

The literary scenario's social backdrop of cultural legacy encompasses the various forces that define a society, including political, economic, cultural, and historical aspects. Socio-literary analysis examines the ways in which these variables impact the settings, characters, and themes found in literary works. It covers the relationship between society and literature, examining how the former moulds and reflects societal norms, values, and concerns, and the latter is influenced by societal influences. Literary history is divided into periods that are distinguished by certain movements, themes, and styles. The study of socio-literary analysis looks at how these patterns develop in reaction to societal shifts and how they influence public opinion and cultural identity.

Literature frequently acts as a mirror, reflecting the complexity of the human experience and identity. Socio-literary analysis looks at how different social identities such as gender, race, class, and sexual orientation are portrayed in literature and how these representations change over time. Writing can serve as a platform for the expression and debate of marginalised voices and power struggles. The power dynamics that are present in the creation, dissemination, and reception of literature are examined by socio-literary analysis.

Literary works are infused with cultural values, philosophies, and ideas that influence readers' and writers' worldviews. Socio-literary analysis studies the ways in which these cultural components are reflected in literature and how they impact social attitudes and behaviours. Socio-literary analysis takes into account how literary works are received in society and how they influence cultural movements, social transformation, and collective memory. As a result, the socio-literary scenario offers a framework for comprehending the complex interactions and reciprocal influences that exist between literature and society.

### **IMPORTANCE OF LITERARY EVIDENCES IN A STUDY ABOUT HISTORICAL MONUMENTS**

For a number of reasons, literary evidence is essential while researching historical monuments. When attempting to comprehend the historical relevance, function, and cultural significance of monuments, literary sources offer invaluable background. They can provide insight on the design, function, and significance of these buildings in relation to their historical setting. Literary works frequently provide in-depth analyses, narratives, and interpretations of historical sites. These descriptions, particularly if the physical structure has changed over time, might aid

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researchers in visualising the appearance, arrangement, and architectural aspects of monuments. The Sefoji palace houses the Saraswathi Mahal library which houses numerous literary evidences that promote Indian cultural heritage.

Literary proof can be used to determine the exact historical sequence of a monument's creation, alterations, and uses. Historians can identify significant occasions and advancements pertaining to the monument by cross-referencing several literary sources. Literary sources shed light on the social and cultural environment that shaped the creation and use of monuments. They can shed light on the sociopolitical dynamics of the era as well as the motivations, convictions, customs, and behaviours connected to these institutions. The integration of literary evidence with archaeological, epigraphic, and other data sources facilitates a more all-encompassing comprehension of historical monuments. Multidisciplinary methods provide complex historical interpretations, bridge knowledge gaps, and validate findings. Literary materials that record the historical and cultural significance of monuments can help guide conservation efforts. They may offer advice on materials, methods, and historical accuracy for restoration, which can assist keep these buildings intact for upcoming generations. Literary works record historical landmarks' significance in the minds of the common man, by adding to their legacy and remembrance. They influence how monuments are viewed, told, and interpreted, which affects how people remember and celebrate them over time. Literary evidence enriches the study of historical monuments by providing contextual, descriptive, chronological, and interpretative insights into their significance and meaning within their cultural and historical context. Integrating literary sources with other forms of evidence allows researchers to construct more nuanced narratives and interpretations of the past.

### **THE SERFOJI PALACE**

In Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, India, there is a noteworthy historical landmark called the Serfoji Palace. It bears witness to the region's rich cultural legacy and the support of the Maratha emperors, especially Serfoji II (sometimes called Shivaji II), who governed the Thanjavur princely state in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The palace complex is a vast building that blends European, Nayak, and Maratha architectural elements. It functioned as the formal residence of the Thanjavur Maratha rulers and the administrative centre of the Thanjavur Maratha empire. Among the palace complex's noteworthy features is the Saraswathi Mahal Library, which Serfoji established in the late 18th century. The library is one of the oldest and most important in Asia since it has one of the largest collections of rare books, palm-leaf manuscripts, and ancient manuscripts. The Durbar Hall, the site of the royal court proceedings, as well as a number of residential buildings, audience rooms, and courtyards are all part of the Serfoji Palace complex. The Serfoji Palace complex is now a major tourist destination and Thanjavur's hub for cultural and historical heritage. In addition to

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learning about the rich history of the Maratha monarchs, visitors can explore the architectural wonders and peruse the riches of the Saraswathi Mahal Library, which is still a repository of scholarly knowledge.

### **MARATHAS IN THANJAVUR**

In Thanjavur, a historic city in Tamil Nadu, India's southern region, the Marathas had a considerable influence. The Thanjavur Maratha kingdom was founded by the Maratha monarchs and existed from the late 17th to the mid-19th century. The establishment of Venkoji Bhonsle, the half-brother of Maratha king Shivaji, as the governor of Thanjavur in the 17th century by the Vijayanagara Empire marked the beginning of Maratha dominance in Thanjavur. In 1674, with the collapse of the Vijayanagara Empire, Venkoji proclaimed his independence and founded the Thanjavur Maratha empire. Thanjavur enjoyed a time of governmental stability, cultural patronage, and economic success during the Maratha era. The Bhonsle dynasty of Maratha monarchs is renowned for its contributions to building, music, literature, and art. They were enthusiastic supporters of the arts and the advancement of traditional Carnatic dance and music. After ascending to the throne in 1798, Serfoji II (also known as Shivaji II) became one of the most well-known Maratha rulers of Thanjavur. Serfoji II was a scholar-king who supported literature, science, and education. Within the Thanjavur Palace complex, he founded the Saraswathi Mahal Library, which grew to become one of Asia's most esteemed archives of manuscripts and rare books.

