Dimensions of Women in New Literatures in English

Special Issue Editor

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PREFACE

Literature is the reflection of human life. The present book titled Dimensions of Women in New Literatures in English aims to focus on the literatures concerned with women’s life and also the colonial and post colonial writing that emerged in the former British colonies which include Australia, Canada, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka etc., Post colonial writing include the literature by people of these colonies. It focuses on the issues and impacts of the decolonization of a country and it also includes the political and cultural freedom the formerly colonized people and themes such as racism and colonialism is also discussed in one of articles in the book.

Many scholars have focused on the women rights and fights to live their life independently. Generally, feminism as a social movement aims at eradicating the gender discrimination and maintain a decent standard of living of women. In that manner, the scholars have attempted to focus on gender inequality, exploitation and changed social status of women and the various forms of violence inflicted on them. The aim of the book is to make the readers aware of the subtle form of violence and manipulation against women in the contemporary society and to find an apt solution to it.

By the implication and suggestion, not aiming at diatribe or decimation, the scholars give the readers an exhaustive survey of the dimensions of women in new literatures in English, recording event relatively known writers and indicating that they also deserve to be noticed as the essential part of the new literatures. The value of the book is enhanced with the success and hope of the subjugated women who have broken the shackles and strong chauvinistic clutches of men and their bold attempt to lead an independent and empowered life.

The book is not the outcomes of a single man’s research rather, a collection of people and their research articles on the concerned topic given. Of course, I have many people to thank the first and foremost, I would like to thank the Lord Almighty for his precious blessings on me, to edit the book successfully. My humble and heartfelt thanks goes to my god father and well wisher Dr.G.Dominic Savio, Professor, the former Head of English Department, the former and Dean of The American College for his constant support, encouragement and motivation. My sincere thanks goes to Thiru. Mr.S.Lakshmanan, the managing director of Shanlax International Journal and his team, for bringing out the book in time.
Dr. M. P. Ganesan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Sourashtra College, Madurai. He received the honorary D.Litt from the International Economics University for SAARC countries. He has eleven years of teaching experience. He has given lectures in various reputed institutions. He has presented articles in National, International Conference and Seminars. He has also published the articles in National, International and UGC approved Journals. He has published a book for NSS Volunteers titled “National Service Scheme: An Overview”. He conducted State Level Seminar on “Roles and Responsibilities of NSS volunteers in the Society” and he was the convener of that seminar. He has edited and published a journal titled “Feminism and Post Colonialism” and he has edited a book titled “Cultural Encounters in Third World Literature”. He held the position of Placement Officer, Youth Red Cross Officer and NSS Programme Officer in Sourashtra College. He produced fifteen M.Phil scholars and he is the Guide and Supervisor of Madurai Kamaraj University. He is specialized in Indian Writing in English, Canadian Literature, and Communicative Skills and he is a motivational and inspirational Speaker in Tamil and English.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exploitation of Manju Kapur’s <em>A Married Woman</em></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dr. M. Anbazhagan</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Westerner’s Spiritual Quest in India in Jhabvala’s <em>A New Dominion</em></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ms. M. BackiyaLakshmi &amp; Dr. A. Padmashini</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Affectation and Make–Belief World in Manohar Malgonkar’s <em>Upper Division Love</em></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dr. K. Jeyamurugan</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sex and Infidelity in Manju Kapur’s <em>Immigrant</em></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dr. C.S. Jeyaraman</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Crisis of African Entity in Chinua Achebe’s <em>Arrow of God</em></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>S.K. Gowri Sankar</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Plight of Indian Women in Chithra Banerjee Divakaruni’s <em>The Bats and Clothes</em></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>S. Masimalar</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Self-Awakening of The Psyche in Girish Karnad’s <em>Yayati</em></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>J. Priya &amp; Dr. K. Anuradha</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Desirability of Westerners in India in Jhabvala’s <em>A Backward Place</em></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>R. Chitra</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Women Characters in Manju Kapur’s <em>Difficult Daughters: A Study</em></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>R. Leelavathi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Position of Women in Manju Kapur’s Select Novels</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dr. V.P. Rathi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The Irksome Clutches on Nisha in Manju Kapur’s <em>Home</em></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Mrs. R.P. Jeswill &amp; Dr. G. Dominic Savio</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Quest for Feminine Identity in Manju Kapur’s <em>Difficult Daughters</em></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dr. M.P. Ganesan</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Intertextuality in Chinua Achebe’s <em>No Longer at Ease</em></td>
<td>Dr. S.M. Nandini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Diasporic Elements in Jhumpa Lahiri’s <em>The Namesake</em></td>
<td>Dr. M. Sundaram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Politics and Women in Nayantara Sahgal’s <em>This Time of Morning</em></td>
<td>R. Margaret Karunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tradition Verses Modernity in Salman Rushdie’s <em>Fury</em></td>
<td>N. Moorthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Psycho – Spiritual Adaptability of Mama Day in Gloria Naylor’s <em>Mama Day</em></td>
<td>Dr. (Mrs). G. Beulah &amp; S. Anu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Harsh Reality of Childhood in Toni Morrison’s <em>God Help the Child</em></td>
<td>S. Durga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Reading of Beatrice’s Recollections of Memory in Kazuo Ishiguro’s <em>The Buried Giant</em></td>
<td>Dr. (Mrs). G. Beulah &amp; G. Akilan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Internal Dimensions of Maya Angelou being a Child, an Artist, a Mother and a Social Activist</td>
<td>Dr. K. Valayapathi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exploitation of Manju Kapur’s A Married Woman

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Abstract
In the history of Indian English novel, women have been perceptually attempting to express their ideas, emotions and feelings through their writings. Indian women novelists exhibit their own experience and the multi-faceted experience of Indian women in their short stories and novels. The novelist, in her novels takes into account the complexity of life, different histories, cultures and different structures of values, the woman’s question, despite basic solidarity, needs to be tackled in relation to the socio-cultural situation. Women under the patriarchal pressure and control are subjected to too much more brunts and social ostracism. They are more discriminated and are biased in lieu of their sex. The lives women live and struggle under the oppressive mechanism of a closed society are reflected in the writings of Manju Kapur. One can see the budding of new women in Manju Kapur’s heroines, who do not want to be mere puppets for others to move as they like. Defying patriarchal notions that enforce women towards domesticity, they assert their individuality and aspire self-reliance through education. They nurture the desire of being independent and leading lives of their own. They are not silent rebels but are bold, outspoken, determined and action-oriented.

Keywords: patriarchal pressure, discrimination, oppression, bias.

Kapur seems to be aware of the fact that the women of India have indeed achieved their success in sixty years of independence, but if there is to be a true female independence too much remains to be done. The conflict for autonomy and separate identity remains an unfinished battle. Women under the patriarchal pressure and control were subjected to much more brunts and social ostracism. They were discriminated and were biased in lieu of their sex. The lives of Indian women and their struggle under the oppressive mechanism of a closed patriarchal society were reflected in the novels of Manju Kapur. She deals with the position of woman as a daughter, a wife and a mother. “All her female protagonists railing from middle class status challenge the existing socio-cultural patriarchal system. In the social milieu they are educated, modern, intelligent bold and assertive” (Pradhan 116). Even though they try to transcend the social hierarchy by demolishing it, they often undergo serious psychological traumas in the absence of an alternative, planned feminist ideology that may give them freedom, security and peace of mind.

Feminism emerges as a concept that is based on a critical analysis of male privilege and woman’s subordination within any given
society. It opposes woman’s subordination to men in the family and society. Feminism is a global and revolutionary ideology that is political because it is concerned with the question of power. In the words of P.C. Pradhan: “Feminism as a philosophy, challenges the patriarchal symbolic order, social organization and control mechanism. It, therefore, opposes women’s subordination and oppression in home and society” (108). A feminist is one who is awakened and conscious about woman’s life and problems. Themes explored in feminism and feminist theory include patriarchy, sexual objectification and oppression. Feminists argue that inequality between the sexes is not the result of biological necessity but is produced by the cultural construction of gender differences. Sex refers to the determining of identity on the basis of biological category while gender connotes the cultural meaning attached to sexual identity. In other words gender is the product of cultural conditioning.

Manju Kapur, a powerful exponent of feminism has denounced the Indian women’s socio-cultural predicament caused by their entrapment in male-dominant socio-economic culture and political hegemony of patriarchal society. She has expressed such feminist views in her second novel A Married Woman (2002) in the context of post-modernism. Manju Kapur has successfully enabled her woman protagonist Astha in A Married Woman to construct a femino-centric protest and help her wriggle out from the stifling patriarchal institutions like family and married life. She becomes fully aware of the enormous burden of gender discrimination in her respective culture and society. She understands that all over the world all history is male-centered. He has used her to promote his physical and material comforts. “At the same time he has never taken any meaningful steps to elevate her to that rank she was created to fill, namely an equal partner to her male companion. Conversely, he has done everything to debase and enslave her mind and body” (Gnanamony, Literary Dialectics 161). So the space of a woman in the human world is biologically limited. Her existence in the male world is unlimitedly controlled by so many factors—sociological, biological, cultural and moral.

Asha, the female protagonist of Manju Kapur’s A Married Woman gives a stiff resistance to patriarchy by helping her “metamorphosed into a feminist odd ball” (162). Astha, the daughter of an educated father and an orthodox mother, she is discriminated against and subjugated at her in-law’s house. Her marriage with Hemant, the son of a government official in Delhi, does not prove to be based on mutual co-operation and understanding. She is compelled to be an enduring wife and sacrificing mother, like a holy cow in the status of married woman. There, she is supposed to have a willing body at night, a willing pair of hands and feet in the day and an obedient mouth. It leads to her physical exploitation and emotional starvation. Being deprived of her emotional fulfilment, she frantically searches for it and turns to lesbianism. Manju Kapur in her novel A Married Woman through the protagonist Astha, “has carved out an independent life of the woman for self-fulfilment and advocated for inter-religious marriage and female-female bond contrary to patriarchal norms of traditional society” (Prasad Singh 71). A Married Woman reveals a woman’s obsession with love and lesbianism.

The protagonist of the novel Astha is a typical middle-class woman brought up in Delhi. She succumbs to her parents finding her husband in a traditionally arranged manner. “Within the bounds of marriage, she discovers a latent sexuality that is driven by love and passion and her desire is to assert her individualism” (qtd. in Prasad and Joseph 196). As Astha was the only child to her parents, her education, her character, her health, her marriage, were the burdens of her parents. In fact, she was their future, their hope and though she did not want them to guard her so carefully, they did. But Astha’s mother, being a traditional family woman, prayed for Astha’s future thus: “Everyday in her temple corner in the kitchen, she prayed for a good husband for her daughter” (A Married Woman 01). Astha’s father also took an enormous care for his daughter. In the mean
time, Astha became sixteen. She was well trained on a diet of “mushy novels and thoughts of marriage” (08). Unlike many unmarried girls she had her infatuations of adolescent love for Bunty, a handsome soldier boy who frequented his visits to her house and for Rohan who left for overseas for a better career. Astha liked Bunty very much. But her interest in Bunty was short-lived. Astha’s mother became instrumental in sowing the seeds of discord in her daughter’s friendship with Bunty. Astha was unable to forget her Bunty. Shortly a suitor came for Astha. As she had just come from college, tired and was stinking with sweat, she was not at all ready to meet the stranger. Astha remained in the bathroom long after her suitor had left. Manju Kapur sarcastically says, “The bathroom represented her future; she had better start getting acquainted with it now”(22).

In the mean time, obviously suspecting something fishy in Astha’s secret life, her parents “tightened their surveillance” (28). Rohan, her boy friend, did very well in the exam and like his father, went to Oxford for his higher studies. She had become a victim of male passion. Rohan went abroad and Astha enrolled in M.A., “bored and unenthusiastic” (31). Astha had a proposal from a US returned MBA chap. She was wondering whether she should tell him “though she had kissed a boy, her hymen was intact” (35). The engagement was over and both started dating. The marriage took place on an auspicious day. Rohan, her boyfriend, had abandoned her, Hemant had married her, he valued her, and he thought her so charming. In their honeymoon in Kashmir, he told her that he was happy because he wanted to marry “an innocent, unspoilt, simple girl” (41). That was fulfilled for he was so sure that Astha was a virgin. But Astha asked herself “Had she been a virgin?”(41). As such thoughts were useless, she decided to stop thinking about the past.

That Astha used to write and paint was known to her husband. Reading a poem Astha had composed, Hemant said, “May be I can help you” (A Married Woman 42). All Astha said was, “Really!” (42). She would have felt that this was another aspect of male chauvinism. That wives have to dance to all sorts of tunes of their husbands is not unusual in the Indian domestic space. As Astha wanted to be different, she tried to make her husband understand that she was an individual and she must get her due respect and she could never tolerate to be a doormat. In the bedroom, Hemant wanted her to wear sexy clothes. Balking she would ask him, “What do you think I am? A whore?” (44). On another occasion, Astha was looking at a black thing he offered to her. She asked him what it was. He said, “a teddy” (44). She asked him in annoyance, “So I am to be your teddy bear?” (44). Hemant felt unhappy with her reply. Within a few months, dullness began to taint Astha’s married life. She had to wait all day long for her husband’s arrival. She took up a teaching assignment in Delhi and enjoyed it very much. But back in home sometimes she had to wait very long for her husband (who was employed in a bank) to draw his attention to her.

Hemant behaves like a typical male in the orient. He did not care much to the inmost longings of his wife. He even denies Astha’s just demand of having a baby. She had to repeatedly plead to him to stop using birth control devices. Hemant loved her even after Anu was born to them. However, she didn’t like the way he pushed her into the bathroom to have sex with her. He would pacify her saying, “How do you think half the country fucks? You think they have separate rooms?” (60). She didn’t like the leer on Hemant’s face. Her longing for a better relationship with him did not materialize. In the domestic space, Hemant behaves like a typical hyper masculine. In other words, “he is a proud member of a patriarchal society dominated by machismo and heterosexuality” (Gnanamony, Literary Polyrhythms 105). As the earth is conquered, women must also be conquered. If a man is successful in conquering his woman, then this morale will be very high. Otherwise he will feel very shaky. As Ania Loomba observes in her classic text Colonialism/Post Colonialism : “[…] female bodies symbolise the conquered land” (152). Hemant’s attitude to his wife is nothing short of this.

Thus Astha initially finds love and companionship, but following the birth of her two children, she begins to find that she has sacrificed her own identity while striving to satisfy the traditional
duties and family values. Her family affairs are also not so good and nothing is right with her. As a married woman she becomes an enduring wife and sacrificing mother. “Her temperamental incompatibility with her corporate thinking husband compels her to play the role of mother and father for her children (A Married Woman 189). This denies her self-fulfillment and leads to the collapse of the institution of marriage. Discontentment leads her to defiance and restlessness. Astha understands a married woman’s place in the family to be that of an unpaid servant or a slave and thought of divorce brings social and economic death in her Indian status. She is “always adjusting to everybody’s need” (227). She has no emotional freedom from the domestic affairs. She has to please her husband and for pleasing him, she must be “A willing body at night, a willing pair of hands and feet in the day and an obedient mouth” (231). So she joins as a teacher but this job also does not set her free from distress and stress of discrimination. Astha is thus torn between her duty and responsibility, faith and fact, history and contemporancity, public ethos and personal ethics. She struggles for an emotional freedom from the scourge of family. She develops psycho-somatic symptoms of stress and depression balancing between existing and living.

Manju Kapur attacks the Indian attitude of preferring a baby-boy to a baby-girl in the novel. When her daughter Anuradha was four, Astha conceived again. As the seniors in the family had expected, the baby was a son. He was Christened as Himanshu. Now Astha got all that she wanted. She felt satisfied for “she had partaken of the archetypal experiences marked out for the female race” (69). Having given birth to Himanshu- a son, she did not feel inferior to anyone in society and family members are grateful to her because they felt “the family is complete at last” (68).

Like a typical Indian father, Hemant wanted Astha to take of the baby-boy. As the novel says, “the last thing he wished to bother about was taking care of a child” (70). He said that it was her job and he had nothing to do with it. He said firmly, “It’s woman’s work hire somebody to help you, or quit your job” (70). Astha was struck dumb. In the mean time, Hemant’s business prospered and he travelled to South Korea and Japan. Gradually their house started acquiring the gloss of a house with money. But such things didnot make Astha happy. She was now “virtually a single matter” (71). Due to some tension or other, Astha had a terrible headache. She had to be operated on, yet the headache returned. In the mean time, she had composed some two hundred poems. These poems talked about her experiences endlessly replayed. Her poem, “Changes” very beautifully presents her pain, longing and determination:

I would never suffer again
But no matter how many times
I leave the doorways of my soul
To let the chill light in
The darkness grows silently
To hide me in the break of day. (81)

On reading it, Hemant felt that these lines sounded bleak. He also noticed that the person behind those poems was a positive neurotic. Astha protested that the poems were not about her.

It was just then Astha came into contact with Aijaz Akhtar Khan, the founder of the Street Theatre Group. Aijaz , a muslim lecturer in history, was a good artist and he appreciated Astha’s drawings very much. Shortly, Astha heard that Aijaz Khan was engaged to Pipeelika Trivedi, a Hindu Brahmin girl living in Delhi. Pipee’s mother was horriﬁed when she learned that her daughter was marrying a Muslim. Having been a postgraduate in Economics, she joined an NGO run by three women, dealing with alternative education for slum children. Pipee had a lot of hair, it sprung up all around her head in waves and curls and frizzes. Aijaz loved it, “loved it almost as much as he loved her breasts, large and full of give” (123). They married in September 1988. No relatives were present from either side. A year later in 1989, Aijaz and the Street Theatre Group
travelled to Rajpur. Aijaz Khan and his troupe were burned alive in their van. Reading it in the newspapers, Astha wept openly. When she went to school that day, “numbly Astha put on a white saree” (140). Usually Indian women wear white when their husbands pass away. Four days later, Astha joined a massive procession was organized in Delhi to the Prime Minister’s residence to present a memorandum to him to put an end to communal orgies. Shortly Astha made a trip to Ayodhya to study the communal situation there. It was there she met Pipee for the first time. She was attracted to her hair instantly.

As a boy is attracted to a girl in the courtship period, Astha was drawn to Pipee. As both their hearts were empty at that time, it was rather easy for them to come closer. Astha sat in a daze after reaching home from Ayodhya. She couldn’t believe that she had met Pipee and had been with her for many hours. Next morning, when she packed her husband’s suitcase, she saw a condom. She stared at it for a long time. Its implications ran through her head. Astha takes a sweet revenge on her husband. In this act of vengeance, unnatural sex, little excitement, little impatience and much imagination, she has a big jerk in her mind and this cripples her married life. As Astha had a substitute husband in Pipee, she did not create any scene at all in the condom episode. Rather she thought that if her husband had an extra ‘other’ in his life, she could also have an extra ‘other’ a kind of Old Testament tit-for-tat attitude. Both Pipee and Astha seem to be aware of this hidden truth. They started meeting each other quite often. Both became very chummy friends. Pipee put her hand on Astha’s and pressed it gently. Astha blushed with pleasure. An element of secrecy entered their relationship and gave it an illicit character. Hemant caught a whiff of this extra, unusual interest in his wife’s life. But he was not unduly perturbed about it. From the behaviour of Astha and Pipee one can understand that as far as sexuality is concerned, it is not something biologically given, or transmitted by genes, rather it is a cultural construct which is learned in society due to certain circumstantial constraints. Once Pipee took to her bathroom mirror and asked her to have a close look at her figure. On her way back home in her scooter, Astha felt lost and confused. The image of the two of them in the mirror was often returning when she thought of Pipee. On another occasion, they met in Astha’s bedroom. Pipee pressed Astha’s fingers into her mouth and sucked each one gently before letting go. Astha hardly dared to breathe. That night when Hemant started his sex routine, Astha said for the first time in her married life that she did not like it. Astha’s meetings with Pipee increased. They phoned up atleast five times a day. Astha “started to fantasise about touching her, imagined her hair between her fingers, her skin beneath her own, her hand on the back of her neck” (225). As they drove the streets of Delhi in Astha’s car, “Asta leaned against Pipee with her arms around her waist” (227). As Jyotirmaya Tripathy observes elsewhere that their sexual conduct shows “that an alternative exists and that is not less enjoyable, that sexuality does not mean pulverization of the female principle, and lionization of a dominant male. It proves that sexuality is a pleasure, not a power structure” (290). Astha found a satisfaction that she did not get from her husband.