The Maratha emperors of Thanjavur kept diplomatic ties with European colonial powers, including as the British East India Company, and other nearby countries. However, internal strife, poor financial management, and British pressure caused the kingdom to start declining by the early 19th century. Thanjavur was ruled by the British when Tipu Sultan of Mysore was overthrown by them in 1799. Maratha sovereignty in Thanjavur came to an end in 1855 when the kingdom was technically acquired by the British, but the Maratha rulers persisted in ruling as vassals of the British. The region still celebrates the Marathas' history despite the fall of the Thanjavur Maratha kingdom because of its rich cultural heritage, famous buildings like the Thanjavur Palace, and the lasting influence of Maratha traditions in Tamil Nadu's cultural landscape.

### **SERFOJI II**

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Serfoji II, popularly known as Shivaji II Bhonsle, ruled the Thanjavur Maratha kingdom in southern India. Born on October 24, 1777, he succeeded to the kingdom in 1798 after his father, Serfoji I, passed away. Serfoji II was well-known for having a deep passion for learning, writing, and the arts. He supported education, founding a number of educational facilities and organisations to encourage study and intellectual endeavours throughout his realm. His efforts to the creation of the Saraswathi Mahal Library, which is housed

inside the Thanjavur Palace complex, make his reign especially noteworthy. The library grew its collection of books, artwork, and manuscripts under his patronage, making it one of the largest libraries.

Apart from his endeavours in education and cultural sponsorship, Serfoji II was renowned for his adept diplomacy and his attempts to bring the Thanjavur kingdom's governance up to date. He kept cordial ties with the British East India Company, which had made its home in southern India, and asked for their help with a number of issues pertaining to infrastructure development and governance. After his passing on March 7, 1832, Serfoji II's reign came to an end. Shivaji III, his adoptive son, succeeded him. The Saraswathi Mahal Library is a living reminder of Serfoji II's significant contributions to Thanjavur's education and culture. Serfoji II is still remembered in the area for his role as a scholar-king and patron of the arts.

### **PROMOTION OF TOURISM, HISTORY, HERITAGE AND ECONOMY IN TAMIL NADU AT THE SERFOJI PLACE AND ITS RELEVANCE IN THE SOCIO – LITERARY SCENARIO**

Heritage, history, and tourism have all been discreetly pushed by Thanjavur's Serfoji Palace. Only if Tamil Nadu's economy is generally acknowledged as a fascinating historical location will it be profoundly affected. Serfoji Palace in Thanjavur is still a lesser-known historical site today. Only with the efficient implementation of dynamic projects and multidimensional approaches which calls for the participation of government agencies, local communities, businesses, and other stakeholders will the tourist sector reap benefits. Encouraging public-private partnerships to finance conservation and restoration, as well as providing proper maintenance of this historically valuable landmark, can help to promote the Serfoji Palace. The architecture of Thanjavur's Serfoji Palace reflects the city's little-known history, heritage, and tourism. Tamil Nadu's economy won't be significantly impacted unless it is widely recognised as an intriguing historical site. Not many individuals are aware of the very existence of the Serfoji Palace. The tourism industry won't prosper until dynamic projects and multifaceted approaches are implemented effectively and involve businesses, government agencies, local communities, and other stakeholders.

There are two methods to support the Serfoji Palace in Thanjavur: first, by making sure that this historic site is properly maintained, and second, by encouraging public-private partnerships to provide funding for conservation and restoration. The government hosts cultural events and festivals that showcase Tamil Nadu's rich history, art, music, dance, and customs, in addition to historical educational institutions and organisations. Promoting the state's cultural identity can also be accomplished by showcasing the regional textiles, artwork, and crafts. A location's history, culture, and legacy may be schematized for use in educational programmes for use in curricula of schools, universities, and other organisations. The government

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may choose to make improvements to housing, transport, and other amenities in order to guarantee that tourists have visits they won't soon forget. It is possible to design carefully thought-out tourism circuits that link several historical monuments and heritage sites and offer a thorough experience.

Digital platforms, blogs, travel websites, and social media can be used to promote the lesser-known historical sites in Tamil Nadu. The local communities' participation in tourism-related events and activities with the goal of promoting and protecting their historical landmarks and cultural heritage. The southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu is known for its tourism because of its varied landscapes, rich cultural legacy, and array of attractions that appeal to a wide range of interests. Several community-based tourism programmes that offer visitors a close-up view of local traditions and culture might be put into place to increase awareness of lesser-known historical sites. Heritage walks and guided tours are two examples of easy events run by experienced historians and interpreters that can shed light on the significance and background of lesser-known historical locations. Additionally, it is also possible to create smartphone apps and audio guides to improve the experiences of visitors. Collaboration with global organisations and groups is feasible. Institutions could be founded to foster appreciation and knowledge of Tamil Nadu's lesser-known historical sites as well as intercultural understanding. It would be possible to teach environmentally friendly activities and emphasise sustainable tourism methods that minimise the impact on the environment.