Asta thus chose an alternative form of sexual identity willingly “to destabilize the entire system of sex regulation, that undoes binary oppositions such as gay/straight” (qtd. in Stuart Sim 345). Astha, the married woman, knew pretty well that the heterocratic society distinguishes man from woman. In this binary opposed mindset, lesbians have no place and they will never be tolerated as they are seem increasingly defying the definition of man and the grammar of man-woman relationship. As Gnanamony in his Literary Polyrythms aptly observes, “Asta’s taking the stance as a lesbian is vociferously against heterosexuality, and its normativity and institutionalization. Her stance is a protest, as in the words of Jyotirmaya Tripathy, against “heterosexual master identity, its logic of domination, its demonization of other sexual practices, and its rejection of sexual diversity” (290).
As days went by, a great change came upon Astha. She was in a state of continued war with everything around her, and her self. She could never truly find peace with herself. She was fast creating a space for her as a lesbian by making Pipee her steady sweetheart. Through this process she released herself from obsession with her male partner, her husband. She was also conscious that she was a wife too. After sometime, Astha too realized that any relationship, even that between a woman and another woman, becomes demanding after a length of time. Pipee wanted Astha totally committed to her but Astha was not willing to divorce herself from her old life. Yet such a relationship could continue only between two people who are firm and strong and totally resolved to live together. Astha, however, was not a strong woman. She could never be bold enough to leave her marriage and live with Pipee. After Astha’s trip with her family to Disney world and London the relationship broke down irreparably. Pipee decided to go to America to pursue her Ph.D. and Astha returned to her old life. Astha continued her paintings and found an outlet for her pent-up rage. Through Astha, Kapur offers a frontal challenge to patriarchal thought, Manju Kapur empowers her protagonist Astha to give a strong resistance to patriarchy by denouncing the prescribed norms of a society. Through such resistance she attains psychological freedom and individual needs in her life.

Works Cited
The Westerner’s Spiritual Quest in India in Jhabvala’s A New Dominion

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Abstract
The western women provide similarities in character and situation where they are stranded as vagrants moving from their native land to India and back to their homeland. They are subjected to emotional, sensitive, and sentimental problems irrespective of the differences in race, religion, culture, and creed. Women novelists concern is to probe, and analyse, into the secret recesses of their women characters and present them in flesh and blood. Jhabvala’s A New Dominion is a continuous series of episodes, under different subheadings. Jhabvala expresses each episode in a definite form. This novel is interpreted as a variation on the theme of East-West encounter. The novel has three parts with many episodes in each part. Part one takes place in Delhi, which shows changes taking place in modern India which are harmful to the western people. The part two is located in the holy city of Banaras which exhibits the spirit of the Easterner to the westerner. The part three is in the Rajasthani town of Maupur, a symbol of purity for many characters. Thus, this paper is an elaborate discussion on the spiritual quests of the westerners in India. The whites, especially women come to India with a spiritual quest to the land which offers so much, despite the clashes between tradition and modernity, be it Sanyasis, Gurus, Saints and other godly men and their system of beliefs, faith, spiritual philosophies.

Keywords: expatriate, psychological trauma, cultural schizophrenia, spiritual, sexual moorings etc.,

The characterization of western women provides similarities in character and situation where they are stranded as vagrants moving from their native land to India and back to their homeland. The western women are subjected to emotional, sensitive, and sentimental problems irrespective of the differences in race, religion, culture, and creed. They have sexual freedom and remain strange to others to reconstruct their lives. The women writers with their sensitive perception of the human bondage tackle the situation from the perspective of the relationship between man and woman in or out of marriage which is intimate and most complex and also they handle the problems of the expatriates with their psychological trauma and cultural schizophrenia. Women novelists concern is to probe, and
Dimensions of Women in New Literatures in English

analyse, into the secret recesses of their women characters and present them in flesh and blood. The quest in the novels commences with the young protagonist’s decision to set out on a journey to India against all odds and ascertain for her the causes that made her to be a concubine under a King or a Nawab. The protagonist is a new woman full of confidence and with a matter of fact approach to life. She is constantly on the move, visiting a backward places, shrines, and houses and even uses computer as a process. Her quest ends as spiritual and sexual moorings.

The novel appears to be the collection of a number of episodes; each episode represents a new incident. Through this, the narrator wants to express her newly adopted technique of writing a novel. In this novel, Jhabvala presents a clear picture of India in various aspects of social, cultural, spiritual and political dimensions. Jhabvala’s *A New Dominion* is a continuous series of episodes, under different subheadings. Jhabvala expresses each episode in a definite form. But, *The Unfortunates*, which is also divided into twenty seven episodes, does not have subheadings, only the first episode and the last episode have headings, and the remaining have been written at random. Perhaps, the narrator has left it to the readers to frame it according to their interpretations. Through this, it is proved that Jhabvala’s way of presenting the novel has a definite purpose.

*A New Dominion* or Travelers opens with three European girls Lee, Margaret, and Evie, who try to get spiritual enlightenment under the supervision of a swami. This novel is interpreted as a variation on the theme of East-West encounter. The novel has three parts with many episodes in each part. Part one takes place in Delhi, which shows changes taking place in modern India which are harmful to the western people. The part two is located in the holy city of Banaras which exhibits the spirit of the Easterner to the westerner. The part three is in the Rajastani town of Maupur, a symbol of purity for many characters. Jhabvala describes the experiences and opinions of those Britishers and Americans Lee. Margaret and Evie in this novel, visit India in search of spiritualism and to solve their personal problems, but, their expectation come out rather badly. Jhabvala’s views about India seem to be bitter against India. Haydn. M. Williams in one of the articles writes:

> Throughout the novel there is much psychological analysis, often extremely probing and painful, displayed against a backdrop and death betrayals Hindu holiness, ritual, custom, passion, above all sexual passion, obsession and the frantic search for happiness which more often leads to the destruction of weaker personality. (67)

Besides these foreign characters, there are some Indian characters in this novel. Gopi is a young, dynamic, and handsome youth of a typical Indian. He is a useless, unemployed youth who is much enthusiastic to meet foreigners and come across a great friend Raymond and Lee. Through these characters, Jhabvala tries to narrate the relationship between the east and the west encounter in this novel. Rao Sahib and his wife Sunita belong to a royal family and represent a modern Indian society. Asha, Rao Sahib’s widowed sister, is another important character and best example of westernized Indian woman in India. Swamiji, who resides in the Ashram, is also an important character and represents the fake Swamiji in Indian society. His character appears to be repulsive and gruesome, and behaves like an animal with all animal instincts. On the other hand, there is an old lady. Banubai, who always dedicates her life to God. She lives in Banaras, and her duty is to meet visitors and admirers those who come for help. Bul Bul and Shyam are the servants of Asha. Raymond is portrayed as a foreigner and is described with a touch of satire and humour.

The foreign women characters in Jhabvala’s novels are differently portrayed in each novel. For instance, their destiny to come to India is altogether different from Lee, Margaret and Evie in *A New Dominion*. Basically, they come to India, after their marriages with Indians, find something new. Similar is the experience of Clarissa who comes to India a tourist. She feels very happy and adjusts herself to this country. But, in *A New Dominion*, Lee comes to India to find peace. Actually, she loses herself in order as she liked to put it to find herself. Not only Lee, but Margaret and Evie also come to India searching for peace as they are fed up with the mechanical life in the west.
Lee, who is the main character of this novel, travels in and out of Delhi, where she meets Gopi and Raymond. Raymond is a European who feels happy in talking with her and enjoys her company, but, Gopi an Indian feels the same but he wants something more from her. This brings out the tragedy of Lee to submit herself in order to satisfy Gopi’s desire. Again, Lee meets Margaret in the mission of Miss. Charlotte, another foreign girl having the same desires. Lee says: “she was glad to be doing this for him and, at the final moment, thought to herself that perhaps this was part of the merging she had so ardently desired while looking out of the window” (48).

Lee comes to know about a Swamiji, who resides in Banaras, speaks English and does a lot for foreign disciples. She thought to visit him, along with Margaret, hoping that they might find peace and spiritual glory. During their stay in the ashram, they meet another European girl Evie. She is a personal secretary to Swamiji, who has already received the blessings of the swami. Commenting on Gurujis, Meenakshi Mukherjee writes: “The true guru is supposed to be in a state of Jivan mukta a state in which he is free from worldly bonds and desires. Though his body still performs earthly functions, his soul has already been resurrected and is in a state of union with Param Brahma” (68). Jhabvala describes the effect of Swamiji on Indian society. Swamiji in the novel mesmerizes people through his eyes and words. He behaves like an autocrat, saying that, he knows everything about the secret of life, and wants all his disciples not only spiritually, but, physically submissive to him. In the case of Lee and Margaret the same thing happens. They are influenced by Swamiji and they do everything for the sake of self-fulfillment. Lee writes to Asha that how both of them got adjusted in the ashram. Lee also tells Asha: “...I can become the new person he wants to make me and I want so much to be...” (71). In order to become a new person. Lee enters alone into a Swamiji hut at midnight, as she thinks that Swamiji might be ignoring her arrival. But, Swamiji knows everything. He is waiting for her, wastes not even a second of his time, and takes her to bed quickly by stroking her like a cat. Lee describes: “He was the only person there...drove right on into me and through me and calling me beastly names, shouting them out loud and at the same time hurting me as much as he could...” (191).

Margaret also comes to India for the quest of spiritualism and becomes a victim to Swamiji by submitting herself. She revolts against the convention ridden English society. So she refuses to act as a bridesmaid in her sister’s betrothal and revolts at the last moment. She feels desperate and visits India to find peace and spiritualism. But, Swamiji knows how to attract western women. He discusses with the three western girls about the cook who has run away from the ashram. He tells Margaret that “under special decree she was appointed cook for the day” (114). She is not mentally prepared for such a task. Jhabvala writes:

Margaret kept on protesting for a while but it didn’t do her any good, in the end she had to go. Swamiji continued to joke with her, but she became quite still and serious and just before she went she did a funny thing: she bent down and touched his feet.... (114)

After accepting the task of Swamiji, Margaret goes to kitchen and becomes sick. Lee observes: Margaret’s condition is becoming very worse than earlier. Raymond requests her to come along with him to hospital, she does not go. Men the doctor says that she is suffering from infective hepatitis, Margaret refuses to stay at hospital: “Please don’t be worried about me. I’m all right. Truly I am. Swamiji has explained it all to me so beautifully” (166). She further adds: Doctors don’t know a thing. These diseases that people get in India, they’re not physical, they’re purely psychic, we only get them because we try to resist India—because we shot ourselves up in our little Western egos and don’t want to give ourselves. But once we learn to yield, then they just fall away. (166)

Margaret goes back to the ashram and returns after a few months, when she is nearly going to die at last; she dies in a small store room of a small hospital in Maupur. Evie obeys everything of
the sake of Swamiji. After Margaret’s death, the question arises whether she is buried or cremated. Evie says: “Becoming a Hindu not like becoming a Christian. You don’t have to take formal baptism or anything but freely assent to the Truth within you.” (235)

Besides these three girls, there is another western character, Miss Charlotte. She runs a missionary and dedicates her life to social service for more than thirty years. Residing in India, she does a number of charitable works for the welfare of the poor, Jhabvala. Through her, Jhabvala wants to show the other side of Indian society. She is neither a seeker nor a lover, but lives in India with a definite desire to serve the sick and sufferers. Haydn. M. Williams describes: “In a novel full of searchers for spiritual peace (Asha, Lee, Margaret, Evie, perhaps even Raymond in his own way), Miss Charlotte seems the only one at peace with herself, God and India. She may have obtained the goal the seekers look for in vain” (69). Raymond, comes to India as a tourist, and remains like a tourist at the end of the novel. Because, he has no definite plans, and does not know, when he will return to his native place. He meets Gopi, an Indian and admires him as his best friend. He tells Gopi: My family has always had connections with India. One of them was in Delhi in 1835, the year when William Fraser was murdered here. He was a friend of Fraser’s and wrote long letters home about the ease. We still have them. And there’s a great-uncle buried somewhere near Meerut, he was killed while he was out pig-sticking…” (11).

Jhabvala’s A New Dominion can be primarily described as the story of Lee, an English girl, who has come to India on a spiritual quest, a quest for self-realization. In fact, the west is represented by three girls Lee, Margaret and Evie. The novel deals with the dominion of India’s spirituality over the forces of western materialism. Evie, Margaret and Lee are on a spiritual quest. They come to India for different reasons and meet different fates. Evie is shown in her last phase in relation to the Swami, who heads the Ashram ten miles out of Benares. She has been appointed as note-taker and chronicler of the Swami’s dialogues and thoughts. Margaret has rebelled against the modern materialism of her family back home and has walked out of her own sister’s wedding to find solace in India. Thus, this paper is an elaborate discussions on the spiritual quests of the westerners in India. The white, especially women come to India with a spiritual quest for the land offers so much, despite the clashes between tradition and modernity, be it Sanyasis, Gurus, Saints and other godly men and their system of beliefs, faith, spiritual philosophies. The westerners have read much of them; have seen several of them in documentary movies. Their prior knowledge in this regard has given them the impetus to move towards the Indian world to experience the exposed spirituality and thereby realize their spiritual quest.

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Special Issue Editor Dr. M.P. Ganesan
Affectation and Make-Belief World in Manohar Malgonkar’s
Upper Division Love

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Abstract
The aim of the paper is to create awareness in the mind of young men and young women. They must keep aesthetic distance from the celluloid world. Watching Test matches is a time consuming activity. Watching film is a time consuming activity. Adoring any heroine is a foolish act. It is the duty of any fan to appreciate the attitude of the heroine as well as the hero. They have no right to cross the limits. Film world has a long history. The attitude of the layman is not at all changed. They have an infatuation with any actresses. They fail to discern the artificiality of the celluloid world. Manohar Malgonkar has depicted the activities of the lower division clerk in a very shrewd manner. This issue has a contemporary relevance. It is an everlasting issue it touches the raw nerve of the readers. The lower division clerk behaves in a very childish manner. He has no maturity and responsibility. His life is a fruitful lesson to all young men and young women. Imaginary world or ‘Make Belief’ world is a key issue. “a delicate skirting of the common life of India.” So the writer has scrutinized this burning issue in a detailed manner. The protagonist of this story does not learn any useful lesson from his bitter experiences. He has undergone untold suffering in the hands of Ramakant and Sunderbala. He finds it very difficult to alter his attitude. He cannot help adoring another actress named Shilamati. The indirect message of the story is “old habit dies hard”.

Keywords: infatuation, affectation, aantasy, mock love, artificiality, hollowness, childish.

Monohar Malgonkar is one of the most remarkable novelists and short story writers of modern times. He has brought to his writings, his rich experience of academic life and princely India. His Significant works are A Bend in the Ganges, Distant Drum, Beware Bombay, A Sky in Amber and Combat of Shadows. Upper Division Love is the Story of a small clerk’s infatuation with a popular film star and his subsequent disillusionment through envy and humiliation.

Manohar Malgonkar has a sense of social responsibility. He delineates the character very acutely. The aim of this paper is to point out the difference between genuine love and mock love. Real world is entirely different from celluloid world. Most of the young men and young women spoil their life in the form of watching television and watching movies. Watching movie is a time consuming activity. Common people fail to keep aesthetic distance from the celluloid world. They reckon ‘imagination’ as ‘real’ and ‘real’ as imagination.
In this story ‘Upper Division Love’ the name of the protagonist is not at all mentioned. Manohar Malgonkar deliberately avoids mentioning the name of the protagonist. The lower division clerk is not at all responsible. He happens to get chicken feed salary. He never thinks about self development and the welfare of his family. He is travelling in the ‘Imaginary World’. The lower division clerk fails to do his duty very earnestly. He behaves life malingering. Manohar Malgonkar has pointed out the stark realism in his work very sharply. He describes the activities of the lower division clerk in a very clever manner. He describes the behavior of the clerk in the form of hard boiled realism. He said

There were three photographs of her in my room and one in my wallet. I had seen every picture in which She had acted I knew all her songs to the slightest meaningful pause, and once I was so carried away by an enormous poster of her in front of the Bolero Theatre, that I gave up my place in the bus queue to be able to gaze at it longer. (Upper Division Love, p1)

The lower division clerk is a cinema buff. He always thinks about his favorite film star Sunderbala. He considers Sunderbala as ‘heart-throb’. He feels dump founded while looking at her photograph. He has moved heaven and earth in the form of collecting photographs. He is very eager to see all her pictures. He behaves like movie friend. He tends to forget his duties. He has strained every nerve to memorise her songs. He wallows in the world of imagination. He behaves like a drunkard. Drunkard has the habit of forgetting the real world. Like that the lower division clerk forgets his duty as well as his responsibility. The duty of office goers is to nurture his family. The responsibility of office goers is to maintain the financial condition very properly. He must have filial responsibility. He must think about his work always. But the lower division clerk forgets his entire responsibility.

The paper has a contemporary relevance. Watching movie and mega serial is a time consuming activity. The lower division clerk behaves like typical Indian. One should watch movie only for entertainment purpose. One should keep aesthetic distance from the celluloid world. Young girls and young boys are like screenagers. They spend a considerable amount of time in the form of watching movies. Film world is a fantasy world. It is very difficult to find stark realism in the film world. Film world is not at all real world. It is a sort of make-belief world. In the recent newspaper article one can come cross the shocking news of a person’s activity. A son thoughtlessly killed his father. His father has refused to provide him money for watching the movie. It is rather the shocking news. Manohar Malgonkar wrote this story like a seer. He has analyzed the recent trends very acutely. He feels panic stricken to watch the activities of lower middle class people. Lower middle class people polluted themselves in the form of watching movies. The situation is not at all changed today. He has depicted the recent trends of any youngster in a fairly clever manner. Most of the people live in ‘Make –Belief’ world or ‘Imaginary world’ for a long time. There is no scope for self improvement and intellectual pursuit. The purpose behind writing this paper is to create awareness in the minds of the young girls as well as young boys. They should have some social responsibility. They should have some civic sense. They must think about the welfare of their family. They should behave like good citizens as: “Oh thank you” She said and her eyebrows arched, her nose crinkled, her eyes lit up, and Her teeth flashed. For a movement, the famous smile was turned on just for me.

Then it was turned off, abruptly as though it Were all controlled by a switch” (Upper Division Love, p2).

In this story, Sunderbala is the favorite film star. She is in her “Hey-days” She makes all the youngsters sleepless. Her smile, love and concern are not real. There is a vast difference between affection and affectation. Affection is real. Affectation is not real. There is a vast difference between genuine love and mock love. Sunderbala smiled at the lower division clerk. It reveals her
affectation. It is not at affection. Mother’s selfless love is affection. Brother’s concern is affection. Wife’s fret reveals her affection indirectly. But the smile of the heroine is not at all a replica of affection. The lower division clerk fails to discern this. He becomes the victim of “Make Belief” world or “Imaginary world”. The lower division clerk and Sunderbala shacked up together only in the imaginary world. Without having any decency, he goes on describing her teeth, her eyes, her nose, her smile etc. The smile of Sunderbala is quite artificial. It is not quite artificial. It is not at all real. It reveals her acting and mock love. The lower division clerk has the prospect of sitting with her cheek by jowl only in the imaginary world. He never thinks about his self development. Sunderbala can a mass wealth in the form of smiling, gazing, mock loving etc. She has the capacity to convert all her gesticulations into money. But the lower division clerk is a fool. He has no commonsense to realize either the ‘Make Belief’ world or affectionation. In this story, Manoharr Malgonkar has introduced one another character. His name is Ramakant. He has the capacity to do all the incredible things or action in the form of stunt sequence of Ramakant makes the audience guffaw. They may make acerbic comments about his stunt sequence. The action sequence is not real one can apply the theory of S.T. Coleridge while watching any film. ST Coleridge, the prominent poet of the romantic period has advocated the theory named “Willing suspension of Disbelief Theory”. All the heroes of celluloid world have to think about this particular theory. The film world is an imaginary world. They happen to project all incredible things in the film. It does not happen in the real world. But the lower division clerk has no such commonsense to apply this theory named “Willing Suspense of disbelief Theory”. Ramakant has the privilege to make either ‘mock love’ or ‘genuine love’ to any heroines. He can play with the emotions of the heroines. He can apply any dirty tricks to seduce any heroines. Sunderbala has an emotional attachment with Ramakant. Sunderbala is a real hypersensitive heroine in the story “Upper Division Love”, she feels intemperate very often. She relishes the bill and cooing of Ramakant. She does not feel repulsive towards the touch of Ramakant. She smiled at Ramakant for time being. She can sever ties with Ramakant under any circumstances. Even her emotional attachment of Sunderbala does not have an everlasting value. It discloses her affectation but not affection. There is no scope for permanent relationship in the celluloid world. There is no scope for platonic love in the film world. The film world is either ‘Make Belief” or the world of ‘affection’. The lower division clerk does not go to office regularly. He is behaving like the truant. He behaves like thick skinned fellow. He applies for ‘French leave’ very often. He is a real malingering in that office. He shirks from responsibility. But he can pick holes in the attitude of superintendent. Manohar Malgonkar in the story ‘Lower Division Love’ has described the attitude of lower division clerk very beautifully. “From the studio I rang up my office and told the superintendent. That I had fever and a bad pain in the stomach, and the Doctor had advised me ten day’s rest” (Upper Division Love, p4).

The behavior of the lower division clerk is childish. He behaves like a dull student. He is very dull in completing his work. He does his work in a very slipshod manner. He is a movie friend. At the same time he wastes his time brutally in the form of watching test matches. He has no productive time. He wastes his time callously. He has no awareness about the proverb “Time is Gold” or “A stitch in time saves none”. He has avoided his responsibility deliberately. He cannot do his clerical work out of passion. He does his work very indifferently. He is not at all responsible. Most of the office goers think about the prospect of promotion. They want to leapfrog their position. They never give room for laziness. They are always duty conscious. The lower division clerk is basically a lumpen. He is the spoilt child. He thinks about the film world. He thinks about test matches. He never thinks about his promotion. He never thinks about getting higher perks. Watching movies is not at all his habit. It is his weakness. He gives undue attachment

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towards the film world. He finds it very difficult to avoid both things namely watching test matches or admiring actress. He comes across a series of dramatic events. It leads the ‘lower division’ clerks to the realization not only of the utter futility of his passion, but also the artificiality and hollowness of the “upper division” film world. This does not deter him. He never changes his attitude even at the end of the story. He is the perfect example to prove the famous proverb “Old habit dies hard”. Manohar Malgonkar has made the sarcastic remarks on lower division clerk. He describes: “I have only just discovered that she (Shilamati) works in the Ajaib film company which has its studio behind the Botanical Gardens, right on my way to the office” (Upper Division Love p14)

In the beginning, the lower division clerk gazed at Sunderbala, a film star. In the end, he gazed at Shilamati another film star. So he cannot help adoring one actress or the other. He finds it very difficult to change his nature. There are more than millions of people living like him. He is a real specimen in the million. This issue has a universal appeal. This issue is everlasting. Even today one can see a lot of youngsters are powering several liters of milk on the banner. They prostrate themselves in front of their favorite actor. This activity still sustains in this contemporary world. Manohar Malgonkar has an astute sense to scrutinize the recent or common attitude of the people through the character of Sunderbala, Ramakant and the lower division clerk. M.K.Naik observes “even when he deals with situations of strong social import in stories like Bondage and ‘Two Red Roosters, Malgorikar seems to be more interested in the surprise ending than in the social problems involved.

Works Cited
Sex and Infidelity in Manju Kapur’s *Immigrant*

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**Abstract**

Manju Kapur presents vagrant in woman married life. The novel *Immigrant* illustrate woman ruined by marriage, sex, immigration and infidelity. In Nina’s case, it is her husband’s Ananda’s, pre-ejaculation that makes Nina go after Anton. Woman is not satisfied in her marital life. The sex is an important aspect of life. The female protagonist, Nina, is bent upon in outmaneuvering the male counterpart. This paper represents the modem and revolutionary woman of new generation in quest for definite identity of her own.

**Keywords:** immigration, migration, infidelity, sexual consummation, unfulfilled sex.

Manju Kapur presents vagrant in woman married life. The novel *Immigrant* illustrate woman ruined by marriage, sex, immigration and infidelity. In Nina’s case, it is her husband’s Ananda’s, pre-ejaculation that makes Nina go after Anton. Woman is not satisfied in her marital life. She falls away from the expected roles and seize to be satisfied woman. She cross the boundaries and are tormented in her life struggle. The novel differs from all, as it has two locales one India and another Canada, and shuttles between these two. Its central character, Nina, is not only like Pipeelika of Woman, a Miranda House graduate but a teacher at that college and her Canadian destination, Halifax in Nova Scotia, is a location where Kapur has lived and studied.

The novel/story begins with the unmarried state of the thirty-year-old Nina, living with her widowed mother in a cramped Delhi apartment. Under the maternal pressure, she accepts a semi-arranged marriage with Ananda, an NRI dentist in Halifax, abandons her teaching career and moves to Canada. To her, the double process of adaptation to her husband and Canada is along one with pain and struggle. Nina joins a feminist group and spreads Simone de Beauvoir and Germaine Greer. Meanwhile, Ananda suffers from medical problems related to sex and seeks an alternative therapy in California. The therapy succeeds but the outcome is not to strengthen the marriage but to undermine it.

The story of the main character Nina’s first night is one of disappointment as it reveals his dysfunction shattering her idea of a long and prolonged experience of sexual consummation. Though hurt with unfulfilled sex, she tries to suppress it with a positive...
thought of togetherness in the true-spirit of marriage. Night after night, the experience continued to be the same with no fulfillment, leading to added frustration and loneliness. Though she has tried to fill her days with other activities such as going to the library and drowning whatever book that came her way, that cannot replace her physical and emotional fulfillment in marriage. When she suggests having sex frequently, Ananda takes it as her way of accusing him of his sexual dysfunction. Kapur writes: “For years and years Nina had masturbated, hoping the day would come when a loving partner would circumvent the furtive dissatisfied feeling this left her with [...] Guilt ridden, she would promise herself, this is the last time, but her restlessness made this impossible.” (181)

When Nina attempted to be close to him he brushed her aside expressing his tiredness. This prompted her to close herself in the toilet to engage in her own self-satisfaction. Nina seeks her own psychological satisfaction leading to more and more frustration. “In the beginning she had construed their problems to lie to their unfamiliarity to each other, even her body told her this in an itching which subsequently disappeared. His needs were obviously different and she didn’t want to impose, hesitant about putting him off. If only she were in India, with more difficulties in her daily life...with more obligations.” (181-82) She tried her best to educate herself to improve her sexual relationship with Ananda and to save their marriage. She read with fascination “quizzes about performance, seduction, techniques, adventure, libido, fantasy, daring, communication skills, verbal and physical etc.” (182) All her readings led to need for mutuality as desires, fantasies and feelings to be shared. She openly shared her thoughts on improving their sexual relationship as he is unable to sustain himself due to premature ejaculation. She is frustrated as she points to the problem as the cause of her not conceiving.

Certainly Ananda decided to go on his own way as his problem made him hate Nina. His negative reaction to her suggestion to consult a therapist, disrupted their mutual trust and communication. After a few weeks, she sounded very positive when he spoke of a dental conference at San Diego. She was excited to go with him, but was put off when he decided to go alone. When he was gone Nina spent her days in more solitude. It was a secret trip he made to solve his sexual problem. “All his adult life he had been alone with this problem; it was the background to everything. For years he had felt abnormal, with a hidden disfigurement.” (190) He was determined to undergo two weeks of therapy at Dr. Hanes’s clinic to get his problem settled. But he kept the plan a secret. In the course of the sessions, he was given a surrogate named Marty in the absence of Nina to assist him with the experiments. She taught him to take focus on his sensations. The treatment consisted of daily two hourly sessions with Marty, mostly in bed with her to get him sustain his excitement, followed by counselling sessions. It was odd for him to play that sort of sex with a surrogate, but he had no other choice to make improvement in his premature ejaculation. Marty, being a professional sex therapist was keen on performing her tasks with precision, to get the best results for Ananda. She kept reminding him to focus on what goes on in his head in the course of the session. She taught him breathing exercises to reduce tension. He was surprised that one week into the therapy had not led him to having sex with Marty and he was learning things he could use in his relationship with Nina. Only his fear was how to tell Nina where he learnt all the new techniques. Marty reassured him if his wife really loved him, she would be glad he learnt the techniques from her.

Unfortunately, Nina was offered a part time job at the library; she found it an escape from her frustration. Kapur reveals Nina’s thoughts very vividly: “I come almost every day; this is my home away from home. I used to teach literature in India, now I am getting to know Canadian authors... and I would love to unite my knowledge of books with more practical experience.” (205) She was excited, but was not sure how Ananda would take the news. While unpacking his suitcase, she found several books on sex. She began to ponder on his secret way of going for sex therapy with the excuse of the conference. She wondered what kind of a therapy he had with a surrogate. She
was no fool and concluded that he had sex daily with someone else in the garb of a surrogate. Her thoughts flickered on why he resisted couple therapy at St. Louis instead preferred it with a surrogate in California. She should have known about it and the decision should have been hers. She could be glad that he has better staying power and the matter could end there without further questions. When he returned home that day he was beaming with joy as though he had missed her the whole day. Throwing off his coat he embraced her. She was eager to know about his sessions with the sex therapist. He was quick to retort and say that it was only a professional relationship. But she equated sex therapy to prostitution and made him feel very frustrated. The heated argument left them apart that night. The following day Nina tried to employ the technique he had taught her and told him. “Above all I want us to have a solid relationship, with us sharing everything. You are all I have in this country, you are the reason I am here.” (211)

The need of hour, Ananda sought sexual fulfillment with his office clerk Mandy. He drove to her apartment at Clayton Park on a Saturday, where no one knew him. Finding the adulterous relationship growing stronger day by day, he decided never to give it up. The immediate impact was shown in his indifference to Nina. Though his visits to Mandy were exciting, she billed him for every minute he spent with her. His experiences with Mandy and Nina were totally different. “Mandy encouraged him to be wild, free, uninhibited, and playful. With Nina he was his mother’s son, his sister’s brother, the good husband, playing out a role he had been trained for since childhood. Nine years in Canada had not dimmed the need to be this person.” (242) He was a split personality in his seeking fulfillment in his sexual explorations. Nina busied herself with her admission to the Library School. She was no more the solitary housewife of earlier times, depending for everything on her husband. “She was following the path her husband had trodden when he came here all those years ago, getting a degree that would affect the makeover of her Canadian identity. Two years was a small price to pay for such a metamorphosis, said Ananda.” (247)

Nina met Anton in the school, a young Russian, married to a girl from West Indies. Finding Nina very warm and intelligent, he began to be close to her. Since both of them being married, he spoke in terms of platonic relationships between them like others in Canada. When a field trip was arranged for Nina to go to Ottawa, Ananda was very glad so that he could continue his clandestine affair with Mandy. When Mandy suspected that his wife would perhaps find a partner during the field trip, he was sure his wife would never do that. That was almost the breaking point in the relationship between Mandy and Ananda as she presumed herself to be the foremost in his life. He even told Mandy that he would die without her as she was considered his saviour. Though apparently all his desires were fulfilled after marriage, everything seemed to drill away. The only place where he felt fully himself was at his work, peering into people’s mouth, which gave him recognition and “he thought of the empty spaces marriage had filled, the comfort of routine, and the daily companionship. It was marriage too, that had given him Mandy; in his mind his wife and his mistress was inextricably linked.” (254) While in a restaurant on the last day of the trip, Nina sat next to Anton having a cigarette and had a couple of beers. Being impressed by his intelligent comments and jokes, she ignored his occasional touches and strokes. During the course of the conversation, he shared his perception of love and intimacy. “I’m married too. But it’s stupid to confine yourself to one person for your whole life. What about adventure, what about experiencing differences? Nobody owns anybody, you know.” (261) They held each other as they moved towards their hotel. She went with him to his room. In her loneliness, he overpowered her, and she found herself offering him everything. She begged him to stop, but finally collapsed into each other. She had her own justifications: “That she liked. She had lived. Who can feel guilty about living? Judging from the evidence, and the sexual therapy centres, every citizen in North America regarded good sex as their inalienable right, it was her right too.” (263) She had a new perception of herself,
a sense of her own self, autonomous and independent from others. She did not feel guilty about her sexual adventures: “Her first lover had taken her virginity and her hopes, her second lover had been her husband, her third had made her international.” (264) Their relationship being like an illusion, Anton kept away from Nina for a few days. But that made her suffer as they mutually desired each other. That was the beginning of her doing away with all taboos and traditions. She felt her beliefs were false.

During vacation, Anton would be going to New York, and she would miss him as she would be going to Delhi. When she returned after two months, Ananda was full of conversation. She felt pity for him and mused: “he must have missed talking when I wasn’t here, poor man... Everybody needs someone, and fate has joined us together.” (296) She felt guilty when he showed great pleasure in having her return home. She decided to devote herself to him, but felt it impossible to cross the barrier between them. Lightly, she asked if he had any affairs in her absence. The probing question put him off guard. They tried to enjoy each other’s company. But Nina was determined with her obsession to have a child. In her mid thirties she felt insecure about a future with no children. In Canada she needed a broader base to rest on. She needed something more than Ananda in the home front after her profession was taken care of. Unlike in India, in Canada “it was all man-woman relationship-love-fulfillment.” (299) The passionate expression of love from him left her dissatisfied as he refused to address the issue of having children.

Nina found joy in her library programme and was glad to undertake a field trip to New York. She took it a opportunity to continue with her relationship with Anton. Both Ananda and Nina were glad as they could both go their own ways. In course of a dinner out in a restaurant, Anton told her that their relationship had to remain purely on friendship basis. While returning together to her room in the International Student House, he asked her for a romantic evening with her. When she understood his sinister design she resisted his advances.

Back in Library School, Anton made efforts to apologise, but she ignored him. She couldn’t go on like that for long and thought of bringing the matter to the women’s group. But that would invite police investigation and case. Hence, she came to her own female conclusions: “Been foolish enough to be unaware of the links between former desires and present danger?” (316) When sex with her husband became difficult, one day she thought of giving a cooked up account of her trip. She said she was attacked by a man while on the street at night to snatch her chain. When Ananda questioned her why she had not reported it to him and the authorities, she began to weep. Nina’s inner state of mind is contrasted with the setting of winter with its snow and icy wind as she wished to “escape into the purity of the landscape and be separated from her thoughts forever.” (318) As the weather became warmer and green shoots propped up, she had green and fresh hopeful thoughts of a job of her own. As she entertained her prospective hope of happiness, news arrived of her mother’s sudden death. Ananda arranged her to reach New Delhi the following day, enabling her to take her mother’s ashes to be immersed in the Ganges at Rishikesh. With her mother gone, there was no one to call her own. She had no one’s expectations to be met any more as her marriage bond meant nothing. “Her life was now completely her own responsibility, she could blame no one, turn to no one. She felt adult and bereft at the same time.” (326)

Nina returned to Halifax, Ananda expressed his usual feelings of missing her all the while. The following morning, while making bed she noticed a wavy blond hair next to her pillow. Many things became clear to her as she sat with it on her bed: “The hair explained much the distance, the silence, the ticket for two months in India, his strange indifference interspersed with tenderness, the shifty look that skittered about her. She didn’t blame him. His body spoke when his tongue could not.” (327-28) She took the hair and taped it to the accounts notebook. She understood that marriage was based on more than one person’s lies. Any exposure would only cause ruin and grief.
After mother’s death, Ananda was her only anchor in the world in her loneliness. But all her hopes got shattered with the golden hair as it proved Ananda’s adventures with white women. She had no other option but to go to the Library School. Anton made it a point to express his great regret for what happened, when she expressed her disgust for him, he pleaded forgiveness and absolution from her. She decided never to forgive him so that the crime would continue to wound him. It was a small victory for her. She wanted to encounter Ananda with evidences of his infidelity. But that would mean her own infidelity. They had to examine the core issue why they had betrayed each other. Ananda continued to sympathise with her mother’s loss and comforted that things would change with a job. But she continued to be moody and stubborn behaving like a deprived immigrant. He tried his best to change her ways, but Nina continued to be his opposite even when he philosophised saying, “Life was what you make of it. You could look at a glass and call it half full or half empty. You could look out of the window and see the sky or stare at the mud.” (330) Nina understood his comparisons and the argument and counter argument continue to taunt them. She accused him of being a drifter having no purpose in life, and seeing nothing beyond the material. He countered her saying Canada offered him everything in life, unlike her living in an unreal world. Her mind was made up: “She could not be happy living on the surface where he floated. For her that was not living at all.” (331) But she was helpless in a foreign land without the security of her husband.

Finally, Ananda was a man under stress, considering himself unlike other immigrant Indians he knew. They all had a notion of home and family which they recreated in Canada. For him marriage was the only opportunity left for him to rebuild himself. But after marriage everything changed “his mind, his heart, his penis ... It was not her fault. It was the situation.” (332) Nina had to enjoy every breath of air despite her stress as “her own regeneration was not inevitable as the revolving earth and the tilt of its axis.” (332) She applied for jobs everywhere, except in Halifax as she needed a change to think over her life. She made it clear to Ananda that she wanted to be away from him to be independent. “She was travelling away from Halifax, deliberately pulling at the bonds that held her. She too was heading towards fresh territories, a different set of circumstances, a floating resident of the western world. When one was reinventing oneself, anywhere could be home. Pull up your shallow roots and move. Find a new place, new friends, and a new family. It had been possible once, it would be possible again.” (333-34)

In this novel, the main story of a middle-class is globalised migrant in Canada, who’s spatial and sequential identities are in a status of unvarying fluctuation as their lives become part of a challenge between different cultural perspectives. Kapur shows the dilemma of a middle-class migrant who are observed with a yearning of professional utopias and prosperous living and lifestyle and who willingly dispose themselves of from their homeland to assert a new identity. As the title indicates, Nina and Ananda’s experiences are shaped by at least two major institutional and cultural apparatuses; India and Canada. The narrative concentrates more on Nina than on Ananda. It opens with Nina who lives with her widowed mother in a shabby flat at Jangpura in Delhi. She feels frustrated with the impoverished life she is leading. Nina’s frustration arises more from her realization that the prospect of marriage and having a home of her own is going bleaker as she is on the verge of her thirtieth birthday. Besides, the bitter memory of her abortive affair with Rahul, a professor ten years older than her, who betrayed her even though she had had sexual consummation with him, haunts her and wounds her.

The sex is an important aspect of life. The female protagonist, Nina, is bent upon outmaneuvering the male counterpart. Nina has had sex with the boy friend Rahul. After marriage, she finds her husband sexually dysfunctional. Kapur visualizes: “The bridal night. Now that the moment was close, Nina felt shy. Ananda closed the door and grabbed her. His hands leapt all over, under her
Dimensions of Women in New Literatures in English

blouse, her petticoats; they forced her on the bed to enable an even speedier exploration of her body. Startled, she tried to slow him down, but in five minutes he had come, five minutes and he had not even entered her. The rest was done with his hands, but that was stuff she could have done on her own. Ananda disappeared into the bathroom. Nina had imagined a very different consummation. As she lay in bed she tried to transform reality into a scenario that would not confuse or upset her. Togetherness was the important thing. To be critical of how it was achieved was again the spirit of marriage. Involuntarily comparisons arose. Rahul, with his obsessive talk of sex, endlessly curious about what she felt in what position, this technique versus that. So much so that at time she felt objectified. At his desire to penetrate from behind she had been outraged, what did he think she was? His little virgin, he replied, who needed to be educated so they could feel as much pleasure as possible. That was what love was all about.” (89-90) After finding her husband sexually incompetent, she thinks of her independent career. However, Nina and Ananda both want to join the bandwagon of liberal sex. Nina gets a white parter Anton and Ananda gets a white female body of Mandy. Both desire each other.

Thus the novel, Nina represents the modern and revolutionary woman of new generation in quest for definite identity of her own. She shows an inclination towards assimilation and acceptance in the alien land. Nina’s embodied identity is in a flux. It is inclined towards the land of living. There is no nostalgia of the past and rootlessness at the place of migration, a clinging to the old identity and a resistance to making a transition. The end of the novel finds Nina moving away from Ananda, uncertain of what the future will bring but nevertheless confident in her decision to leave. It is due to both Ananda’s and Nina’s infidelity.

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Crisis of African Entity in Chinua Achebe’s *Arrow of God*

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Abstract

African culture despite its richness degraded for centuries by the western hands got a fresh uplift through the writings of some important post-colonial writers. This article is a study of various measures adopted by west for the colonial subjugation and how some African writers resisted this through their writings. These writers projected the enormous rituals as a part of Africa and the trauma faced by Africans during colonialism. *Arrow of God* is a study of dilemma in Ezeulu’s mind during changed social order in Africa. This work is a projection of various rituals and traditions as the very essence of African entity. The article also analyzes the western notion of hegemony, how it worked against the colonized and how it forced the natives to throw away their own culture.

Keywords: hegemony, subjugation, entity, ethnicity, intellects, marginalization.

African culture which is rich in traditional values and culture has made us aware of the literary world by the writings of Chinua Achebe. The first step in this attempt is *Things Fall Apart* (1958). It is about the collapsing of world order felt by the protagonist as a result of foreign influence. The next one is *Arrow of God* (1964). It is a psychological study about a leader’s mind which is deeply involved in Igbo traditional entity. Achebe who is a veteran in showing the minute details of Igbo society, does not disappoint the readers of *Arrow of God* (1964). Achebe here shows identity crisis of Ezeulu who is a priest. This crisis is actually, an inner conflict in Ezeulu’s mind whether his culture would survive in the colonial occupation. The novel is also a redefining of powers and roles of a priest whose relation with people gradually changed due to foreign influence. The metaphor of mask in the novel is used to justify Ezeulu’s decision to send his son to colonial school. But in reality the mask shows his dual personality. On one side he hides his own self. And on the other side, he tries to fix his authority on his people in the wake of changed social power equations.