Governmental and non-governmental tourism organisations might arrange focused training courses for the local populace to improve their abilities in tourism-related jobs including tour guide services, hospitality, and handicraft manufacturing. These would surely help the tourism and hospitality industries, boosting employment and the local economy. By stimulating the local economy, more support for neighbourhood establishments such as eateries, lodging facilities and handicraft stores can contribute to the development of a sustainable tourism environment. Working with the tourism sector to develop appropriate trip packages with airlines, tour operators, and hotel providers would surely be the first step in promoting these lesser-known historical sites. All of these objectives could only be accomplished by putting into practice a thorough plan that strikes a balance between community involvement, education, preservation, and sustainable growth. Sincere efforts to make use of the state's rich cultural legacy and historical riches would undoubtedly draw tourists, boost the state's economy, and instill a sense of pride in its citizens.

### **Conclusion:**

Tamil Nadu is well known for its beaches, hill stations, and temples, but it also has a number of palaces that serve as tourist attractions by giving guests a look



at the state's magnificent architecture and royal past. With thousands of years of history, religious and philosophical influences, social norms, language diversity, and artistic expressions, Indian heritage and culture are immensely rich and diverse. Palaces are historical sites and architectural wonders that provide visitors with an insight into Tamil Nadu's royal past and a sense of the state's rich cultural legacy. The region's tourism industry is greatly aided by these palaces, which offer guided tours, cultural events, and preservation initiatives. There are several travel and tourism resources available in India. Costly tourist attractions are available in the form of historical monuments. India is replete with historical monuments that attest to the rich cultural legacy of the many civilizations that have flourished there over millennia, as well as their influence. There are many historical monuments of all sizes and shapes across the Indian subcontinent. Ironically, despite their convenient locations, significant historical backgrounds, and gorgeous architectural styles, many of them remain forgotten. Serfoji Palace in Thanjavur is a lesser-known, undiscovered and unexplored historical landmark that needs to be identified and appreciated. Situated on the coast of Tamil Nadu, this lesser-known historic landmark subtly hides its personified beauty. The purpose of this research study, which is funded by the ICSSR Minor Research Project, is to identify and appreciate value this historical site. It focuses mostly on Tamil Nadu and aims to find and appreciate lesser-known historical monuments that boost tourism, history, and economy. Magnificent historical sites and the interwoven histories of important Tamil Nadu locations are extravagant in India's history. These depictions of our heritage's illustrious past, vibrant present, and bright future are immensely inspiring.

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**Title of the Article: Exploring Cultural Dynamics in Rohinton Mistry's  
*Such A Long Journey***

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**Celin Selvakumari K, Research Scholar.**

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**Abstract:**

Rohinton Mistry's novel "Such a Long Journey" functions as a rich compound through which to explore the complexities of Indian society and culture within the framework of cultural studies. Set in Bombay in the early 1970s, the novel follows the protagonist, Gustad Noble, as he navigates the complexities of postcolonial identity and representation, Globalization, Marginalization, community dynamics, social hierarchy, political upheaval, and familial relationships. The novel offers a fine examination of communal harmony, tensions, and coexistence, shedding light on the complexities of Indian multiculturalism.

Gustad's personal journey becomes intertwined with broader themes of nationalism, patriotism, and the legacy of colonialism, inviting readers to contemplate the intersection of personal identity and collective history. Family plays a central role in the novel, acting as a small-scale representation of Indian society. Through Gustad's interactions with his family members, including his son Sohrab, Mistry explores the tensions between tradition and modernity, generational differences, and the transmission of cultural values across time and space. Overall, "Such a Long Journey" offers a compelling exploration of Indian culture and society, themes of identity, community, tradition, and change within the context of postcolonial India. Through its vivid characters and evocative storytelling, the novel provides valuable insights for cultural studies research, illuminating the complexities of the human experience in a diverse and rapidly changing world.

**Keywords:** Culture, Identity, Representation, Globalization, Postcolonialism

**Introduction:**

Rohinton Mistry, a member of the Indian diaspora, belongs to the Zoroastrian Parsi community, whose ancestors were exiled due to the Islamic conquest of Iran. This historical event dispersed them to the Indian subcontinent, where they formed a significant part of the diaspora. During India's colonial era, Parsis enjoyed favour from the British rulers, fostering a cooperative relationship often termed "the

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psychological diaspora." Following India's partition in 1947, some Parsis found themselves straddling the divide between two conflicting regions, prompting migrations to England and America, marking the western diaspora of the Parsis.

Shortlisted for the esteemed Booker Prize, Rohinton Mistry's debut novel, "Such A Long Journey" (1991), skillfully captures the essence of Indian culture and family dynamics against the tumultuous backdrop of the subcontinent's postcolonial politics. Set in Bombay in 1971, during the outbreak of war between India and Pakistan over the formation of Bangladesh, the novel intricately weaves together the personal struggles of Gustad Noble and his family within the larger context of geopolitical unrest. Gustad Noble emerges as the central protagonist, navigating through the complexities of his life amidst the unfolding political turmoil.