The novel is really a struggle of a common man, a priest and a father, to sustain in his religion and tradition. He has felt like the power of Ulu is questioned who is not able to save his people from white man. In dream he has seen that some people spit on his face and call him the priest of a dead god. Ezeulu is not ready to accept the new social order in which his Ulu has no role. His mind is wandering...
with the present state of disorder. Ezeulu is also irritated that his religious doctrines and priestly
hood are in the point of a threat. At the beginning of the novel strife happens on a piece of land.
This conflict gradually becomes a question of authority and a weapon in the hand of foreigners to
establish their authority and religion.

The novel intrigues into the faith of one person and his efforts to assert its importance. For
Ezeulu, Ulu is the supreme truth in this world. So when all others in the village started to question
the tradition and the age old Gods, the chief priest remained unmoved in his faith. But the colonial
powers made such a trick that the belief and authority all are questioned through other natives like
Nwaka. Here most importantly, the colonists attempt to question the African authority in African
terms. They have exercised their power only through African converts and not directly with white
people. It is the age old white attempt to control the Orient mind through English language and
religion which Ezeulu tried to provoke.

A close connection is observed between the writings of Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Fanon, Edward
Said and Achebe that the method of oppression of the colonized is through linguistic domination.
The colonizer is well aware of the fact that only through their language, they can have control
over colonised people. Here Chinua like Thiongo expresses his concern over Semiotics. The
interpretations of Igbo culture made by foreigners are far different from actuality. This confusion
gradually resulted in confusion of life for African people. The important attempt of Achbe through
this novel is not to express a world of derailed order. But conveys how rich and unique Igbo
tradition is made value less by its own people. Through this white were able to question the very
existence of an age old tradition. They also tried to give their own meaning to the Igbo signs.

Though westerners succeeded in their socio cultural oppression, they faced strong resistance
from Africa itself. The writers who initiated an intellectual protest in western language were Fanon,
Edward Said, Chinua Achebe, Thiongo etc. Thiongo has made an exception by writing in his
own Gikuyu language. He considers it as a protest and felt that African literature can survive
only through regional language. But the most striking aspect is their reluctance to involve with
those African intellectuals that after English education started writing in terms with Western interests.
Such pseudo African writers showed in their writings the enormous African ritual and traditions
as a cause of African backwardness. But on the other hand Chinua and Thiongo projected this as
the essence of Africa. Okonkwo and Ezeulu are the paramount declaration of African ethnicity.
The psychological confusion faced by both the characters show the trauma faced by each African
during imperialism.

In the words of Simon Gikandi, Arrow of God (1964) represents a struggle of power and authority
between Africa and colonial tradition. The figure of dancing mask shows the various interpretation
of Igbo aesthetic. He opines that Arrow of God shows the relationship between tradition and change.
In Gikandi’s work ‘Reading Chinua Achebe’ (1991) he says that many tensions in Umuaro can be
related to one simple question:

“where do the allegiances of different characters and social groups lie when important ritual acts
cannot guarantee security and continuity?” (53). Here the metaphor of mask is used to show the
intensity of tension between tradition and transformation. Similarly Arrow of God shows a tug- of-
war in the consciousness of Africans as experienced by Derek Walcott. Here Derek also pictures
in his work A Far Cry from Africa (1962) a sense of disorientation and homelessness. Both Derek
and Chinua feel that home lies in any direction away from the region. Both the works show a sense
of insecurity which Derek writes in “A Far Cry from Africa. I who am poisoned with the blood of
both. Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?” (6)

According to Chinweizu, an eminent Nigerian critic, African literature has an autonomous entity
and so its models and norms are unique. Those are related to Africa must be different from Europe.
But, the West failed to understand this uniqueness. An important acknowledgement in this respect is Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). Here he says that “blackness” is a western constructed synonym for unprivileged, poverty, backwardness etc. He came to such a conclusion from his experiences as a psychiatrist. He has noticed the treatment of North African patients by French doctors during Algerian war of independence. Those who have come with physical ailments are considered as psychologically affected. Here the patient fails to understand the questions of doctors and they do not ask the right questions. Fanon feels that the colonized experience and language are denied. This results in their marginalization and subjugation.

The emotional sensitivity of the native is kept on the surface of his skin like an open sore which flinches from the caustic agent: and the psyche shrinks back, obliterates itself and finds outlet in muscular demonstrations which have caused certain wise men to say that the native is a hysterical type. (15)

Another important writer in the post colonial resistance is Edward Said. The most important work of Said is *Orientalism* (1978). This book describes the western notion of Orient or East (people of Asia and Africa) as inferior. The western sponsored scholars who study the languages of the orient did not consider them as subject but as an unchanging, uniform and peculiar object. In Said’s opinion this is “the Orientalist hegemonic attitude” and condemns it. He has given many analyses in this topic like his comments on Mansfield Park and Heart of Darkness. Said set more examples for this lowering of orient culture. For example Disraeli wrote during his trip to Cairo that his eyes and mind yet ache with grandeur so little in unison with our own likeness. Such Orientalist attitude is revealed in the works of Goethe, Hugo, Scott, Byron, George Eliot etc. The success of Orientalism depended upon the success of imperialism and colonialism. But in the twentieth century this concept faced and facing a threat in the wake of the uprising of post-colonial orient.

As above mentioned west pictured all those which are beyond their understanding as inferior. This contrast is evident from an attempt to kill the Royal Python in the novel. The old priest Ezeulu at first decided to send his sons to missionary school and he sent his son Oduche there. There he by the influence of John Goodcountry decided to kill a python which is considered sacred by the Africans. Here we see the deliberate attack on African culture and they are taught that if they have to remain as Christians they must kill Python.

Ezeulu’s son is brainwashed to kill a sacred python to get rid of the disturbance made by it. Python is actually there always in his hut without making any problem to anyone. In fact it is the act of the boy that has resulted in the argument between Ezeulu and one of a messenger sent by Ediemili. Ezeulu is actually very much annoyed by his son’s act. He knows that it is against their culture. Ezeulu has sent his son to church in the expectation that it would make his son fit for this new and changing world- “The world is like a Mask dancing. If you want to see it well you do not stand in one place. My spirit tells me that those who do not befriend the white man today will be saying had we known tomorrow.” (46).

Here we see the fascination of Africans towards English and English culture. Oduche who is at first reluctant to go to church gradually inspired by Blackett, a West Indian missionary. He is considered more knowledgeable than whites. Another teacher called John Goodcountry comes there and he is the best example for planned attack on orient culture. John Goodcountry tells converts of Umaro about the early Christians who have fought against bad customs of their people and how they destroyed shrines. Those who destroyed traditional signs are given martyrdom. John Goodcountry said “you must be ready to kill the python as the people of the rivers killed the iguana. You address the python as Father. It is nothing but a snake, the snake that deceived out first mother, Eve” (38).
Arrow of God is thus an excellent effort to show how colonial interest plans their attack on colonies. How African entity is thrashed and how it became priceless before its own people.

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The Plight of Indian Women in Chithra Banerjee Divakaruni’s The Bats and Clothes

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Abstract
This paper focuses on Divakaruni’s depiction of women characters in the selected short stories in the book Arranged Marriage (1995). The stories taken into account are The Bats and Clothes. Divakaruni deals with a variety of themes related to women. These include arranged marriages, domestic violence, bride viewing, longing to become parents, responsibility of educated women, burden of an extended family, life abroad and many more. The women characters of Divakaruni are very varied. The protagonists of Divakaruni are sometimes educated and sometimes illiterate; sometimes assertive and sometimes very submissive.

Keywords: Exploitation, Restriction, Autonomous, Domestic Violence.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one of the female writers. She depicts through her works, the condition of women in the society. Divakaruni was born in Kolkatta in India in the year 1956. Currently she lives in Texas and she is a co-founder and former president of Maitri, a helpline founded in 1991 for South Asian Women dealing with domestic abuse. She has written numerous short stories, novels, and poetry. Her first collection of short stories Arranged Marriage won an American Book Award, a PEN Josephine Miles Award, and a Bay Area Book Reviewer’s Award. Arranged Marriage is a collection of eleven stories, which are diverse in theme, characters and narration, yet bound together by the common thread of marriage.

Men become self-proclaimed protectors of women in the form of father, brother, husband and son. And then began the exploitation. Women have been exploited and ill-treated by their own protectors throughout the world. In every society of the world, women have been considered secondary in position. They have been made to live under severe restrictions. Their lives have never been theirs. Women in the Indian society are forced by men to accept the status of an inferior. In order to gain equality and to realize their human potential, women must become autonomous. They must take their position strong in society by attaining education and at the same time they must raise their voice against any kind of exploitation.

The first story in the book Arranged Marriage is “The Bats”. The story is an account of a married woman who constantly suffers
beating at the hands of her husband but never fights back. The beating is disclosed to us by the narrator and the daughter of the woman. The daughter comes to know of the beating that her mother is suffered through the “yellow blotch with its edges turning purple” (2) and through another mark on her face “even bigger and reddish-blue” (3). The heart rending depiction of the plight that is presented by Divakaruni in “The Bats” leaves the readers gasping for breath. The first sentence of the story tells the whole story: “That year Mother cried a lot nights. Or maybe she had always cried, and that was the first year I was old enough to notice” (1).

Wife-beating has been a very rampant practice in the world and India is no exception. Many men show their valor through this practice as if beating a woman makes them more manly.

The mother does take a brave step and leaves, while the husband is asleep, along with the daughter to one of her uncle’s house. The uncle’s place is very tiny, “almost a play house, with mud walls and straw on the roof like in my storybook pictures”(6). The life for the narrator there is very eventful and joyful. She doesn’t like to see the mother crying night after night and no bruises anymore. But the compulsion of the societal norms are so strong that the mother is compelled to inform by herself their whereabouts to the husband. The husband commits not to repeat the torture and urges them to come back home. The joyful life of the narrator comes to an end abruptly and she is back to her father’s home in no time. But the mother faces the same fate. The mother and the daughter have to leave like this many times but always they have to come back.

The comparison with the ‘bats’ is indeed very appealing. The bats keep coming back to spoil the mangoes. Grandpa-Uncle tries everything “sticks and drums and magic powder from the wise woman in the next village” (8), but nothing seems to work. Finally, grandpa-uncle has to use poison. What are the compulsions that make bats keep coming back to the mango orchard? Even after being poisoned, some of them keep coming. The mother and the daughter are beaten day after day. They leave the house; but come back again. The compulsion in this case is the society that does not allow a woman to live away from her husband. The woman has to adjust her husband. If she revolts, she is immortal.

The second story, “Clothes”, is basically about the unfilled promises of the marital bond. Sumita has a number of dreams, just like any other young girl would have. The dream that her handsome prince: “would take her to his kingdom beyond the seven seas” (18). Somesh Sen, her would be husband, lives in the US and she will have to go with her husband after marriage because, “a married woman belongs to her husband, her in-laws” (19). Somesh is a kind husband and encourages Sumitha to get a degree in teaching. Sumita is gratified with the fact that Somesh has such confidence in her. She dreams and pictures herself “in front of a classroom of girls with blond pigtails and blue uniforms, like a scene out of an English movie”(27). But her dreams are shattered when Somesh is killed by a burglar in his store ‘7-Eleven’. So the promises of the marital bond are not fulfilled by the turn of events.

Another very profound theme that has been highlighted in “Clothes” is of bride-viewing. Bride-viewing is a very common practice in India. Girls wear beautiful clothes, put on the make-up, and get ready to be viewed by the prospective groom. The boy comes, the girl comes with tea in the tray, the boy and the in-laws watch the girl- the way she walks, the way she has dressed up, her looks, her complexion, sometimes she is even asked to sing for the prospective groom and his family. People do not really realize the plight of the girl while she is viewed and assessed for whether she is worthy of the boy or not.

Sumita is also viewed by Somesh and his parents. She is made to wear the most beautiful sari for the day. She is prepared for viewing by her friends.

I close my eyes and smell the sweet brown odor of the ritha pulp my friends Deepali and Radha are working into my hair so it will glisten with little lights this evening. The scrub with more vigor
than usual and wash it out more carefully, because today is a special day. It is the day of my bride-viewing. (17)

Sumita is lucky enough to be chosen in the very first go. Radha, on the other hand, not that lucky. Her parents are also trying to arrange a marriage for her. “So far three families have come to see her, but no one chosen her because her skin colour is considered too dark”(19). This is a kind of materialization of women. They are seen as if they are some products the features of which are assessed and then decided whether to buy the product or not. This is the sad predicament of girls in the society depicted by Divakaruni in the story “Clothes”.

Sumita is a brave woman who cannot be mowed down by even most adverse circumstances. Her dreams have been shattered. The promises that came along with the marital bonding have been left unfulfilled. She is in a “dangerous land” (33), far away from her family. She has lost her very ‘loving’ and ‘caring’ husband and has been left all alone. But this does not make her, like many other widows, dead. She is not ready to be one of those widows” in white saris… bowing their veiled heads, serving tea to in in-laws. Doves with cutoff wings”(33). She still has vigour for life left in her. She is not ready to yield to circumstances and is determined to start the life afresh though she is aware of the approaching remonstrations. “I straighten my shoulders and stand taller, take a deep breath. Air fills me – the same air that travelled through Somesh’s lungs a little while ago” (33).

The female characters of Divakaruni are very varied. The imperfect lives of these characters are depicted in the book Arranged Marriage. The women of Divakaruni are both liberated and trapped in their struggle to create their own identity as they are under the influence of cultural changes. The women are, many a times, Indian-born US-settled, who try to strike a balance between their hereditary cultural values and modern liberal thoughts. The challenges based by these women no different from what is talked about by other female writers-domestic violence, wife-beating, bride-viewing, exploitation, etc. Some women are educated and some are not educated. But the predicament of all the women, irrespective of their educational qualifications, is the same. They are supposed to rear children and take care of the household chores. Though not every husband is bad and not all in-laws are cruel but yet women have to go through a lot of adjustments in order to make the husband and the in-laws happy. The wives might not be consulted for the decisions taken by their male counterparts but of course the decisions taken by the women must be in consultation with the husbands. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni writes: “Women in particular respond to my work because I am writing about them, women in love, in difficulties, women in relationships. I want people tolerated to my characters, to feel their joy and pain, because it will be harder to be prejudice when they meet them in real life” (qtd. in Chaturvedi 55)

Divakaruni’s female characters are rebellious and bold. They are in a pursuit of self-realization though they are absolutely aware of the potential remonstrations. They, many a times, go against the conventions of the society to register their protest. The conventions formed by the male – chauvinistic society. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni also, very vividly, puts forth the fact that whether women are educated or not; whether they belong to rich families or not; whether they go for arranged marriages or not, their fate is almost the same in the patriarchal world. They will have to fight their battles themselves and will have to get through their battles themselves and will have to get through their trials and tribulations on their own. C.J.Walia comments: “Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s book of short stories, Arranged Marriage, focuses on family-marriage matches, a century old tradition in India. These stories about Indian immigrants to the U.S show how the dislocation of immigration are making this tradition problematic” (7). Philipa Kafka credits Divakaruni as one of the diasporic
authors who “write eloquently on the issues that arise either for them or for their characters in the west” (26), and also Divakaruni writes with “Obvious compassion and full understanding of Indian women who go west” (Kafka 26).

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Self-Awakening of The Psyche in Girish Karnad’s Yayati

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Abstract
Girish Karnad is one of the most prominent Indian dramatists of contemporary Indian Drama. His plays are truly a critique of modern Indian society but his major aim is the exploitation of human relationships and psychology. What is unique about Karnad is his use of history and myth, the juxtaposition of the past and present and various innovations that he has brought into modern Indian Drama. Girish Karnad reworks on the actual myth and adds contemporary attachments with it. Karnad modifies the myth in a way to suit his own plot. And this myth was transformed to reflect the contemporary society. Hermeneutics is the study of the philosophy of understanding and interpreting. Depth or Negative hermeneutics goes below the waking consciousness. Karnad has taken the plot of the play Yayati from Adiparva myth of Mahabharata in which Yayati was cursed by Shukracharya (Devayani’s father) for his relationship with Sharmistha of premature old age. Sharmistha’s son Puru rescues Yayati from the curse. Yayati is a play on theme of responsibility but Yayati himself is not ready to shoulder his responsibility. All the characters resemble the modern race of selfish, immoral and thankless individuals who constitute the majority in contemporary society.

Keywords: myth, hermeneutics, philosophy, responsibility, psychology, immoral.

Myths are the eternal source of inspiration for creative writers. Myths are expression of the primordial images in the collective unconscious of man. In the beginning, man had certain experiences and received them in his psyche in the form of images. Since they are the images, they are called archetypes of the collective unconscious. Among the modern Indian writers Girish Karnad is one of the leading writers who have made the use of the myth in his creative works. In his article, “Indian Mythology” Professor R.N. Dandekar says: “If philosophy attempts to discover the ultimate truth, mythology must be said to represent the human effort to attain at least the penultimate truth, of which all experience is the temporal reflection…. Philosophy is often described as the foundation of religion, ritual its super-structure, and mythology as its detailed decoration. In case of Hinduism…mythology is its essential constituent factor…. Mythology represents some of the distinctive features of Hinduism,
tolerance broad sympathy, liberal outlook and dynamic assimilative and at the same time elevating power”

Girish Karnad is one of the most prominent Indian dramatists of contemporary Indian Drama. Like the other playwrights of the 1970’s namely Badal Sircar and Vijay Tendulkar, Karnad too was acutely aware of his own glorified tradition. He uses this idea of tradition as his foundation stone and history and myth as his building blocks. His plays are truly a critique of modern Indian society but his major aim is the exploitation of human relationships and psychology. What is unique about Karnad is his use of history, the juxtaposition of the past and present and various innovations that he has brought into Modern Indian Drama.

Girish Karnad has found myths a powerful vehicle to carry the complex ideas of the modern times. Besides the use of myths which enables him to link the continuity of emotions from the beginning of civilization to the present age. Girish Karnad reworks on the actual myth and adds contemporary attachments with it. Karnad modifies the myth in a way to suit his own plot. And this myth was transformed to reflect the contemporary society. Actually Karnad does not interpret the myth as in the past he modifies and questions it. In the view of the theorists of negative hermeneutics writes Prof. Nila Das in her discussion on The Fire and the Rain “the purpose of interpretation of an ancient text is not to manifest or restore the text’s past meaning in its own terms, but rather to use modern concepts to question demystify and undermine its meaning. It has the idea that an ancient text is a revelation of meaning inherited from posterity. It is a message or proclamation addressed to the audience”(26). Karnad certainly does the line of negative interpretation in his plays right from the beginning. In this paper I have tried to show on the concept of myth and how Karnad have interpreted the myth in a different way.

Hermeneutics is the study of the philosophy of understanding and interpreting. Humans interpret everything around them. There are five different types if hermeneutics. They are: Natural, Normative, Scientific, Philosophical and Depth. These five types of hermeneutics are happening all the time; they never stop. Without these we humans as we are would not exist.

Depth or Negative hermeneutics goes below the waking consciousness. It states that people want to be liberated from all forms of domination and oppression. An example is the fact that people that are not oppressed do not want to be but do not think about it until they are. Negative or depth hermeneutics is the hermeneutics of distrust or suspicion, a continuation of the enlightenment’s effort to liberate us from the dogma, error, and superstition of the past. It is called negative because of its undermining intent and is sometimes styled “depth hermeneutics” because it purports to sound beneath linguistic surfaces to the unconscious (Freud) or to the economic political conditions, the regimes of power, that control human communication.

Karnad has taken the plot of the play Yayati from Adiparva myth of Mahabharata in which Yayati was cursed by Shukracharya (Devayani’s father) for his relationship with Sharmistha of premature old age. Sharmistha’s son Puru rescues Yayati from the curse. Yayati is a play on theme of responsibility but Yayati himself is not ready to shoulder his responsibility. At last he accepts it after enjoying youth for one thousand years. In Girish Karnad’s Yayati, he accepts it after the death of Chitralekha.

Girish Karnad has given this traditional tale a new meaning and significance highly relevant in the context of life today. The symbolic themes of Yayati’s attachment to life and its pleasures as also his final renunciation are retained. In The Mahabharata, Yayati recognizes that fulfillment of desire does not diminish or finish it. In Karnad’s play, however, Yayati recognizes the horror of his own life and assumes his moral responsibility after a series of symbolic encounters.

In Yayati he realized the meaninglessness of sensual pleasures only after the death of Chitralekha. Chitralekha’s suicide opens the eyes of Yayati, who now readily owns the responsibility and returns
the youth of Puru to him and retires into the forest as a hermit. Karnad here presents two types of characters, on the one hand rejects passionate attachments to sensual pleasures to which the king is a slave, and pleads for a life of responsibilities and self-sacrifice as represented by Puru in the play. Chitralekha’s proposal to Yayati turned youth by exchange of ages to accept her may be a test to Yayati’s sensuality on the other. It may be Chitralekha’s selfishness. His words are expressive of his mind towards the end of the play, “We should wash our sins by doing penance in the forest. I have spent my youth in this city but will spend my old age in the forest” (Yayati 82).