Rohinton Mistry's "Such a Long Journey" set in Bombay, India, during the violent period of the early 1970s. The story revolves around Gustad Noble, a middle-class Parsi man struggling to lead his life among complexity of life. Gustad works as a bank clerk and lives with his wife, Dilnavaz, and their three children in a tiny apartment. Gustad encounters the challenges of daily life and political conflicts. Throughout the novel, Mistry skillfully explores themes of identity, community, betrayal, and resilience against the backdrop of India's socio-political landscape. As the story unfolds, Gustad is forced to confront his own prejudices and biases, ultimately leading to a deeper understanding of himself and the world around him. "Such a Long Journey" is a poignant portrayal of one man's journey through life's challenges and complexities, offering insights into the human condition and the quest for meaning and belonging.

Cultural dynamics refers various cultural elements within a society, including traditions, beliefs, customs, languages, and social norms. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for comprehending the many natural aspects of postcolonial Indian society as described in the novel. Mistry portrays the conflict of diverse cultural influences in Bombay, reflecting the city's cosmopolitan character. Through the characters' interactions, dialogues, and experiences, he explores the tensions and contradictions in a present society as it holds with its history of colonization while also striving to grasp modern values and practices.

In this novel portrayed how Parsi community people struggle to preserve its cultural identity among rapid social and political changes. Here the protagonist Gustad Noble representative of Parsi Community and balancing tradition with modernity, familial expectations with personal aspirations. For instance, In Mumbai where Parsi families are celebrating a traditional Navjote ceremony. In the midst of it all is Gustad Noble, a serious man who represents the Parsi community's struggle to keep their culture alive. While watching the festivities, Gustad feels torn between sticking to old ways and embracing modern life. Suddenly, some young Parsi professionals dressed in Western clothes come up to

Gustad, excited to talk about the latest technology. They show how the community is changing, trying to balance tradition with new ideas. As the night goes on, Gustad feels pulled between his family's old-fashioned beliefs and his own dreams for the future. This story shows how Parsis, like Gustad, try to find a way to honour their heritage while also moving forward in a changing world.

Initially, Gustad stand for traditional Parsi values, strongly established in customs and community ties. During 1970s, India undergoes rapid modernization and social change, Gustad finds himself battle with the tensions between tradition and progress. Gustad's struggle is exemplified by his interactions with his family, particularly his son, who represents the younger generation's preference towards interconnecting Western ideals and opportunities. Gustad's efforts to balance his son's aspirations with his own commitment to preserving Parsi traditions reflect the broader societal shift towards modernity and its impact on cultural identity.

In Mistry's Work, cultural representation is described through a plenty of characters and their interactions, offering readers to understanding of Indian Society. This helps us understand India better. He explores things like Indian customs, traditions, and what it means to be Indian. His characters come from different backgrounds, like Parsi, Hindu, or Muslim.

Each one has their own story and is very detailed, showing how diverse India is. When these characters interact, we see how cultural, religious, and money differences affect their relationships. This helps us understand how people from different backgrounds get along in India. Mistry's characters often handle the correlation of identity, grappling with issues such as caste, class, gender, and religion. Through their experiences, Mistry sheds light on the intersections of privilege and marginalization within Indian society, highlighting the ways in which these dynamics shape individual lives and social interactions.

Moreover, Mistry doesn't just show different types of people. He also shows how they connect with each other. By putting characters from different backgrounds together, Mistry shows that we're all human, no matter where we come from. But he also shows that cultural differences can cause problems, like misunderstandings and unfair treatment. In the end, Mistry's stories help us understand Indian society better, showing us that it's more complex than we might think. He challenges stereotypes and helps us see the beauty in different cultures

In the novel, Gustad's personal struggles highlight the tension between tradition and modernity. Key Example is Gustad's conflict regarding his son's education and career path. Traditionally, Gustad values education and wants his son to succeed, but he believes that success within the framework of traditional professions like engineering or medicine. But his son doesn't like to pursue traditional professions. His son expresses interest in pursuing a career in the arts, a choice that challenges Gustad's traditional views and expectations. This conflict

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reflects Gustad's struggle to reconcile his son's modern aspirations with his own traditional beliefs about success and fulfilment.

Due to globalization, the world changed a lot so Gustad realizes that blindly holding old traditions might not work anymore. He desired to keep his traditional values, but he needs to follow new ideas to succeed in life. When his son wants to pursue a different career, Gustad struggles because it goes against what he thinks is right. This shows how hard it is to balance tradition with the changes happening in the world. Gustad's story helps us see how important it is to adapt to new things while still holding onto what makes us who we are.

In a crowded marketplace in Bombay, amidst the chaotic harmony of vendors hawking their wares and shoppers bustling about, a scene unfolds that captures both communal harmony and underlying tensions. As the aroma of spices fills the air, a Hindu fruit seller, Ramesh, chats amiably with his Muslim neighbour, Abdul, as they arrange their displays side by side. Their banter is filled with laughter and comradeship, reflecting years of shared experiences and mutual respect. Customers from all backgrounds frequent their stalls, a testament to the seamless integration of diverse communities in the neighbourhood.

In the busy marketplace of Bombay, where people from different backgrounds come to buy and sell things, there's a mix of harmony and tension. Some young guys influenced by extreme ideas, look at the Muslim sellers suspiciously and say mean things quietly. They don't like having Muslims around because of recent problems in the city. Then, there's a big fight between a Hindu customer and a Muslim seller about the price of a spice. It starts small but gets louder and draws a crowd. Ramesh and Abdul, who are friends and neighbours, step into calm things down. They talk to both sides and help them find a solution. After the fight, things feel uneasy. Even though people from different backgrounds usually get along, there's still some tension and mistrust. This shows how delicate it is to keep everyone peaceful in a diverse city like Bombay

Prejudice, discrimination, and reconciliation play significant roles in shaping cultural dynamics and social unity within a community. Prejudice and discrimination is the reason of barriers between individuals or groups based on characteristics such as race, religion, ethnicity, or social class. This can result in exclusion, marginalization, and unequal treatment, inequality and resentment. Reconciliation helps to understand cultural dynamics by challenging stereotypes, promoting cross-cultural understanding and facilitating the exchange of diverse perspectives.

The power dynamics plays the biggest role in the life of Gustad who belongs to middle class Parsi family. He has to deal with powerful people like government authorities and workers. At particular point of time these powerful people treat him unfairly, making him feel weak and unsure. In India, social status

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can decide a lot about the life. Even though Gustad is educated and skilled, he faces difficulties moving up in society because of things like class and privilege. This makes it hard for him to achieve his dreams for himself and his family. Including in family he faced power dynamics. As the head of the family, he is expected to make important decisions but he also feels pressure to follow society's rules and regulations. This novel explores how power dynamics affects Gustad's life in different ways from his job to his family. It teaches us about the way power works and how it can shape people's lives and relationships.

"Such a Long Journey" by Rohinton Mistry is a poignant portrayal of life in 1970s Bombay, seen through the eyes of Gustad Noble, a Parsi man grappling with family, work, and societal pressures. Mistry deftly explores themes of tradition versus modernity, as Gustad navigates his son's unconventional career path amidst India's rapid modernization. The novel's diverse cast offers a nuanced view of Indian society, addressing issues of privilege and power dynamics. Set against a backdrop of political unrest, Mistry captures both the harmony and tension within Bombay's multicultural fabric, highlighting the importance of reconciliation and cross-cultural understanding. Ultimately, "Such a Long Journey" invites readers to reflect on universal themes of identity, resilience, and the human quest for belonging in a changing world.

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**Jeyamohan's *Elephant Doctor* and Chidambaram's *Manjummel Boys*:  
A Contemporary Sociocultural Perspective**

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**Abstract:**

Writer Jeyamohan's *Elephant Doctor* is a significant literary text that offers a unique perspective on the current environmental scenario. The story emphasizes the urgent need to preserve nature and its inhabitants. In his short story *Elephant Doctor*, Jeyamohan provides a distinct view on the plight of elephants in the southern forests of India due to the prevalent drinking culture. The text is important in raising awareness about environmental preservation and the Eco-system. Jeyamohan's critique of the recent Malayalam movie *Manjummel Boys*, which he believes promotes the liquor culture that distorts nature, is a key aspect of his message in *The Elephant Doctor*. This paper analyzes the unique perspectives presented in the short story *Elephant Doctor* and the movie *Manjummel Boys* in the context of contemporary social culture.

**Key Words:** Environment, Eco System, Ecocriticism, Socio-cultural practices , Drinking culture.

**Introduction:**

Ecocriticism is a discipline that sincerely attempts to find the close correspondence between literature and nature. The manifestation of ecosystem and environment through literary writings have profound relevance to the contemporary socio-cultural scenario. Ecocriticism, is defined as, "Simply defined, ecocriticism is the study of relationship between literature and the physical environment" (Peter Barry 248). Eco-critical perspectives propose to intensify the awareness of human concern for nature. The Tamil writer Jeyamohan's short story *Elephant Doctor* is phenomenally significant in the aspect of creating environmental awareness especially, about the disasters caused by human beings in the life of elephants. The film director Chidambaram's super hit movie *Manjummel Boys*, portrays the essence of friendship and it has characters with temerarious disposition whose ventures are a threat to nature. The present paper aims to focus on the ideas on the existing



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sociocultural practices and the dire need to understand and change certain practices for the healthy growth of the society and the world, that are present in Jeya Mohan's *Elephant Doctor* and Chidambaram's *Manjummel Boys*.

Jeyamohan (1962-) is a prolific Tamil and Malayalam language writer and literary critic from Tamil Nadu. Jayamohan has created a unique style of writing of his own. Most of his widely acknowledged writings delve deep into the mysticism of Indian culture and nature. His voluminous novels *Vishnupuram* and *Venmurasu* are examples of his intense passion for exploring Indian mythology and philosophy. His *Venmurasu* is a re-narration of the great Indian epic *Mahabharata*, and he completed it in six years, thus creating the world's longest novel ever written. *Rubber*, *Pin Thodarum Nizhalin Kural*, *Kanyakumari*, *Kaadu*, *Pani Manidhan*, *Eazhaam Ulagam* and *Kotravai* are some of his well-known novels among readers.

*Aram* is a collection of twelve long short stories by Jeyamohan, published in 2012. The book has an imaginative narration based on the lives of real people. Their anger, silence, protest, sacrifice, selfless service to society, and journey to self-discovery are portrayed with the essence of truth. The book was translated into English by Priyamvada Ramkumar in 2022, entitled *Stories of the Truth*. *Elephant Doctor* is one of the inspiring short stories that delve deeply into the significance of environmental consciousness. The story is narrated by an unnamed forest officer.