In this play Karnad has interpreted myth in a different way. He questions it and by including new characters like Chitralekha and Swarnalatha he reveals what is there in the subconscious minds of the characters. If Shukracharya does not curse Yayati, his wish for sensual pleasures won’t be revealed. And Puru’s love for his father will be diminished. Nobody would have noticed his self-sacrifice. If Chitralekha lives, Yayati would not have realized his mistakes as well as his responsibilities. It is Sharmistha who lives with unconditional love for Yayati. She knows that he got married to Devayani and his relationships with other women as being a Kshatriya. Towards the end of the play she goes along with Yayati to the forest to the rest of her life. Devayani being possessive does not have the love and affection for Yayati which Sharmistha has more.

The play offers alternative visions of life. First of Yayati who indulges in the pleasures of the body and the authority to rule; second of Puru who believes that to sacrifice unconditionally is the way to a true living, and third of Chitralekha who wishes to live with self-esteem which requires courage to choose even death.

Here, in the case of Chitralekha, Karnad has given us an insight into a substantial new woman who would not accept oppression and sacrifice herself at any cost. Yayati advises her to retain her calm and self-control, and receive the prince back in the manner which befits an Agna Princess and Bharata Queen for the prestige of the family. Chitralekha refuses to obey her father-in-law when he orders her to follow his command as a king. She prefers to leave the kingdom and embrace death to making such a compromise in life. The king loses patience and she resolutely asks him: “You hold forth my wifely duties. What about your duty to your son? Did think twice before foisting your troubles on a pliant son?” (Yayati 62). She holds Yayati responsible for Pooru’s miserable existence and her wretched plight.

Disgusted with the situation where the father and the son carry their will live for a future of their own obsessions without an iota of consideration for her, she embraces death by drinking poison from the vial which Sharmistha had kept there for herself in revulsion against her blighted future. Sharmistha arouses the conscience of the King by reminding him of the result of his actions: “So here is the foundation of your glorious future, You Majesty. A woman dead, another gone mad and third in danger of her life. Good bye, sir” (68).

I thought there were two options- life and death. No it is living and dying we have to choose between. And you have shown me that dying can go on for all eternity. Suddenly I see myself, my animal body frozen in youth, decaying deliquescent, turning rancid. You are lying on your pyre, child, burning for life, while I sink slowly in this quagmire, my body wrinkles and gasping but unable to gasp anything. (68)

After regaining his youth Pooru feels small and hurt at the sight of Chitralekha’s dead body and repents: “We brought you here only to die…. We shall never grasp the meaning of all that you taught us” (69). At last Pooru had a moral vision of life with a sense of sacrifice and duty only by losing Chitralekha.
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The Desirability of Westerners in India in Jhabvala’s *A Backward Place*

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Abstract

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala feels the burden of English men and women living in India. India is an overpowering and overwhelming entity that drives them onwards to the inevitable choice between drowning and disaster by staying on and escape by withdrawal and flight. The Westerners are rich and prosperous. They are mobile, autonomous and self-dependent. Jhabvala’s *A Backward Place* has westerners who happened to live in India. This paper attempts to expose what sort of hold and fall the westerners living in India have got. Jhabvala finds India, with its powerful impact of social and personal milieu, has forcibly brought about a conflicting status quo for them—either to stay on or to delight in the escapade of leaving the country.

Keywords: attraction, mobile, autonomous, self-dependent, culture, history, psychology etc.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala expounds the burden of the English men and women living in India. For her view in India is an overpowering and overwhelming entity that drives them onwards to the inevitable choice between drowning and disaster by staying on and escape by withdrawal and flight of imaginations. The Westerners are rich and prosperous. They are mobile, autonomous and self-dependent. She consistently bases the conflicts that arise between Indians and westerners upon the complexities of culture, history, and psychology. Her novel *A Backward Place* has westerners who happened to live in India. Etta, Judy and Clarissa are poised at different points to undergo different emotional experiences. Their respective fates result as much from their being. Being a central European herself and being used to the affluent way of life in the west, Jhabvala personally considers India’s poverty as the most salient feature of this country.

European women come to India impelled by different purposes. Some of them are drawn by the variety of the Indian life. Others come for the better knowledge of India’s geography, art and culture. Still others come to India in search of peace of mind and soul. They are attracted by the Indian saints, whom they believe, have the power to unravel to them the mystery of life and to offer to them the light of truth. Jhabvala’s main concern is with the quest of a woman for her identity and her validity as a human being. Usually, western women are portrayed as healthier as and happier than Indian women in her...
novels. They enjoy greater social and cultural freedom. A Backward Place concerns itself with the narrator’s refracting mirror splitting the image of her into a series of contradictory selves, deconstructing in unambiguous ways which appear as an integrated authorial personality. Shahane comments on the title of the novel as:

The most significant aspect of A Backward Place which strikes me as a major dement of Jhabvala’s thought process is the dominant voice of affirmation which rings true and clear in the various chambers of its structure. Judy seems to me the central and main character in the novel who says “aye” to all the challenges that her life and experience present to her. More than Etta, more than Clarissa, Judy represents the authentic voice, the dominant note of this international orchestration in A Backward Place. (55)

It focuses on the cultural scene of Delhi in the 60’s. An admirable study of an English girl, Judy who is married to an unsuccessful Indian artist named Bal. Jhabvala skillfully narrates her own complex response to India into the varied responses of her European characters while narrating her European characters in various types of cycle of response that she believes all westerners to go through in India.

The importance of main character of this novel is Judy. She comes to India after her marriage and never faces the problem of adjustment. Now, she wears a sari, grows her hair so long and lives with Bal’s relatives without any problems. Singh describes: “Judy is far-sighted, soft-natured and understanding woman. She is mentally ready to compromise with life and help her husband to regain confidence and use his talent” (57). Etta and Clarissa are both foreigners and they play a crucial role in the novel. Etta, just like Judy, marries an Indian and comes to India at an early age. Residing in India for twenty two years, she marries three Indian boys one after the other. She dislikes India and points out India on many occasions. When we speak of Clarissa, another foreign lady, who comes to India on her own, is altogether so different. She is a good lady who develops the virtue of adjusting herself to what is given. She tells Sudhir: “Well, don’t let’s get too serious. Life is a jolly affair, so they tell me, and we have to take it with laughter, laughter all the way. Ugh” (153).

Jhabvala points out another category of foreigners through other three characters in this novel. These westerners come to India for a short life span on some specific condition. Here, we have the Hochstadts, an old German couple, living in Delhi. Dr. Hochstadts is an Economist and has come to India as a visiting Professor for a period of two years. Their attitude is quite different, mature and understandable. They maintain their western views and also appreciate the Indian art and Philosophy. They pontificate on the favourite theme of Jhabvala’s East-West differences in the following words: “How often have I thought: ...’that a serious comparative study of Indian and western spiritual achievements will widen the horizons of both the one and the other” (106).

Jhabvala not only describes the western characters, but also a few Indian characters which appear to be quite insignificant when compared to western characters. Some of the Indian characters like Bal, Judy’s husband is portrayed as a typical Indian youth. He is a graduate without any employment, but full of plans and builds castles in the air. Sudhir is Judy’s colleague who belongs to Bengali family and his great-grandfather is a famous educationist and a leader of the Brahmo Samaj Movement. His grandfather is a distinguished Professor. But, unfortunately his father is an employee in a National Library. Sudhir is a brilliant student and studied History in the University. He searched for jobs in Calcutta, Delhi, Bombay, Poona, Patna and many other places but he does not find any. As the days passed, his father died leaving his mother and two daughters. After that, he got job in a very remote district of Orissa and worked in many organizations. He took the responsibility of his two sisters’ marriage, one sister to an engineer in Jamshedpur and another sister to a doctor in Asanol. After his mother’s death, he left Calcutta and shifted to Delhi. Sudhir
got job in a company “Cultural Dais”. His best friend Jayakar is an old retired man. Sudhir, Jayakar and Bal belong to the lower middle-class of Indian society. Singh quotes: “...the whole country is a “backward place”. Its poverty is appalling: But for the amelioration of the starving millions, Sudhir offers a solution, that is, he wants to run professional theatre to educate people through entertainment.” (58)

The other famous Indian woman character in this novel is Mrs. Kaul a modern sophisticated, cultured, educated, middle-aged woman. Mrs. Kaul, the Honorary Secretary of the “Cultural Dais” in Delhi appears to be a caricature of western woman, imitates western culture, but, neither remains an Indian nor a westerner. Connie Hayball describes her, “Out of all her characters, Mrs. Kaul, Secretary of the ‘Cultural Dais’ is snobbish and affected...” (59) The dishonest man is Kishan Kumar, super-actor, a friend of Bal appears to be a caricature of the Indian film stars. He maintains status in the society and promises young men like Bal. you will have an opportunity in the films. That is the reason all the youth meets him. There is another character named, Gupta or Guppy, a rich man and an owner of a big Hotel. A typical businessman is very rigid and traditional at home but feels free to do anything when he is in bazaar. Frequently, he goes out with Etta and has fun. On the other hand, Etta is also practical in leading her life even though she is married. She has a false assumption about marriages. She tells Judy: “Marriages, my dear, are made to be broken, that’s one of the rules of modern civilization. Just bsume we happen to have landed ourselves in this primitive society, that’s no reason why we should submit to their primitive morality” (5).

Etta describes India as a backward place. Judy submits everything to her Indian husband and seeks a new life in India with patience and hopes for the golden days in the future. Etta’s reaction is not normal. It is true that any foreign girl who marries an Indian, leaving her family and country forever, can at least hope to have a woeful living in India. She hates to see Judy living in this state and tells her. “You must leave him and get out. You’re just rotting here. Look at you in that thing’ ... and your hair too and ugh, you’re awful. You’ve let yourself go...” (6).

Clarissa is basically an artist and accepts every situation of life very happily. She is kind to the poor and humble towards people of India, leads a simple life. She comes to India in search of spiritual life and emerges from the library, holding aloft Rolland’s Life of Vivekananda, and says to Sudhir: “Do you know that it was this book that really and truly finally decided me to come to India? I’d wanted to come ever since I was a tot, but it was this-this dear, darling book’ --and she kissed it» ‘My Bible! My Guru!” (115)

In this novel, Jhabvala describes the interior decoration of Etta’s apartment. Her apartment is so beautiful and elegant with no Indian aura; one can feel that you are living in Europe. When Judy visits Etta’s house she likes it: “The raw silk lampshades matched the curtains, and sophisticated black and white prints hung on the walls. There were two flowers each in two tiny delicate vases. Several gay record-sleeves were scattered on top of the radiogram; a French fashion magazine lay open on the divan” (6).

Etta asks Judy to look at herself in the mirror. Judy does not find anything strange and significant. But, Etta suddenly comes up behind her and pulls the pins out of her hair, which fall down her shoulders. With another tug, the sari drops off. “...There was Judy in her sari-petticoat and the short blouse, looking young and vigorous and pleasing, with her apple breasts, her bright blue eyes and her fair hair framing her face” (216) She stands blushing; her face too pale after ten years in India was suddenly the fresh pink it had been intended for. She still retains her charm. Then, Etta tempts her with an invitation to go with her to England, France, Italy or wherever she like and have to have a goodtime. But, Judy turns deaf ear to her tempting. Although embarrassed, “...she stooped to pick up her sari and tuck it back to her petticoat string” (217) Thus, Judy finds for herself a permanent place by identifying and submitting herself to the Indian ethos, which is odd for Etta and Clarissa.
They have crossed the cultural barriers but they are not always in it. But, Judy seeks identification with the Indian ethos and proves that she is a real Indian wife. Of course, there is a danger of retracting one’s steps back to the world from which one came. Forster describes the humanist as possessing four leading characteristics “Curiosity, a free mind, belief in good taste, and belief in the human race.” (64) “Curiosity” in *A Backward Place* obviously represents distinctive features of an alien ethos.

Thus, the analysis made hitherto in this paper attempts to expose what sort of hold and fall the westerners living in India have got. In *A Backward Place* there are three foreigners women. They are Clarissa and Judy from England and Etta from Hungary. Etta is single. Judy is wedded to Bal. Etta is divorced from three Indian husbands. Each woman has a totally different perspective on India. Jhabvala finds India, with its powerful impact of social and personal milieu, has forcibly brought about a conflicting status quo for them-either to stay on or to delight in the escapade of leaving the country. It is evident that these white are affluent and influential. Her characters Esmond, Etta, Judy and Clarissa, with their turbulent emotional bent and how they succeed in maintaining the psychological equilibrium and how they are aware that they were the cause of their destiny are the testimony of the attraction.

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Women Characters in Manju Kapur’s *Difficult Daughters*: A Study

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**Abstract**

The article is about the evolution in the portrayal of women in Indian English Novels written by Manju Kapur. The aims of the article to show how the women characters portrayed in the novels the past three decades reflect the changes that are taking place in Indian society. There is a lot of differences in the way women portrayed-their desires, their trauma as presented in the novels of Manju Kapur. She tries to show the gradual change in the outlook of the character as well as the change in the social outlook through the novels of Manju Kapur. It gives the changing scenes and life style of women, trying to contrast it with the pre-independent period and earlier and eventually. The writer shows how women realize that they have been suppressed and exploited and they register the protest. The struggle to cope up with situations results either in depression or in protest leading to marital disharmony and family integration. It further focuses on desire for freedom results in conflicts within the individual about sticking on to the traditional outline and fulfilment of one’s desires violating some of the traditional forms and the second one being the individual in conflict with the society. The article analyses the women characters and focuses on their search for identity, there by establishing the change in perception in their outlook.

**Keywords:** Changing outlook of women’s life, individual conflict, searching for identity.

Women are often the subject of literary works, seen as an object to Behold of an earthly link to God, however, in the works of early British Literature, the image of women ranged from political peace Keeper to anti-beauty in the Old English tradition, women are seen as either dutiful slaves or angelic creatures from heaven, According to the history, the women of the household or kingdom serviced her husband and the men of the table as the consummate hostess, keeping quit and keeping the drink poured.

But Manju Kapur’s as a feminist writer covering all her five novels. The novel explains unquestionable ability to travel around the consciousness of the modern day urban, educated middle-class. The protagonists are trapped in the midway between tradition and modernity. It is an attempt to study Kapur’s women protagonists, as portrayed by her in her novels, with a view to understand and appreciate their trials and tribulations under the impact of the conflicting influence of tradition and modernity. And also it is critically analyze their response to the budding situation in life so as
to fit themselves in the modern society. The fictional works of Kapur shows both daring and desires of the Indian women in the fictional works Kapur.

Manju Kapur born in 1948 in the city of Amritsar. She is a daughter of veteran educationist Raghuvansha Kishore Kapur, who was Vice Chancellor of Sambalpur University. She is completed her B. A. Honours in English literature from Miranda House University College for Women at Delhi. Then she is gone to Canada to take her M.A. in English at Dalhousic University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. After completing her M. Phil. at Delhi University, she joined her alma mater Miranda House College as a lecturer in English. After teaching English Literature for almost 30 years, she takes voluntary retirement from her service. Now is a fulltime writer. She is married to a Delhi based industrialist named Gun Nidhi Dalmia and lives in Delhi.

Kapur’s first novel, Difficult Daughters which is received an international acclaimed novel. Difficult Daughters is partially based on the life of her mother Virmathi’s life. It is a story of three generation women. Ida is the narrator of the story who is the daughter of Virmathi, the protagonist of the novel. In this novel Ida narrates the struggle of her mother Virmathi. Virmathi’s mother Kasturi is an ever-pregnant lady, who has eleven children. Though Virmathi is a sister but she lives as mother of them. She helps to her mother in every pregnancy. In Difficult Daughters, Manju Kapur is not only focus Virmathi, but also her feelings. She deals number of other women characters and how they can fight for their freedom. Not only fight for their freedom, but also participate actively in the political activities. Difficult Daughters is a painful story of a sensitive girl who struggle the male-dominated society.

In Difficult Daughters, Manju Kapur deals three generation of women. The first generation women are Kasturi and Ganga. Kasturi is a traditional woman. On the time of partition educated girls only gets a well educated bridegroom. So she is gone to school to get educated bridegroom. In her mother’s house she learns reading, writing balancing household accounts and sewing. She spends his whole life to obey others. She doesn’t ask any question against her husband, because she obeys the traditional rules. Her life is trapped in the patriarchal world around her. Motherhood is one such trap. She has give eleven children. Life become burden in her every pregnancies. Her repeated pregnancies made her very sick. Ruby Milhoutra observes that,

“Kasturi’s repeated pregnancies made her sickly, resulting in her total dependence on Virmati to manage her household. As a natural consequence her unique position in the home is lost which she has to yield to her daughter quite unwillingly. Virmati thus becomes a ‘substitute’ and not the double’ that every mother wants her daughter to be. As a consequence the relationship assumes hostile dimensions.” (165)

Ganga is the traditional women. She is an uneducated woman, but she gets married with the educated man who is worked as a professor in the oxford university. The professor doesn’t like his wife for being uneducated. He tries to teach her reading and writing. But she does not show any interest to learn reading and writing. So he doesn’t like uneducated woman. As Ganga’s character sketch moves forward it becomes clear that Kapur through Ganga gives her readers a glimpse of the process of growing up as a girl in India. Her husband continues to be her public statement of selfhood. Even after the professor’s second marriage Ganga continues her routine with her bindi and her bangles, her toe rings and her mangalsutra and it all suggests that she still considers him as her god.

After the second marriage of the professor, Ganga doesn’t stop her routine work. Because in Indian tradition husband is like god. To be a house wife is sometimes a curse in India. Women that do not have out to work are always devalued. Afraid to get out of family relationships they are literally trapped in their own family. The professor’s wife, Ganga is one such example. She prays to God everyday that her house should be free from evil; outside influences till her children were
grown up and settled. Then she would resign herself to whatever was in store for her. When her husband remarries, it is as if her life is over but rebellion or opposition is not an option that is open to her. She accepts it as her fate.

Virmati is a second generation woman. From her novel, Difficult Daughters depicts the inner and the outer world of its female lead, Virmati and her fatigue for life. This novel deals Virmati’s life is ragged among her responsibility of family, thirst of education and also deals the illicit love with the professor, who is already married. Virmati is born. She is a sensitive young girl. She is the elder daughter of Kasturi and Suraj Prakash. They have eleven children. She undertakes her home, when she is seventeen. She goes to Dalhousie with her mother Kasturi, to look after her. In Dalhousie Virmati meets her cousin Shakuntala, who is studying in Lahore. She is deeply impressed by Shakuntala’s glamorous, vibrant and intelligent personality. Virmati wants to live independent life like Shakuntala and she dreams of the glamorous life of metropolitan life. So she joins AS college in Lahore for higher studies. In this college she meets the professor and fall in love with the professor. Due to the relationship with the professor she stopped her marriage. She goes to RBSL College to her higher studies. Here she gets pregnancy and it is aborted with the help of her roommate. She gets married to the professor on the way to Shanthi Niketan. But the professor is already a married man. So Virmati’s family members don’t accept the marriage. She gets pregnancy and gives birth to a girl child. The professor gives a name to his girl child “Ida”. Ida means a new beginning.

Ida, Virmati’s only daughter represents the third generation of women and she is the narrator of this novel. She is portrayed as a radical woman of contemporary India. She refuses to submit the dictates of male dominant society and believes in personal freedom. Her father wants her to look pretty, neat, well-dressed and he also likes her to study well, learn classical music, and take dance lessons, and so on. But she is not at all interested in studies. And when her mother complains, “You mean living only by yourself. You are disappointing your father” (DD 279). She rudely retorts “Why is it so important to please him” (DD 279). She doesn’t care for her parents’ desires. She gives importance only to gratify her own wishes. Surendra Narayan Jha rightly comments, Ida was not at all interested in displaying any signs of intellectual brightness. Rather her prime concern always spelled out the youthful frivolity merely. She hardly ever intended to be worthy of her parents expectations. Only her own self mattered most for her. (221)

Ida is introduced in the novel as a divorcee. “I know my relatives feel sorry for me. I am without husband, child, or parents. I can see the ancient wheels of my divorce still grinding and clanking in their heads” (DD 4). All parents expect their daughters to get married to an educated and respectful man. Similarly, Ida’s parents Harish and Virmati hunt for an ideal bride groom, and their choice is Prabhakar- “He was a successful academic, a writer of books, a connoisseur of culture, a disseminator of knowledge” (DD 157). And so, Ida is wedded to Prabhakar. But her conjugal life with Prabhakar is not happy and pleasant as they thought, rather it turns into a disastrous marriage. She suffers a lot being trapped in a loveless marriage. Her husband never shows any sign of love towards her. When she informs him that she becomes pregnant, he mercilessly asks her to abort the child. She is shocked at his words and is completely broken. Yet as a stoic woman, she never shares it to her mother. She states,

Now I have nothing. Mother, I never told you this, because you thought Prabhakar was so wonderful, and I was glad that in the choice of husband I had pleased you. Why should I burden you with my heartaches when you had enough of your own? (DD 156-157)

This proves that Ida is a stoic woman. She obliges her loveless husband’s words and gets it aborted. Thus, she suffers in the hands of insensitive, irresponsible and inhuman husband. Joya Chakravarthy says, Ida is “strong and clearheaded” (98). Denial of maternity and forced abortion
prepares her mentally to break up the relationship with her husband. She has the strength which Virmati lacks, and as such she frees herself from the tormenting husband. Ida’s life becomes miserable, when she gets divorce from her husband and stays single. She leads her life all alone. The epilogue mirrors her pathetic condition of life.