The short story *Elephant Doctor* is based on the life of an Indian veterinarian, Dr. V. Krishnamurthy, who dedicated his entire service to the well-being of the animals in the forest. The writer introduces the veterinarian as Dr K. The pivotal role and contribution of Dr K to the animal kingdom in the Mudumalai forest range is quite popular, and he is fondly called an 'elephant doctor' by the people in the forest area. Dr. K's selfless service is described in the following words:

Dr. V. krishnamurthy had arrived at Topslip thirty years before as a veterinary doctor attached to the forest department. His job was to provide medical attention to both wild and domesticated animals. But over a period of time, he had become a specialist vet for elephants. Once it was established in the Tamil Nadu Forest Department that he was the most knowledgeable veterinarian on the subject of pachyderms, it came to be that he had to attend to every elephant-related problem anywhere in the state... They said that Dr. Krishnamurthy must have operated on more than one thousand elephants. He had delivered three hundred or more elephant calves...He had developed the procedure used today for performing these autopsies... The system developed by Dr. Krishnamurthy to tend to the elephant's well-being has since become a manual for the Indian forest department...Harry Marshall, a world-renowned wildlife documentary maker, made an eponymous film on him for the BBC. Dr.K is a living legend.( Jeyamohan 56, 57)

Dr. K's intellect, simplicity, dedication and humanity create an absolute respect for him in the narrator. Dr.K's insights on the philosophy of life and his

approach to every creature as one and part of him are astounding to the narrator. Dr.K's dedication, devotion, and concern for the forest's inhabitants are eye-openers for the narrator. On many occasions in the story, Dr. K mentions the unscrupulous behaviour of human beings which causes heavy damage to both the environment and innocent animals. Jeyamohan wishes to strongly record the atrocities and irresponsibility of the people who come to visit the forest in this story. He writes that, "Should you visit man's depravity, like a daily slap in the face of, you must come to forest"( Jeyamohan 68).

The focal point of the writer is to bring the brutality of human behaviour against nature to the light. Jeyamohan vigorously expresses the reckless actions of the people who visit forest for entertainment :

Most tourists who come here are educated and in 'good jobs'. They carry fried snacks and liquor bottles all the way from their homes. Throughout their journey in the forest, they keep drinking and eating. They vomit. They pierce the tranquillity of the mountain ranges with their blaring horns. Blasting their car stereos as loudly as they can, they jump about and dance. They scream obscenities at the lofty hills.( Jeyamohan 68)

Above all, the consequence of such people's weirdness ends up in the tragic death of the elephants. These magnificent creatures trample on the beer bottles and get hurt. Bearing the unbearable pain, it will die silently. Jeyamohan says that the bottle shards are the most dangerous threat to elephants. When the elephant steps on the hurled bottles, the glass penetrates straight into their feet. When they take the next step, it even more plunges into them. The following words describe what happens to the wounded elephants: "within two days, the wound will form puss. Maggots will enter it, pierce the flesh and transport the pus inside. If they manage to reach any of the critical blood vessels or bones, the elephant will not survive" (Jeyamohan 69).

The new millennium challenges this planet's inhabitants regarding climate change and environmental disasters. The continual distortion of the ecosystem manifests through natural disasters and the extinction of various species. In this connection, Jeyamohan's *The Elephant Doctor* can be identified as a prominent literary text written with a concern for nature.

Jeyamohan discontent and frustration towards the indifferent attitude of the tourists is no less shown in the 2024 Malayalam movie *Manjummel Boys*. The movie is a blockbuster, screened all over India and directed by Chidambaram. It is a survival thriller based on a true incident. The story follows a group of friends from Manjummel in Kochi, Kerala, who visit Guna Caves in Kodaikanal. It is a prohibited space because people who have fallen into the cave have not survived. One of the boys slips deep into the caves. The movie's second part shows how the other boys stand together to save their friend despite the life-threatening challenges. The movie was celebrated by the youngsters for its exaltation of friendship.

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While most people were celebrating the movie, writer Jeyamohan wrote a critical article on the movie titled 'The clamour of Drunkards on his blog page. In his article, he vented his discontent against the culture of alcoholism among the younger generation. Alcoholism has become part and parcel of the present generation. They drink on every occasion. They want to drink. For them, drinking is the only way to be joyful. Jeyamohan puts forth an acute criticism, saying that "on screen, the activities of young people being built are not just fiction. It is the hard-core reality of the milieu. Tourists from Kerala come here to take drugs, drink, vomit, and fall down. Not interested in anything else. They do not have basic knowledge" ([Jeyamohan jeyamohan.in/197808/](http://Jeyamohan.jeyamohan.in/197808/)).

Exactly the same situation is portrayed in the movie *Manjummel Boys*. The movie opens with a wedding celebration, and two groups of drunken young boys create a ruckus at the function. They keep on drinking, dancing and creating many uncomfortable situations for the people who have come to attend the wedding. All the youngsters are from lower and lower-middle class. After the wedding, they plan a trip to Kodaikanal, to booze and freak out. While planning and during their visit, they constantly talk about boozing up, as if that is the only motivation for their life. They roam around the tourist spots in the forest holding beer and other liquor bottles. They carelessly throw the cigarette butts and liquor bottles, ignoring the warnings of the forest rangers. They shamelessly get into a fight with the drunkards in the liquor shop. They throw the liquor bottles into the forest with total recklessness. They happily violate the rules by entering into a prohibited area.

Survival on this planet amidst natural disasters like global warming, earthquakes, and tsunamis is the biggest challenge in front of human beings. The constant annihilation of nature is the reason for all these threats. The planet's flora and fauna contribute innumerable ways to the sustenance of every creature on this planet. In this context, Jeyamohan's text *Elephant Doctor* has significance in creating environmental awareness. When a text like *The Elephant Doctor* is prescribed for classroom teaching, it becomes even more significant. The text cannot be easily passed over just like any other text, in fact, every text is significant in its way because the contemporary sociocultural practices propagated by films have a massive influence over the younger generation. Ethical values taught through literary texts in classrooms can greatly impact the students. The suffering of elephants and other animals is painfully described by Jeyamohan and the reason for most of their suffering is humans. Dr. K says, "You see all of the deaths of large animals here, one three is murder. Committed by humans..." he said" (Jeyamohan 63). The possibility of creating awareness of the Ecosystem and the environment should be the pivotal objective of the curriculum in the contemporary situation. That is why eco studies and green studies are included in the syllabus nowadays.

In a similar context, the films can also be a little more conscious about the

ethical values that help modify the sociocultural practices of the age. Jeyamohan was ruthlessly blasted on social media for criticizing the movie *Manjummel Boys*. He received rebukes from all directions, especially from the Malayalam movie industry, for abusively depicting the Keralites and their drinking culture. The Times of India wrote, "Writer Jeyamohan faced backlash for criticizing the Malayalam film 'Manjummel Boys' and highlighting cultural differences. Tamil movie directors Naveen Hidayath and Lenin Bharathi condemned his comments, while Jeyamohan called for action against the promotion of drinking and fighting in Malayalam films" (The Times India, Entertainment Desk). The online journal The Hindu reacted to Jeyamohan's review in the following words:

Writer B. Jeyamohan's blog post on the Malayalam film '*Manjummel Boys*' kicked up a storm in social media on Sunday, with the writer facing a backlash over several sweeping statements and derogatory comments that he made on Malayalis. The film, based on a real-life survival story involving a group of Malayali friends visiting the Guna Caves in Kodaikanal, has been a major box office success in Tamil Nadu too. The author said that he was irked by the much celebrated film, which he saw just as a "celebration of some wayward drunkards". He lashed out at the film buffs of Tamil Nadu for their adulatory comments on the film. In the rest of the long blog post, he makes generalised statements on Malayalis, especially the tourists, whom he accused of engaging in excessive drinking and vomiting, lacking basic decency and creating havoc inside protected forests and at tourist spots with their irresponsible behaviour. ( The Hindu, The Hindu Bureau)

Jeyamohan's criticism of a particular community's sociocultural practices is unacceptable. In the present, most of the population has become addicted to alcoholism. At the same time, *Manjummel Boys* is not the only movie that shows the drinking culture. There are several movies in many languages that promote such culture. A creative artist has his or her freedom of thought, but social consciousness is also equally important as it affects the life of the public. The paper aims to point out the fact that creating awareness of the well-being of the environment as well as against the culture of alcoholism among youngsters is important. Jeyamohan's *Elephant Doctor* and his review of *Manjummel Boys* have a social concern. To conclude, it would be apt to quote Peter Barry on culture and nature. He opines that:

...the scope of some of the debates within ecocriticism concerning the crucial matter of of the relationship between culture and nature... For the ecocritic, nature really exists, out there beyond ourselves, not needing to be ironised as a concept by enclosure within knowing inverted commas. But actually present as an entity which affect us, and which we can affect, perhaps fatally, if we mistreat. ( Peter Barry 252)

Dr.K 's dedication to fellow beings is the best example of living life with its fullest meaning and living life with care, kindness and compassion. Throughout the story, Jeyamohan spreads the message of inclusiveness, including the right from an

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insect to the elephant as part of one's being. Hence, it would be ideal for a creative writer to be more concerned with the ethics and values that could be promoted and propagated through their work of art, which can bring many changes to society.

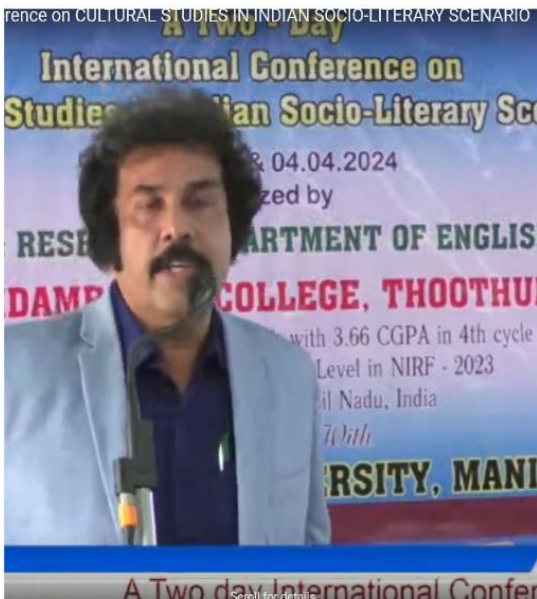
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**भारतीय सामाजिक-साहित्यिक परिदृश्य (हाइब्रिड मोड) में सांस्कृतिक अध्ययन पर दो दिवसीय अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सम्मेलन का आयोजन किया गया.**