I was nothing, husbandless, childless. I felt myself hovering like a pencil notation on the margins of society. For long periods I was engulfed in melancholy, depression, and despair. I would lie in bed for hours, unable to sleep, pitying myself for all I didn’t have, blaming my mother, myself. (DD 279)

Thus, Manju Kapur beautifully and brilliantly propagates different alternatives in the traditional and conventional way of life. She is of view that the traditional concept of marriage and man-woman relationship has become outdated and it must be re-defined and re-shaped. Almost all her novels have justified this attitude with microscopic observations. Almost all her novels have justified this attitude with microscopic observations. The portrayal of women in Indian English fiction as the silent victim and upholder of the tradition and traditional values of family and society has undergone a tremendous change and is no longer presented as a passive character.

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The Position of Women in Manju Kapur’s Select Novels

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Abstract
The present paper focuses on the position of women in Manju Kapur’s select novels. Women have tried to bring in a new social order which is congenial to the physical, social and psychic well-being of women by demolishing the existing myths. They will be in a position to lead their lives with dignity and enjoy the full right of their free conscience to create their own values. The women of the 1940s had no voice to assert their rights. Manju Kapur raises the voice against male chauvinism to claim the rights of economic independence. She makes woman a cult figure which fights against taboos, social and joint family restrictions and constraints laid by patriarchy in the tradition. By analyzing the fictions of Manju Kapur, it is seen that the position of women in Indian social structure has been marginalized. However, Manju Kapur has created women protagonists who have tried their best to liberate themselves from the trap of patriarchal culture despite being subjugated.

Keywords: position, woman, right, Indian, social, family.

Manju Kapur deals with the position of woman as a daughter, a wife and a mother in all her novels. All her female protagonists hailing from middle class status challenge the existing social-cultural patriarchal system. In the social milieu, they are educated, modern intelligent, bold and assertive. Even though they try to transcend the social hierarchy by demolishing it, they often undergo serious psychological traumas in the absence of an alternative, planned feminist ideology that may give them freedom, security and peace of mind.

Manju Kapur provides a glimpse into the female psyche and deals with the full range of women experiences in all her novels such as Married Woman, Difficult Daughter, Home, The Immigrant and Custody. Demolishing the existing myths, women have tried to bring in a new social order which is congenial to the physical, social and psychic well-being of women. By that they will be in a position to lead their lives with dignity and enjoy the full right of their free conscience to create their own values. As one looks at the entire corpus of Indian women’s writing in English we noticed that it is primarily a literature of the elite, for the elite and by the elite. Her characters are basically middle class and upper middle class women and novels are continuously looking for freedom from social and moral constraints. Tradition is deeply rooted in India and in the
traditional system Indian society is organized around gender division giving more space to male for dominance. Right from the marriage, the bride’s incorporation into the family begins. She is guided and trained into the lifestyle of her husband’s family. But despite of her all efforts to devote herself sincerely to the wellbeing of the family she is considered an outsider. Manju Kapur rightly says:

She didn’t care so much about having a child now. These walls, this room was inimical to it. She wanted to be outside; she had had enough of inside. Slowly she left the apartment block, and started walking. The sky grey, a few brown leaves still clung to trees otherwise bare. (TI 172)

Although the quest for self, especially in the life of woman has become a much debatable phenomena, as long as this term is growing old, it is losing its authenticity. The literary geniuses who were born and nourished in the invisible shackles of traditions tried later on to break them and voiced their notions in a more liberated and out spoken manner in their literary works under the influence of modernism and Manju Kapur comes under this category of geniuses. The women characters in The Immigrant and Custody, have imaginative mind, longings and aspirations to soar high and high, the impressionism of new education and teaches and incessant urge to establish her identity. Kapur highlights the polluted environment, degrading human values and the Satanism of male against the weaker sex in her novel. Since time immemorial, Indian Women have unsuccessfully tried to create their own space in a patriarchal society. She registers her concern for Indian women in this novel. She dwells on various feministic issues in this novel like female education and their empowerment, financial independence, etc.

Manju Kapur’s message is thunderous and clear that society would be better off if its females were effective and capable. According to the pioneer feminist, Simone de Beauvoir, “the two prerequisites for women’s freedom are Economic independence and liberation from orthodox traditions of society. Kapur believes that the woman needs more than bread, butter and physical comfort.” That shows in the ending words of The Immigrant, “She too was gearing towards fresh territories, a different set of circumstances, floating resident of the western world” (TI 334). As it is crystal clear to mention that prominent Indian women writers like Toru Dutt, Cornelia Sorabji, R.P. Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Shobha De, Kamala Das, and Manju Kapur have been primarily concerned with the issue of man woman relationship, which is nothing but a sad and realistic tale of a persecuted mind and physical and psychological torture in male-dominated society governed by rigid traditions and restrictions.

The sole objective of Manju Kapur has been the portrayal of the new image of woman, who fight against dejection, anger, oppression, exploitation, seduction, betrayal, rebel, longings, search for happiness, ironic social system and paradoxical tradition. Manju Kapur has presented the women of the1940s, when women had no voice to assert their rights, most importantly the voice of the protagonist. She raises the voice against male chauvinism to claim the rights of economic independence. Manju Kapur makes the woman a cult figure that fights against taboos, social and joint family restrictions and constraints laid by patriarchy in the tradition. A major preoccupation in recent Indian Women’s writings has been a delineation of inner life and subtle interpersonal relationship. In Indian culture and heritage, individualism, quest for identity, protests and concepts of rebelliousness have often remained alien ideas, as far as women were concerned.

Women were not supposed to raise voices for their rights, protest against injustice or question the already existing beliefs, customs, rituals and superstitions. They have to merely exist subjected to the patriarchal system. Women have to be obedient, quiet, submissive, and passive not claiming any of their rights neither as women nor as human beings. Even the earlier Indian women novelists have been portraying woman as the silent sufferers, the upholder of traditional values and ethics, a strict observer of social taboos, an essence of tolerance and patience, an exemplar to their
successors, a being with no space for herself, a woman without an identity, a worshipper of their counterparts, unfortunate and ignorant about their rights as human and so on. Manju Kapur is affected by her surroundings because we can see in some of her words. To look at women’s lives from a feminist perspective is something, that is when imagination comes into it. Jane Austen is using a small microcosm to reflect every issue under the sun. Often, women’s fiction is called domestic or family focused. It is a label that is not derogatory but a bit condescending. The theory of the feminism when applied to such novels for the proper critical evaluation may lead to different results. Portrayal of Shagun’s character clearly shows the triumph of feminism. Beauvoir suggests: “the young girl has hardly more than her body which she can tell her own: it is the hardest treasure; the man enters her takes it from her; she is overpowered, forced to compliance, conquered” (405).

A close study of Manju Kapur’s novels create new vision on the world of female, in her all novels female protagonists projected as, an Indian woman in spite of her education, status an intelligence, tries to marry according to her choice, is likely to spoil her prospects in both the worlds, the one that she revolts against and the other she embraces. Any step taken by her choice condemned and rejected. These bring disastrous effect on lives on women. Her female protagonists are trapped between tradition and modernity in her middle class status. In her social setting they appear educated, modem, intelligent, sophisticated, courageous, and assertive. Their maladjustment in rapidly changing world makes them carve for more space for themselves. Hence they try to surpass the social norms. But mere efforts without clear objective, strong will power and planned action are not enough. She portrays the irritation, anguish and trails of Indian Middle class Women, who condemn social conventions and traditions. It clearly indicates the educated women have their own choice of career. Such women take divorce from her husband’s and do not regret the outcome, because they find that there is so much in life apart from married life married life is not everything. One can do a lot service even a single woman or as a single parent.

Marriage is one of the tools for a creative writer to depict the cultural ethos representing Indianness. Manju Kapur has both opted for it and also cashed it. Marriage is a central theme in all her fictional works. Manju Kapur’s every novel opens with a live discussion on marriage the topmost significant issue in the life of the female protagonist. Murali Manohar in his Indian English Women’s Fiction keenly observes, “One of the main problems for educated women is marriage. Most of their problems are related to marriage” (Manohar, xiii).

The results of marriages in Manju Kapur’s novels are not all the same. In Difficult Daughters, Kasturi turns out to be a passive sufferer being subjugated in a patriarchal family, Virmati is alienated, and Ida is single and childless. In A Married Woman, Astha in her restlessness turns into a lesbian and becomes reckless with everything including her children and her husband, and Peepalika a lesbian widow. In Home Nisha loses her economic freedom and independent identity. In The Immigrant, Nina being dishonest to her husband feels alienated in an alien land. In Custody, Shagun having everything from first marriage asks for divorce to run after her passion, and Ishita is divorced for her barrenness. The roots of the sufferings of these difficult lives in the fictional works of Manju Kapur are varied in nature. In Difficult Daughters, the problem with Kasturi is the socio-cultural background at her times, Virmati is in the dilemma, and Ida is too radical. In A Married Woman, Astha suffers because of her husband’s negligence to her, and Peepalika’s suffering can be traced back to her psychological weakness of being a single parent child.

In Home, Nisha suffers of the gender inequality in the patriarchal setup. In The Immigrant Nina suffers because of her husband’s sexual impotence. In Custody, Shagun and Ishita both suffer for biological reasons one for passion and the other for barrenness. As a result, Manju Kapur has become the first and foremost Indian English writer to explore the theme of marriage to its fullest extent in the context of contemporary global Indian society and culture.
Manju Kapur in her fictional works has trapped the flux of a representative group of middle-class Indian women trapped in wedlocks in different types of families. Her *Difficult Daughters* presents live discussions on wedding in an Arya Samaji agrarian joint family of Lala Diwan Chand. *A Married Woman* is about the marriage and married life of Astha, a Delhi based middle class Indian woman from a bureaucrat family. The *Home* describes the marriages in Delhi’s mercantile family of Banwari Lal. *The Immigrant* is the projection of an NRI arranged marriage. Her most recent novel, *Custody* deals with the theme of failure of arranged marriage resulting into divorce and remarriage among the two divorcees.

Manju Kapur has clearly stated all possible reasons to marry through her protagonists. In *Difficult Daughters*, for Kasturi it is the responsibility, for Virmati it is to love and attachment, and for Ida it is to carry the line. In *A Married Woman*, Astha’s parents want to marry her because they consider it as their duty. In *Home*, Nisha is married with Arvind only to serve his family. In *The Immigrant*, Nina’s mother wants to marry her daughter so that she can get security and stability. And in *Custody*, for Shagun and Raman it is the standard line of beauty and brain, for Ishita and Suryakanta to be happy, for Shagun and Ashok to follow the passion, lastly to Raman and Ishita it is the adjustment.

Virmati in *Difficult Daughters* learns that in her family there is only marriage for girls. Even she perpetually recalls what her mother taught her to remember that “Still, it is the duty of every girl to get married” (DD 15). Manju Kapur’s women are completely compelled to think of nothing but marriage as “It seemed to Virmati that her family could talk of nothing else but her wedding. Every word they said had so little relation to her inner life that she felt fraudulent even listening to them, passively, immorally silent” (DD 70). In case of Kasturi, the first generation woman in *Difficult Daughters*, marriage was to please one’s in-laws. During Kasturi’s formal schooling it was never forgotten that marriage was her destiny. After she graduated, her education continued at home. Her mother tried to ensure her future happiness by impeccable nature of her daughter’s qualifications. She was going to please her in-laws. For Virmati’s family, marriage is for the parental pleasure and family prestige:

Shakuntala Pehnji did not have five sisters waiting to get married either. And do you think it makes her mother happy to have her daughter unmarried? She may say what she likes about jobs and modern women, but I know how hard she still tries to find a husband for Shaku, and how bad she feels. You want to do the same to me? To your father and grandfather? (DD 58)

While commenting on her parental expectations, Virmati says that “They want nothing from me but an agreement to marry” (DD 100). When Virmati succeeds in getting married with her love the Professor, her feeling is not of joy and happiness but of being relieved of a guilty conscience. In the evening the wedding ceremony proceeded smoothly. The poet’s parents did the kanya-daan, the seven pheras were taken, the couple pronounced man and wife. As Virmati rubbed her eyes, watering from the smoke, she knew, rather than felt, that the burden of the past five years had lifted (DD 202). Manju Verma in her article, “Manju Kapur’s *Difficult Daughters*: A Study of her Women Characters” has aptly pointed out that,

The relationship between the two could have been an ideal between a man and a woman but unfortunately it becomes a story of an exploiter and an exploited, a union of un-equals, and an unusual tale of male chauvinism and woman’s total submission. (Verma 76)

The study of the novel becomes clear that “Virmati had achieved through Harish, education, work, marriage and suffering” (DD 253). And the lesson is “Adjust, compromise, adapt.” (DD 256)
There is another marriage in Custody between Ishita and Suryakanta, which fails because of Ishita’s infertility. However the most interesting thing is Kapur’s idea of bringing together two divorcees, Ishita and Raman as a flourishing couple. In this novel the reader could find Manju Kapur’s own definition of marriage:

Marriage is when two people decide to live together forever. Should they change their minds they go to court and get marriage cancelled. Finished. Divorced. They become strangers; sometimes they never see each other again. (C 341)

The theme of marriage is central to all these novels. Though they deal with childhood, youth, old age, education, marriage is central. The focus is on the man-woman relationship i.e, Virmati and Professor Harish, Nisha and Arvind, Nina and Ananda and Astha and Hemant. Except the first which was a love marriage, all the others are arranged marriages. This reflects the major reality for Indian society. Manju Kapur gives voice to women’s frustrations, disappointment, and alienation in a patriarchal world. It is a novel which provokes the readers’ thoughts as to how Astha, a married woman in search of her identity, registers her protests against breathing patriarchal set up and emerges as an independent woman. Amar Nath Prasad observes in this context: “Women are no longer flowers of the pot for only decoration; rather they are fragrant flowers of the open garden diffusing aroma to all comers, braving the storms and rains” (qtd. in Gunjan 98).

As Astha realised, many facets in her relationship with her husband symbolized power than love whether it be sharing of ideas, sex, decision making, handling of finance, her own freedom and expression. It is true in all cases. Harish loved Virmati and pursued her but could never really grasp the pain she went through in being his lover. Ananda felt that an Indian wife would be understanding about his sexual dysfunction and never thought about how it would affect her physically and emotionally. It was not possible for him to accept his weakness and go for medical counselling with her. His behaviour with Nina, drove him away from her. Love was never a word between Arvind and Nisha and he had married her to please his mother. Of all the male characters the most difficult husband was Hemant. He was sex obsessed and used Astha for his pleasure. He considered her job to be useless, her poems to be neurotic, and her participation in public rallies as rabble rousing and called her and Pipeelika as mind fuckers. He travelled abroad four times a year and was angry and irritated when she was out of home. The money she acquired from the sale of her paintings, he insensitively used it to buy her flight tickets. In order to mount on the social ladder, he made her go from one party to another on New Year’s Eve even though she was a little concerned. Ananda and Hemant also had extra marital relationships. Nina had found a blonde hair in her bedroom when she returned from India and Astha had found a condom in his suitcase after one of his trips. It affected the wives and shocked them about the hypocritical nature of their lives. Apart from love and arranged marriage, Manju Kapur also shows the extra marital affairs and premarital affairs. She shows the live-in relationship between Virmati and the Professor for a long time before marriage. There are really no issues she would not touch in her stories.

Manju Kapur openly discusses the reasons and consequences of deviant social behaviour. Finally it can be stated that Manju Kapur has explored the complex subject of the Indian family with much insight. Her women characters challenge the limits of passive and ordinary existence and try to choose more from life. They are characters who move to different destinations in search of their self.

By analyzing the fictions of Manju Kapur, it is seen that the position of women in Indian social structure has been marginalized. Manju Kapur has however created women protagonists who have tried their best to liberate themselves from the trap of patriarchal culture despite being subjugated and dominated by male chauvinism. She has exposed the existing irrationality in the patriarchal metaphysics in respect of women’s status in society, through their exposition of the ills in the society. Women protagonists in these novels do not accept the definition given to them by...
patriarchy. As their identity suffers from a male bias due to male dominance, they seek to demolish the existing myths of womanhood as prescribed by the male ideology. These new women are obsessed with total fulfilment rather than accepting the submissive domesticity.

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The Irksome Clutches on Nisha in Manju Kapur’s Home

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Abstract
Girl child! Some wondrous creation supposed to be cherished and celebrated like an angel is unfortunately made to undergo the most disgusting, demeaning things in life being physically and mentally abused not in the big bad world outside, but within the confines of her own house, a supposed to be dwelling place for absolute safety for any human being. Unfortunately, it turns out to be more of a shocker and breaks down her mental immunity. Being on guard and safeguarding oneself when she is out on the streets or at a public place is understandable. But if she has to be on guard 24/7 even within the four walls of her house, then it is the worst thing that could befall anyone on a toddler or on an adolescent. The sad part is that the girl child is never able to outgrow out of this traumatic stage, where the petrifying, horrendous incidents come back in time and again to haunt her. She is driven to a stage where she believes fervently that all men only lust woman and not love them. It takes a real man to convince and reaffirm her that there are people who really love for who she is and not what she is. It is the inner beauty which matters and not her external endowments and curves alone that matter. The tragedy is such men are rare and minuscule in number.

Keywords: trauma, oppression, sexual abuse, sub-ordinate.

It is a boon and a bane, as we live in a country where a girl child is considered to Goddess Mahalakshmi herself, on another platform she is considered as a liability also. Manju Kapur in her novel Home beautifully mirrors the life of a little damsel, who was born with a lot of dreams and of course she was the bundle of joy. Unfortunately, as life would like to have its own course adversity cross the threshold into her life and tormented her emotionally and physical all through her prime age in life. The life journey of a woman can be strenuous but should be fulfilling. But here the protagonist is twisted and twirled in the merry go round of life and is made to wallow in pity of life. The trauma a delicate and frail creation of god, who is made to believe that she is the weaker sex has to endure the pain and agony and cross barriers to reach. But the irony is to reach where the Eden or even a makeshift replica of it would have sufficed. Unfortunately, her life enters the mechanical factory with routine of churning tailor made products and metered chores.

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A woman has to cross multiple barriers like gender bias, infertility, denial of educational rights, economic dependency, and boredom of routine life which destroys her identity.

In the novel *Home* Kapur portrays the struggle of women for recognition and survival through the protagonist Nisha. She represents how sexuality becomes a site of woman’s oppression even as a child. It becomes a province of restrictions, danger and repression.

Gender differentiation is a heart wrenching fact that the Indian Society embraces. Birth of a boy in a family is only valued as the progeny and not of a girl. Nisha’s brother’s birth was more welcomed by the family than hers. Right from childhood the differentiation between genders is explicit. Nisha was forbidden from playing outside with her brothers. Sona’s remarks, “It is better for girls to remain inside.” (Home, 51) Sona was keen on preserving the beauty of Nisha just to get her wedded depriving her childhood play. This is again another tantalising factor, where the parents believe in keeping the girl child, indoor until the time she is handed over to her husband in the most pure and chaste manner possible.

The beautiful, naive and godly childhood is messed up forever and the psychological impact of the scathed and scarred survivor will last for more than a lifetime thereby instilling perennial fear and hatred in the mind of the innocent little heart. Nisha, the little girl’s journey of life started in such an unfortunate and not so congenial atmosphere, nowhere else in the world but in her very own house. Nisha was sexually assaulted by her cousin Vicky who left a scar in her memory. As a child her innocence had been taken advantage by the boy Vicky in the house who becomes an emotional burglar. Hence the little girl withdrew and had to endure this pain and suffering for quite some time. After a point of time she started throwing tantrums and expressing her displeasure in ways and means possible which was not interpreted by the parents and the extended family members. Parent’s lack of attention to the little girl had paved way for Vicky to abuse her. Sexual and emotional harassment over Nisha as a child resulted in screams during her sleep and lack of appetite. Her suffering began at the early stage of her budding childhood which is supposed to be a period of play but became a nightmare to her. Her wretched cry to her grandmother shows the trauma she is undergoing. “Why did you let me sleep? I had bad dreams, I had bad dreams.” (Home, 63)

Sleep! The God given gift for every individual in this world to resurrect and face the cruelties of the traumatic life becomes crueler when that peaceful few hours of sleep is jeopardised by nightmares. That too an innocent naive little toddler going through such trauma is unwarranted in any part of the world. Little Nisha was agonised, and her distress was resolved as she was sent to her aunt Rupa’s house for a change. On the other hand, Nisha as she was declared as manglik is forced to observe her first Karva chauth fast for her future husband even as a child. Misuse of religion over the innocent child to clear the obstacles in her path to achieve her destiny in marriage tossed and turned the child’s heart. Women are predetermined to sacrifice after marriage, an essential duty of every wife. This is the societal demand placed on a married woman. Nisha as a young girl when refused to fast was chid by her mother reminding that it’s her duty to learn to sacrifice. Nisha had been insisted as a child to repress the demands of her body and take up the fast. Her mind which had to be preoccupied with studies was forced to think of husband and she was taunted by the fault in her horoscope labelling her as a mangli. Nisha had a flair for studies, but her intelligence was not appreciated by her mother Sonu because she was a girl who was destined for marriage and nothing more and nothing less. “What does a girl need with studying? Cooking will be useful her entire life” (Home, 125)

The repeated insisting of that real education is in the kitchen torments Nisha who had great aspirations. Nisha was totally deprived of the freedom to do what she wanted. Even cutting her long hair was considered to be an indispensable act against womanhood.
“Who gave you permission to cut your hair suddenly you have become so independent, you decide things on your own, where did you find the money, the time, the beauty parlour, where did you find all these things? Her hair was opened, pulled, tugged, stared at, and wept over.” (Home, 150)

She was not given the space even during her adolescent age. Kapur has mirrored how women are controlled throughout their life by their parents and later by their in-laws in every aspect even a trivial act of Nisha’s hairstyle was scorned by her mother. Her love affair with Suresh when came to limelight caused so much stress to Nisha. She was made to feel guilty for the shameful act of loving a guy of low caste and status. She became the butt of ridicule in her family and was asked to wipe out the feelings she had for Suresh. Suresh’s denial of accepting her because the families disapproved of their marriage was a shock to Nisha. She found it hard to digest his betrayal as the love episode comes to an end, and the man of her life vanishes. All that she was left behind was eczema because of her emotional stress.

Nisha’s unmarried state being a mangalik and with eczema left her in a pathetic state as she had to confront all the fuss and insults during her brother Raju’s wedding. She felt suffocated and as she was stressed her skin issues worsened. She desperately wanted to leave the house and the father in spite of the tradition of the house suggested Nisha to work as a teacher in a nearby kindergartner school. Though Nisha was not interested she succumbed to the compulsion of her father. She was deprived of the freedom of choice even in deciding her profession. Nisha’s father Yashpal with all difficulty permitted his daughter to step out for work just because she could not survive within the house in stress. Nisha was so depressed in spirit, mind and body that she could not feel the joy of welcoming the good news that her brother’s wife was pregnant. Instead she sympathised with her own pitiable self,

“Other people go on with their lives, having babies, while all she could do was teach the children they produced. When was her life going to begin?” (Home, 273)

The excruciating pain began gripping her every moment and it reached its heights when she was treated as an untouchable after the arrival of the baby in the house. With a heavy heart she finally convinced her father and started her own boutique Nisha’s creations in the basement of her house. Sona her mother disliked the idea as she kept hinting a woman’s destiny is only marriage and not career,

“She is going to get married, why waste time and money in all this? A business was not like teaching, resignable when the bridegroom reached the door.” (Home, 289)

Nisha was doing well in her business with hard work and dedication in 2 yrs span she began enjoying the success of a business woman. Career for women was a herculean task in the patriarchal world. Women were destined to the confines of the kitchen and for childbirth in a conventional society. Nisha’s career was interrupted by her wedlock with a widower named Arvind. Her condition of continuing her work was not practically possible as she became pregnant after marriage. However ambitious a woman is her dreams, aspirations, career everything is shattered because of her role as a dutiful wife in producing heirs. Nisha was blessed with twins, a boy and a girl which resulted in giving up her boutique to her sister-in law.

The life of a woman is not angelic or like that of a flower in the garden to be cherished, nurtured or nourished. She is always being branded as the weaker sex, is in fact more than swaddled to the brim, thereby making her a mule in the household she is stepping into. Marriage! The very word is supposed to bring sparkle and excitement in the mind of any girl in her adolescence. But unfortunately, the bubble of the whole hungama and excitement is broken when she has to witness the brutal reality once she is within the confines of her new world. She is most importantly expected not to have any dreams or her own ambition, her likes or dislikes in life.
Thus Nisha in *Home* is an exemplary example of how a woman is made the subordinate and how her destiny is controlled by others treating her like a rubber doll. She is deprived of the choice of freedom right from the beginning where her lover Suresh was rejected due to caste, and her education was ruined as the consequence of it. After a long struggle she finds her path to liberation that is through her career. Here comes how a woman could achieve happiness and self-fulfilment through her career and how her dreams are shattered because of her family duties. Nisha after her forlorn journey with a heart break, skin issues, and negligence her desire to become a business woman gave her a vent out. She successfully begins her tailoring “NISHA’S CREATIONS” in the basement of her flat after a long struggle with her family members because of the stringent traditional taboos. Like a bird released from its cage she soulfully gets engrossed in her work which becomes the ultimate cure for all the scares she bore so far. Her flairs in her work of designing suits and gains popularity with her unique collections. Her managerial skills exercised at her employees calm and composed adds to the success of her business. Life seems exciting and challenging to her until and unless a proposal from a widower comes. As Marriage is what destined to a girl invariably however, she succeeds in her career she is compelled to accept the proposal. Being a daring woman, she agrees only after her condition that she will be allowed to work after marriage. In a typical Indian Scenario after marriage a woman has to cross many hurdles to pursue her career. It is not as smooth and easy unlike before her wedding. Consent from her life partner, her in laws is mandatory to pursue her career path which she had walked with bliss till her marriage. Pregnancy which is a bliss to woman also turns out to be a stumbling block in her career path as the society expects her to just give up her work for the sake of bringing up the off springs. Nisha who was blessed with twins, who was firm in being a career woman even after marriage had to succumb to the decision of her family of quitting her work. Her job which once gave her solace, which liberated her from the suffocating life of rejection becomes a path not to be trespassed. The familial hindrance of woman is lucid through the life of Nisha whose career comes to a standstill because of child bearing. Yes! The protagonist walks through fire and water and with the grim settles down as if not much has touched her. Pathetically this is the state of most of the unfortunate women in India and the horoscope part adding the perfect spice to it.

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Quest for Feminine Identity in Manju Kapur’s Difficult Daughters

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Abstract

Manju Kapur is a renowned novelist, in Indian writing in English. Her character that is caught in the complex web of tradition that appears in two forms in Difficult Daughters, firstly, it manifests itself in the form of patriarchal form of society and secondly, in the form of male chauvinism. The novelist is very capably presented her characters during the period of change that characterizes them with special distinctive characters. A writer, worth the name must capture this time spirit because the time spirit expresses the general mood and temperament of that particular generation, quite distinguishing from the one that proceeds and the one that follows. Her novels touche many issues like revolt against deep-rooted family tradition, the search for selfhood, women’s rights, marriage and the battle for independence at both fronts personal and national. This paper focuses quest for identity in Manju Kapur’s Difficult Daughters

Keywords: transition, self-fulfillment, patriarchal society, suffocated, zeitgeist.

Manju Kapur is in confederation with the contemporary Indian women writers who write only to emphasize the troubles the modern women who it seems that come out to be liberated from the boundaries of the society but nowhere she is liberated from the underneath burdens which usually happen to the grounds of their utilizations. Her story typically drifts over dissatisfactions, refusals, revenges and their break of conservative anticipations. Her uniqueness has very little or no gratitude at all. She discovers comfort only in obliterate herself.

Her novels show a lengthy, endless struggle of women to establish and make a position the same to man in the society herself. According to Mayur Chhikara, “The novelist has portrayed her protagonist as a woman caught in the conflict between the passions of the flesh and a yearning to be a part of the political and intellectual movements of the day. The women of India have indeed achieved their success in half a century of Independence, but if there is to be a true female independence, much remains to be done” (189). The dissimilarity among the men and women in the Indian background becomes the most important subject of her novel. Although her foremost characters
are well conscious of their own potentials and they do not easily surrender to the situations. But somewhere their feminine self takes them near to the age old traditional values where marriage is preferred to live-in-relationship.

The quest for identity is one of the mainly outstanding and notable aspects of Manju Kapur’s novel. She comments on her female characterization: “the mother-daughter nexus is only one of the many manifestations of the Indian women’s role. She is a wife, a mother, a daughter-in-law, in fact there are many aspects of a woman’s life” (23). She is very doing well in depicts dissimilar facets of womanhood in all her multitasking talents and special sensitivity to handle the ordinary life. Her greatest cleverness lies in portraying factual to existence characters in which she exceeds approximately all her modern women writers.

The milieu of her novel is typically the pre-Independence and post-Independence India where there is a dual struggle: the exterior life is full of violence with dark scar and the inner chaos by no means allowing the mind to rest at peace. The inner and the outer turmoil are very intensely portrayed in almost all her works where her female protagonists direct to liberate themselves both psychologically as well as physically without any kind of hesitation or burden from within the family or the society. A very conspicuous aspect of almost all her female leads is that they grasp education at the uppermost pedestal without any interpretation or conflict. Their virtue is very obviously seen in their dealing with the society; be it their love affair or their taking a divorce for marrying the man of their option which has no comparison as far as their individuality is concerned. They are not only successful in putting a struggle to emphasize their rightful place in the society by leading a life of their choice but were also successful in breaking the high handed patriarch norms only to retain their self-respect and self-gratification by all means.

Manju Kapur’s first Novel *Difficult Daughters* received huge international acclaim. This novel was published in 1998. It was awarded the Commonwealth Writers Prize for the best first book and was number one best seller in India. *Difficult Daughters* is about emergence of new woman and woman’s quest for identity. It is based partly on the life of Kapur’s Mother Virmati. *Difficult Daughters* tells the story of Virmati, a young and rebellious girl and who wants to create their own identity in the male dominated society. She falls in love with a married professor and eventually becomes his second wife. The historical context of the book is framed by the massive, turbulent and emotive history of modern India, particularly the dreadful events of the subcontinent’s partition in 1947 that destroyed and disrupted so many lives.

Kasturi and Suraj Prakash have eleven children. Virmati is the eldest daughter. One after another she gives birth to children and thus the whole burden of the household work increases over Virmati. So her busy routine she does not do well in her studies and fails. She falls in love with a professor and intimate relationship with Virmati and decides an appropriate place for regular meeting. But their parents decide to marry her to an engineer, Inderjeet. But her marriage is postponed for two years. During this period Virmati passes her FA Exam and denies for marriage. In this situation the family members of Virmati comes to know about her love with the professor. They won’t allow marrying the professor, because the professor is already married. So they decide to allow Virmati for her higher studies. So she joined in RBSL College. Shakuntala, who has been a regular source of inspiration for Virmati, visits her regularly. However educated or innovative an Indian woman is, her Indian background and psyche cannot feel satisfied unless society approves of her endeavors and her relationship. Virmati’s tragedy is the tragedy of ambition, obsession and unclaimed ovation.

Shakuntala is a prototype of the “New woman”. She is a lady of independent thoughts, she says to Viru, “how much satisfaction there can be in leading your own life, in being independent. Here we are fighting for the freedom of nation, but women are still supposed to marry, and nothing
else’ (17). She is a woman who rides horses, smokes, plays cards and badminton, acts without her mother’s advice, buys anything she wants and above all, “she never seemed to question or doubt herself” (15). Shakuntala says, “My friends are from different backgrounds, and all have families unhappy with their decision not to settle down. we travel, entertain ourselves in the evenings, follow each other’s work, read papers, attend seminars, one of them is even going abroad for higher studies’ (17).

There was a lot of influence of Shakuntala on Virmati her visits plants the seeds of aspiration in Virmati. Shakuntala shows her that a woman can be something other than a wife. Under the influence of Shakuntala on Virmati struggle to get her own identity, who is conscious about her rights. Throughout the novel we find the picture of a girl who aims high in life and seeks to empower herself through education.

Virmati wants to stretch her wings like Swamlata, her roommate who is dedicated to “meaning activities concerning the freedom movement and women’s liberation. But her emotional dependence on the professor who constantly evades the question of marriage, stops her from doing anything that he disapproves - ‘May be I could be like Swarna from the inside secretly” (124). Undergoing a gradual process of self-effacement, her energies are directed towards pleasing him while she herself remained parched. Though she dares to cross one patriarchal threshold, she is caught into another where her free spirit is curbed. Virmati fails to break dependence syndrome. She is a loser whose acts totally alienate her from her own family and she fails to create a space for herself for which she had been striving all along. Shakuntala and Swarna have not been portrayed elaborately in the novel but compared to Virmati they standout as stronger and with clearer vision. Shakuntala, her first cousin too had fought the family pressures and had succeeded in carving out a life for herself. Though her life was decorative on the western model, she appears more firm and emotionally stronger to recognize the hegemonic structures.

Virmati from the very beginning of the novel stands against patriarchy and affirming her individuality. She fights her family, protests imposition on her will carves her way to higher education, but she remains as much in the clutches of the hegemonic order as any other woman, only with the difference that While women in general accept the patriarchal structure mutely Virmati shows the courage to question it. Not only does she resist her paternal family, she questions the professor, withdraws her from him goes to Sirmour state to work in Pratibha Kumari Vidyalaya. After her removal from prestigious job because of the professor’s clandestine visits, she decides to leave for Shantiniketan so that she cannot restore her self-identity, and recover her independence. The two persons who greatly influenced Virmati are Shakuntala and Swarna. Both these women are rebels who never give into parental pressure. They decides to carve a name for themselves through their academic pursuits.

Through the novel, the author articulates the nature of female longing by subverting the rigid social gender norms and exploring her protagonist’s struggle for self determination. Her female protagonists are mostly educated, aspiring individual caged within the conservative society. Their education leads them to independent thinking for which their family and ‘society becomes intolerant of them. They struggle between tradition and modernity. It is their individual struggle with family and society through which they plunge into a dedicated effort to carve an identity for themselves as qualified women with faultless backgrounds. The novelist has portrayed her protagonist as a woman caught in the conflict between the passions of the flesh and a yearning to be a part of the political and intellectual movements of the day.

Manju Kapur present in her novel the changing image of women moving away from traditional portrayals of enduring, self sacrificing women towards self assured assertive and ambitious women making society aware of their demands and in this way providing a medium for self expression.
One see the emergence of new women in Manju Kapur’s heroines, who do not want to be rubber dolls for others to move as they will. Defying patriarchal notions that enforce women towards domesticity, they assert their individuality and desire self reliance through education. They nurture the aspiration of being independent and leading lives of their own. They want to shoulder responsibilities that go beyond their husband and children. They are not silent rebels, but are bold, outspoken, determined and action oriented. All protagonists know they cannot depend on others to sort out the domestic situation and proceed to tackle on their own. Inspite of getting education and freedom the women protagonists of Manju Kapur’s novels does not blossom into new women in the real sense. Though they dare to cross one patriarchal threshold, they are caught into another, where their free spirits are curbed and all they do is ‘Adjust, Compromise and Adapt’. B.R.Agrawal writes that “The novelist seems to be questioning the traditional systems of child marriage, gender discrimination, women’s education and other outmoded value systems which lie at the root of modern malaise. Hence, there is a need to modify and not to change them. (246) Through Virmati, the central character in Difficult Daughters, Kapur has revealed women have always been less important individuals.

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Intertextuality in Chinua Achebe’s 
No Longer at Ease

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Abstract
This paper critically examines the centrality of intertextuality in the appreciation of Chinua Achebe’s No Longer at Ease (1960). Achebe includes a pertinent example of epigraph in his novel. He quotes from T.S. Eliot, whose poem mirrors the postcolonial condition that is explored at length in his novel. “The Journey of the Magi” deals with the difficult journey of the Biblical Magi or Wise Men as they searched for Christ. Their journey parallels the Protagonist, Obi Okonkwo’s journey from Nigeria to England and then back to Nigeria. He finds himself no longer at ease with his fellow countrymen and his culture. His estrangement from his culture is the same problem that thousands of Africans and Indians faced after their western education. They are not comfortable with their own culture and at the same time they are not willingly follow the new culture that they had embraced. This paper therefore attempts to explore that Achebe’s No Longer at Ease (1960) reflects the post colonial complications and also ventures to highlight that the epigraph illuminates important aspect of the novel.

Keywords: intertextuality, epigraph, post colonial condition, estrangement, journey.

The term ‘intertextuality’, was coined by co-structural feminist critic Julia Kristeva in 1966. It means in general the shaping of one text’s meaning by the other text. It refers both to the author’s borrowing and manipulation of a prior text, and to the readers’ reference to other texts in order to understand one text. The meaning is not transferred directly from writer to the reader. It is mediated through or filtered by ‘codes’ conveyed to the writer and the reader by the other text. Intertextuality is not just recognition that one text informs another text, rather it is an acknowledgement that one text transform another text; To quote Julia Kristeva:

If one grants that every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying system (an inter-textuality), then one understands that its “place” of enunciation and its denoted “object” are never single, complete, and identical to themselves, but always plural, shattered, capable of being tabulated. (Revolution in Poetic Languauge 60)

In theorizing intertextuality, Kristeva maintains that every text is constituted “by a mosaic of citations, every text is absorption and another text” (The Kristeva Reader 37). Like Kristeva, Terry Eagleton in his book “Literary Theory: An Introduction” opines that every literary work is essentially “re-written” (192). In re-writing literary works as Eagleton indicates, each text directly or indirectly makes reference to other texts, this is what Peter Barry sees as: “a
major degree of reference between one text and another” (91). In his important work, “The Theory of the Text” Barthes lends credence to this perspective:

Any text is an intertext; other texts are present in it, at varying levels, in more or less recognizable forms: the text of the previous and surrounding culture. Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of codes, formulate, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc. pass into the text and are redistributed within it. […] Epistemologically, the concept of intertext is what brings to the theory of the text the volume of sociality. (39)

Intertextuality then, yields to plurality of texts.

We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

-T. S. Eliot, “The Journey of the Magi”

The title for the novel comes from this selection of verses by T.S.Eliot, an early twentieth century American expatriate poet who eventually becomes a naturalized British citizen. The choice of the poem “The Journey of the Magi” is very much apt. it is a poem about how spiritual birth can feel like death. Even though they are being born into something new, they are still witnessing the death of their old way of life, and their old beliefs. This process is painful. Even Achebe accepts this in his interview with Jerome Brooks explained thus:

I think the poem from which I took the title of No Longer at Ease, the one about the three magi, is one of the great poems in the English language. These people who went and then came back to their countries were “no longer at ease” … I think that that is great- the use of simple language, even when things talked about are profound, very moving, very poignant. So that’s really all there is to it.

“The Journey of the Magi” details the journey of the Biblical magi (or “Wise men) as they searched for Christ. The three magi saw a brilliant new star in the east and realized it signaled the birth of a new king. They followed it until they found Jesus, and they worshipped his as their king. In this poem the speaker talks about how the journey was difficult: it was bitterly cold and there were many times they regretted it. They had all these memories of home, where they enjoyed warm weather and “silken girls bringing sherbet,” when they finally reached their destination, a humble tavern and a stable where Jesus is born, they wondered where their journey was for a birth or a death. They had met the Messiah and though the meeting was a birth, it was a bitter birth, one more like death than birth. In the verses excerpted here, the speaker returned to a fixed place they could call home but realized that after a pilgrimage such a place no longer exists, that the old dispensation has been disturbed, that death is the only certainty in a world where the worship of new gods has destroyed the old spiritual framework. The speaker would be glad for “another death” like the one just experienced, perhaps because they he would feel at ease again in his old life with his family and friends.

These short verses, the final verses of the poem, describe what many writers and literary critics have called the postcolonial condition. The journey that the magi took parallels Obi Okokwo’s journey from his home to England, where he experiences an intellectual and cultural birth that is more like death. When he returns to his home country, Nigeria, he feels culturally displaced. He is “no longer at ease” among his countrymen, with their religion and their way of life. Not only does Obi judge their lack of education, but he also feels many of their other customs are barbaric and should be eradicated as citizens embrace Christianity and western education.

In one sense, the title suggests something obvious – someone once felt comfortable and is now feeling uneasy. And actually, once the reader gets into the novel, he or she finds out that this quick assessment is accurate. The title reflects the discomfort felt by the main character, Obi Okonkwo. His university education in England has left him feeling alienated from his family and friends. While in England, he was alone in a foreign place, thousands of miles from his family, speaking a
foreign tongue. And besides all that, he comes from a warm, tropical place, and needs to adjust to living in cold, foggy, rainy England. Obi can no longer get his mother’s pounded foo-foo, yam, or fish soup. Instead, he has had to adjust to eating boiled potatoes, boiled meat, and boiled vegetables.