भारतीय सामाजिक-साहित्यिक परिदृश्य (हाइब्रिड मोड) में सांस्कृतिक अध्ययन पर दो दिवसीय अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सम्मेलन का आयोजन 3 और 4 अप्रैल को बीकानेर विश्वविद्यालय में आयोजित किया गया। सम्मेलन का उद्देश्य भारतीय समाज और साहित्य के विकास को समर्थन देना और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर सांस्कृतिक अध्ययन को बढ़ावा देना है।



सम्मेलन में भारत के 15 राज्यों और 11 देशों के 411 प्रतिभागियों ने भाग लिया। सम्मेलन में साहित्यिक, सांस्कृतिक और सामाजिक विषयों पर 220 से अधिक प्रस्तुतियाँ प्रस्तुत की गईं और विचार-विमर्श का आयोजन किया गया।



**தூத்துக்குடி வஉசி., கல்லூரியில் கலாசார ஆய்வுகள் மாநாடு**

**தூத்துக்குடி.ஏப்.7-**  
தூத்துக்குடி வஉசி கல்லூரியில் இந்திய சமூகஇலக்கிய சூழ்நிலையில் கலாசார ஆய்வுகள் என்ற தலைப்பில் இரண்டு நாள் சர்வதேச மாநாடு நடந்தது. கல்லூரியில் ஆங்கிலத் துறை, மணிப்பூர் பிலிஆர் திகேந்திரஜித் பல்கலைக்கழகத்துடன் இணைந்து நடத்திய இந்த மாநாட்டை உத்தரகாண்ட் மாநில உயர் கல்வி அமைச்சர் தன் சிங் ராவத் துவக்கி வைத்தார். மாநாட்டுக்கு கல்லூரி முதல்வர் வீரபாகு தலைமை வகித்தார். மணிப்பூர் பிலிஆர் திகேந்திரஜித் பல்கலைக்கழக துணை வேந்தர் அசோக் செளத்ரி. 20 ஹார்வர்ட் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின்



தூத்துக்குடி வஉசி., கல்லூரியில் சமூக இலக்கிய சூழ்நிலையில் கலாசார ஆய்வுகள் என்ற தலைப்பில் சர்வதேச மாநாடு நடந்தது.

அசோசியேட் புரோகிராமம் பயிற்றுவிப்பாளரும், அமெரிக்காவின் தெற்கு இல்லினாய்ஸ் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் கல்விப் பள்ளியின் தலைமைப்பயிற்றுவிப்பாளருமான பிரான்சு கெனயூட்சன், நவீன கலாச்சாரத்தில் ஏஜு இன் படைபெயடுப்பு குறித்து பேசினார்.

ஜார்க்கண்ட் மத்திய பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் நாட்டுப்புறவியல் உதவிப் பேராசிரியர் ராமகிருஷ்ணன், கேரள மத்தியப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் மொழியியல் இணைப் பேராசிரியர் ஸ்ரீகுமார், ஸ்ரீநாராயண குருதிறந்த நிலைப்பல்கலைக்கழக மொழிப்பள்ளியின் தலை

வர் வின்சென்ட் பி நெட்டோ, திருநெல்வேலி மனோன்மனியம் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் ஆங்கிலத் துறைத் தலைவர் பிரபாகர் ஆகியோர் பேசினர். இந்த மாநாட்டில் இந்தியாவின் 18 மாநிலங்கள் மற்றும் 11 நாடுகளில் இருந்து 411 பங்கேற்பாளர்கள் கலந்து கொண்டனர். மெய்நிகர் மற்றும் இயற்பியல் தளங்களில் 220 ஆவணங்கள் வழங்கப்பட்டன. பேராசிரியர்கள் அஜித் அமைப்புச் செயலாளராகவும், மெர்சிலதா, கோகிலா, அனிதா ஆல்பர்ட், மருதுபாண்டியன் மற்றும் மஞ்சு முரளிதரன் ஆகியோர் மாநாட்டின் ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர்களாகவும் பணியாற்றினர்.



Conference on cultural studies  
A two-day conference on "Cultural studies in Indian socio-literary scenarios" was organized by the PG and Research Department of English, V.O. Chidambaram College, Theerthkudi, in collaboration with BIR Tikendrajit University, Manipur, on April 3 and 4. Chan Singh Rawat, Higher Education Minister of Uttarakhand, inaugurated the conference. In his address, Ashok Choudhary, Vice-Chancellor of BIR Tikendrajit University, Manipur, stressed the coexistence of culture, K. Ilan Kuzhavel of Southern Illinois University spoke on 'Inevitability of AI in the modern culture'. M. Rameshkumar of Central University of Kerala, Vincent B. Netto of Sree Narayana Guru Open University, Kollam, and S. Prabhakar of Maronmaniam Sundaranar University spoke. R. Ajith of V.O.C college coordinated the conference.