But that is not actually Obi’s problem. It gets a little more complicated than that. The problem of homesickness is compounded by the fact that Obi partly rejected his own culture, embracing Western values through his Western education. As a result of his Christian upbringing and his British education, Obi decided that the written word is the way to go. He suddenly found himself believing in democracy and thinking that if he wanted to get ahead in the world, he need to be a Christian, read and write proper English, and behave like a European.

So he tried. But that does not mean that he felt comfortable in England. There he was, studying in an alien culture, feeling uncomfortable and different. However, when he returns to Nigeria, not only does he not fit with his fellow countrymen, but also uncomfortable among the English expatriates in Nigeria, even though they all work together and they are supposed to be buddies. He does not feel contended with his own folks and he does not feel at ease with the other guys, either. Obi’s estrangement from his culture is the same problem that thousands of young people in Africa and India faced after their western education. On the one hand, they saw all sorts of problems with the culture they had left behind; on the other hand, they were not accepted by the western culture they had tried to embrace.

This is a phenomenon explored by many postcolonial writers. Colonial powers expended a great deal of effort and energy towards distinguishing between western culture and colonized cultures; western literature, philosophy, and popular culture portrayed colonized cultures as “inferior.” Young people from colonized countries felt estranged from their own culture after their western education, even while they were not accepted by westerners. This condition has been called a “postcolonial identity” and Obi exhibits a classic case of it. As Simon Gikandi rightly points out: “Obi returned to the dangerous zone of ‘occult instability’ (80) between the African and colonial cultures.

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Diasporic Elements in Jumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*

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**Abstract**

In the fast globalized world, Diaspora issues, cultural identity, are enriching the Diaspora literature in the twenty-first century. The Diaspora elements are recurrent themes in the writings of Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, V.S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri and many others. Diasporic fiction lingers over alienation, loneliness, rootlessness, homelessness, nostalgia, protest, assertions and quest for identity. It also addresses issues related to amalgamation or disintegration of cultures, discriminating margins of two different social milieus, internalizing longing and suffering forced amnesia. Jhumpa Lahiri is a voice of Indian Diasporas in America. She takes up the issue of the impact of exile and immigration on the complexity of life as pitched against deviating ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. In her debut novel, *The Namesake* (2003), she handles these complexities of the immigrants’ experiences in lucidly.

**Keywords:** diasporic, exile, nostalgia, immigration, deviating.

The word ‘diasporic’ has been taken from the Greek dia, meaning to scatter. It gives the sense of dispersal through space. The term ‘Diaspora’ referred to the Jewish Community, which was without a state of its own and faced discrimination and oppression all over the world. However, the term became popular and was used in the context of other nationalities also which was displaced from the original homelands due to one reason or the other. Even though the distinction has to make between the forced and willing movement of people, the phenomenon of diaspora necessarily involves a “structure of location followed by dislocation and relocation” (Paranjape 59). Moving away from one’s homeland and setting elsewhere on a long-term basis does mean dislocation that brings in the sense of loss and nostalgia. This was following by a bid for relocation in an alien milieu through negotiation and adjustment. All such Indians who have been living outside India constitute the Indian diaspora. Having born of educated middle class Bengali parents in London and grown up in Rhodes Island (USA), Jhumpa Lahiri beautifully and genuinely portrays the diaspora experiences in her first collection of short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies* (which won her the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2000), again doing an encore in her first novel, *The Namesake*, grabbing instant recognition and also a piece of cinematic history. Prior to going into details of the plot to discuss the theme of diasporic conflict of dual identity in *The Namesake*, it would be helpful to mention Lahiri’s remarks. In an interview...
released by Houghton Mifflin Company Lahiri says that the novel is definitely about those “who are culturally displaced or those who grow up in two worlds simultaneously.” Talking about the predicament of immigrants Jhumpa Lahiri says: “I think that for immigrants the challenges of exile, the loneliness, the constant sense of alienation, and the knowledge of and longing for a lost world, am more explicit and distressing than for their children.”

The novel has an autobiographical line as Lahiri’s experience of growing up as a child of immigrants resembles that of her protagonist, is Gogol. In an interview with Mira Nair, she says: “I wanted to please my parents and meet their expectations. I also wanted to meet the expectations of my American peers, and the expectations I put on myself to fit into American society. It’s a classic case of divided identity.” Like Gogol, her pet name involuntarily became her name. She has two other names on her passport and her birth certificate. When she has been enrolled in school, the teachers decided that Jhumpa was the easiest of her to pronounce. Talking about the diasporic crisis of dual identity Lahiri, in the same interview, reflects: “The original spark of the book was the fact that a friend of my cousin in India had a pet name, Gogol. I wanted to write about a pet name distinction for a long time. It is almost too perfect a metaphor for the experience of growing up as the child of immigrants, having a divided identity, divided loyalties etc.” In a conversation with Mira Nair, Lahiri says, “The names we have, there is so much about them: Who are they and we are the one world that exists that represents us. And yet we don’t choose them. They are from our parents.”

As identity becomes the core issue, names become quite significant. The expressive function of a name varies from culture to culture. They have given the two names for Bengali children: one that is a pet name used only by family and close friends, and others that is a good name, used by the rest of the humanity. This very feeling of dual identity has been very well portrayed in the character of Gogol. At birth, Gogol is given a pet name as his official name sent in a letter from his great grandmother in India, gets lost in the mail. His parents give him the surname of the Russian writer Nikolai Gogol as the first name in the Massachusetts hospital where he is born. The chosen name with the accepting that it is merely a formality, and will in time become just a pet name. Gogol, the name of his father’s favourite writer, goes on the birth certificate and stays with him in his early school years. Upon entering Kindergarten, Gogol is told by his family that he is to be called Nikhil, a good name, by the teachers and other children at school. Gogol discards his proper name and wants to be called Gogol by society as well as his family.

This decision made on the first day of nursery school causes him years of distress as it was also his first attempt to reject a dual identity. As a child, he does not question who he is; he “doesn’t mind his name. It seems perfectly normal.” (p. 66). As he grows up, he begins to question who he is. The fact that Gogol, as a child was aware of the importance of identity, which is revealed by the field visit of his class to the graveyard where other children located the graves of the members of their clan by the surname mentioned in the epitaph, but to his dismay, he could not find any ‘Ganguli’ buried there (p. 91). His first name ‘Gogol’ did not relate him to either the Indian Community or the American and so it dampened his spirits. He spends his teenage and young adult years for trying to discover his identity. Before his departure for college, Gogol officially changes his name to Nikhil, which is symbolic of his self-conscious attempts to completely disown his real self and tries to metamorphose himself to a different persona. But even though he had longed to change his name, he finds that he has to get used to being called Nikhil. When his parents also refer to him as Nikhil; he feels, “…in that instant that he is not related to them, not their child.”(p.106)

However, Gogol spends his life living in the United States where children are ashamed of their difference from others. Though Gogol and his sister Sonali are born and raised in the U.S., they feel the annoyance of being different from most of the kids they know. Some mock their names; some spoil their mailbox with derogatory terms and some just find them funny. During adolescence, Gogol desires to blend in American society and to live unnoticed. Other Americans never view him an American, however, even though he is a native-born citizen. This living ‘in-between’ situation
is painful and marginalizing for the diasporas. The identities of diaspora persons and communities can neither be placed only about some fatherland to which they all long to return nor to that country alone where they settle down. They, by all means, face the crisis of hybrid or dual identity, which makes their existence all the more difficult. This is experience universal to all Indian diaspora, irrespective of their caste, region and religion (which they so strongly and devotedly clung to during their stay in India).

For the second generation, the question of identity is a complicated issue. At home, Indian culture and value system are adhered to, while in public the American code of conduct is followed. This is become even more difficult. When Gogol attends a panel discussion about Indian novels written in English, the discussion centres on the identity problem of ABCD:

Teleologically speaking, ABCDs are unable
to answer the question ‘where are you from?’
the sociologist on the panel declares.
(The Namesake, 118)

Gogol realizes that ABCD [American Born Confused Desi] refers to him also. He ponders over the question of distinctiveness. Despite his parents’ efforts to keep him “Indianized” Gogol started mimic his American friends in rustiness and aping them in every aspect. For example, his parents didn’t know about him secretly smoking with his friends, or going to late-night parties. However, he still manages to get good grades and gets into Yale University. There, to his horror and utter disdain, he learns about his namesake, Nikolai Gogol, that he was a cerebral pariah and starts to hate his name. Because of this, he changes it to Nikhil to distance himself from all the bindings of his family and shun all their expectations. He gets attached to a white American girl, Ruth but they soon divide after Ruth spends both spring and summer terms in England studying literature. This constant struggle for finding out the identity is beautifully portrayed in the novel, as first-generation immigrants and their children struggle to find their moorings in an adopted society. On the one hand, the Ganguli parents, especially Ashima, with adapting to a different culture than they are used to, on the other hand, their children (Gogol and Sonia) fight back to achieve an improbable synthesis between respect for their progenitor’s roots and the lure of a more liberating American society. The identities of Diaspora individuals and communities cannot be placed only in solitary reference to some homeland to which they all passionately long to return nor to that country alone which they have made their own. They, in the exercise of their means and ends, wilfully face the challenges thrown by the crisis of hybrid or dual identity, which makes their existence all the more fluid. After his break-up with Ruth, Gogol has an affair with Maxine, an Anglo-Saxon American ethnicity and a member of a liberal and very wealthy Manhattan family. He starts to live with her family and gets closer to her family and moves away from his own. Although they love each other, they eventually break up when Gogal returns after completing all the Bengali rituals on his father’s death. They fight over Gogol’s struggles regarding the emotional complications related to his father’s death. In a slight twist in the tale, Gogol’s mothers Ashima Suggests Gogol meet Moushumi, the daughter of one of her friends belonging to another Bengali family mainly, due to their shared cultural background. Gogol knew Moushumi from his childhood. She had the unfortunate experience of having planned a wedding only to have her future groom to change his mind at the last minute. Gogol was reluctant to meet Moushumi for two reasons. Firstly, for common cultural roots, i.e. being Bengali and then for her disgraced past. But he hardly had any choice as he had to meet her anyway, to please his mother. They meet at a bar and develop intimacy.

Although it was a blind date engineered by their mothers, they develop a liking for each other and eventually settle in matrimony. During a party, there starts a discussion on names. Moushumi’s name explained as a “damp south westerly breeze” (p 240). It is revealed at this point by Moushumi that Nikhil had changed his name. Gogol had not expected her to blurt out the secret. “He stares at her, stunned, have never told her not to tell anyone. He assumed she never would. His expression lost on her; she smiles back at him, unaware of what she’s done. The dinner guests regarded him; their mouth hanging open in confused smiles” (p 243). This episode inevitably leads to his former
name Gogol and even though another guest Sally can place the name as belonging to the writer of short story ‘Overcoat,’ others including Donald consider it a queer name.

Gogol slowly gets disillusioned with Moushumi. The scent of her body which, intoxicated him seems now suppressed by the stale smell of smoke left behind by her excessive smoking. However, by the end of their first year of marriage, Moushumi has grown restless and begins to regret her decision to marry. Gogol suspects something foul and their marriage comes to an end when Moushumi starts having a sexual affair with her old love interest. Throughout the novel, the character Gogol changes in many different ways. Throughout his life, he tried to shed his parents’ un-American lifestyle, but in the end, he succumbed to his past and ancestry. Ever since Gogol’s childhood, all ever wanted was to find a place where he could fit in, whether it be in his own culture, or in the American one in which he lives. During his life, he searches everywhere to find out who he is and where he belongs. Even after his stay and frequent visits to India, he could never be a part of Indian culture. He could never be Indian as he was born and brought up here; at the same time, the name and the family values never let him be American. His multiple relationships with American girls were never successful, and his marriage with an Indian girl was also a disastrous failure. He always remains in a dilemma about his identity, and that is the reason he could never be the one he likes.

Although Gogol Ganguly had a harrowing time coming to terms with real self and accepting himself in his teenage and early adult years, he eventually turns the corner and discovers his identity at the end of the novel. Jhumpa Lahiri’s denouement achieves a balance. By the end of the novel, Gogol feels comforted by one thing: before his father had died, he had revealed the real image for choosing that name for him. At thirty-two, finally proud of his name and its meaning, Nikhil Gogol Ganguly accepted his name and his fate. He realizes that his identity overstated by both cultures. He tries to find solace and a temporary reconciliation with his name and the inheritance he had rejected, as he turns to the book his father had gifted him on his birthday, which Lahiri symbolically mentions:

As the hours of the evening pass, he will grow distracted, anxious to return to his room, to be alone to read the book he had once forsaken, have abandoned until now. Until moments ago it was destined to disappear from his life altogether, but he has salvaged it by chance, as his father was pulled from a crushed train forty years ago. (p. 290) Academic Research Vol. 1, No. 1, 3 Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Research Vol. 1, No. 1, 3

The diasporic crisis of dual identity faced by Gogol gets resolved when he realizes that the answer is not to abandon or attempt to diminish either Indian or American culture, but to instruct the two together. He does not have to be one or the other; he does not have to choose. He is made up of both, and instead weakening his pride, his identity is strengthened by this. Coming out of his turmoil, Gogol can stand on his feet and is no longer ashamed of him. In American culture and values, and at the same time retaining his parents’ Indian heritage, he feels that proud of his name Nikhil Gogol Ganguly and all that it means.

Through this novel Jumpa Lahiri’s deals Diaspora elements, multiculturalism, nostalgia, immigration, divergent of Indian Writing in English and relationship between sexes. Her concentration on narrative tends to be spatial rather than sequential, the depiction of protagonists, exploration of familial ties are portrayed or depicted here.

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Dimensions of Women in New Literatures in English


Politics and Women in Nayantara Sahgal’s *This Time of Morning*

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Abstract

Sahgal has portrayed the life of an Indian woman in our society. *This Time of Morning* seeks to explore the effects and outcome of political impacts as they work out in the life of persons, the seeking of identity that Indians craved for in these early years of independence and an identity based on an admixture of the best aspects of the west without separation of their own heritage is paralleled by Rashmi, Nita and Rakesh who themselves seek to express their own uniqueness and establish their own identity.

Keywords: freedom, self-respect, individuality, emancipation.

In *This Time of Morning*, the characters are of high positions. They are mostly politicians, influential bureaucrats, and artists, journalists with varied level of achievements, distinguished and noteworthy parliamentarians, emancipated, lustful and carnal society women and traditional, educated housewives. In This Time of Morning, the readers could find the glimpses of current history. The main characters of the novel are Kalyan Sinha, the minister without portfolio; Kailas, Prime Minister’s trustworthy assistant brought up in the Gandhian congress Movement, Rakesh, a young I.F.S. officer; Sir Arjun Metra, the practical and rational secretary General of the Minister of External Affairs; Hari Mohan, a business man and Minster of Industries in the Government of Uttar Pradesh for a short span of time; Mira, the devoted and loyal wife of Kailas, Rashmi, the one and only daughter of Kailas and Mira; Nita, the daughter of the Narangs, a Newspaper columnist; and Uma is the beautiful wife of Arjun Mitra. The central theme of the novel is started by Rakesh who is the protagonist of the novel.

Sahgal has portrayed the life of an Indian woman in our society before marriage, through the character of Nita, she is the daughter of Dr. Narang and he is a combination of both Eastern and western culture. Dr. Narang as a man is very much enchanted towards western culture. But when it comes to his daughter Nita, he transforms himself into a traditional Indian who imposes the well-defined Indian norms for women and restrictions and limitations laid for women. But Nita as a highly ambitious woman could not bear and face all these restrictions laid on her. Dr. Narang has never allowed Nita to attend parties. She says: “We don’t allow Nita to go out alone. Her father would not hear of it” (TM 30). Dr. Narang as a typical Indian father seems to be very much concerned with the safety and protection of his...
daughter to abide by the traditional norms and values. Nita’s parents do not allow her to smoke or
drink or take part in club dances or attend parties till her marriage.

Sahgal condemns the typical Indian parent’s mentality of having a strong hold on daughters till
marriage and then wash off their hands on her after marriage. The Indian parents are not at all ready
to pay heed or listen to the dreams, desires, wishes and aspirations that their daughters have in their
gifted life. They aim only at finding a man of their option to give their daughter in marriage to him
without worrying about her opinion on her marriage. Though Nita has reached the age of marriage,
she is not ready to marry the man, her parents have chosen: “creatures her parents have in mind for
her are either so awful or midgets or men who never open their mouth” (32). Nita is totally unhappy
and feels uncomfortable when her parents exercise over powers on her to make her accept parents’
decision to give her in marriage to a stranger. She accepts her parents’ choice of Vijay as a groom,
in spite of knowing his attitude towards her. Nita knows well that Vijay looks upon her as an object
to be possessed. Nita knows very well that her marriage has no hope and possibility of fulfillment.

Due to the restrictions laid on her by her parents, Nita wants to break off those obstacles to see
the world freely beyond them. Nita wants to live her own life according to her wish and she rejects
the values and norms of the previous generation that are imposed upon her. Nita’s search of her
own real self is more stressed than the search of Rashmi. Because Nita has made may attempt to
attain self-discovery even before marriage whereas Rashmi tries to do self-discovery only after her
failure in marriage. Nita has her own principles and views on leading her life. They are absolutely
different from what her dominating and conventional parents impose on her. She is fundamentally
a fun loving girl. She enjoys going to clubs, to dance and to attend parties. She seems to be very
much interested in smoking and drinking liquor.

Nita is a good actor and pretender before her parents. She is mostly kept in constraints and
restrictions by her parents. But she gets a chance to move alone from her jail house and jailor parents,
she behaves like a freed woman from a jail. Nayantara Sahgal in an article, “Women: Persons or
Possessions?” writes that women are looked down upon as inanimate objects or property to be
possessed. Sahgal aptly writes thus: “When I heard someone remark, we never allow daughters to
go out,” or “I can’t do what my husband would not like it”, it sounded a very peculiar alien jargon.
As if, I thought women were property not persons” (IV).

Nita is a new woman who wishes to live her own life, with a job, earning her livelihood and
leading a useful life. She resents an arranged marriage, which is overshadowed by material concerns
where even sexual and emotional acts are merely conventional facades. (TM 45)

She chooses Kalyan as a man of her choice and submits herself to him. Nita is able to feel and
find a peculiar comfort in his accompaniment. She tends to visit him frequently due to the comfort
she finds in him. Once she refused to go home and frankly expressed her love for Kalyan.

“But don’t make me go.” He rose from his chair, “Nita....” She got up, too, and came like a sleep
walker into his arms, clinging to him. “Don’t make me go, please don’t make me go.” He took her
by the hand and then to his room. (TM 152)

Nita’s pre-marital relationship with Kalyan can be interpreted in three ways. It may be an attempt
to fulfill her inner most desire. It may be an attempt to experience the love, care and concern from
Kalyan which she couldn’t feel in her father. Jasbir Jain expresses his opinion about Nita’s sexual
involvement with Kalyan thus:

With Kalyan Sinha, sex comes naturally to her not because he loves her but because she has
unconsciously allowed herself to love and admire him and turn to him in her desperation at being
hedged in by convention. (42)
Nita’s yearning to get rid of the restrictions and limitations laid on her might have induced her to go to the world that is freed of those limitations. Sahgal explores into the place of a woman in Indian society before marriage through the character of Nita. M. Selvanayagi writes:

Sahgal seems to expose conventional narrow-minded Indian society through the character of Nita. In Indian society, the parents choose life partners. The parents arrange for the two young souls to live happily ever after. Sahgal strongly attacks this social convention and names this kind of marriage “just organized rape.” (qtd: 274)

When the time has come to decide on her marriage, she stays passive and does not react or express her opinion to her parents because she is not expected of that. She has led her parents decide her future. Through the character of Nita, Sahgal clearly condemns the typical Indian Parents’ mentality and their conventional narrow mindedness in choosing the life partners for their daughters without thinking about their opinion. The readers can see Nita moving towards self-awareness through unpredictability and bewilderment. Nita believes in arranged marriage as an institution while Kalyan Sinha views marriage as an act of barbarism. Nita does not seem to get attached with Kalyan Sinha in a realistic manner. Rather her deep and strong aspiration for self-discovery and self realisation has pulled her towards Kalyan Sinha. But she knows well that she is not her man. Dr. Kanupriya in her article “Feminist Consciousness in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal” analysed and presents her view:

In the character of Nita in This Time of Morning Sahgal explores the place of women in Indian society before marriage and the kind of freedom young women desire outside marriage. Sahgal refers to the rigid codes in a traditional society when a young girl reaches puberty, her movements are restricted, whereas marriage seems to be a license to do the things hitherto prohibited. Nita resents the idea of an arranged marriage. To her this kind of marriage does not offer any prospect of fulfillment. (47).

Women like Nita always look for self-satisfaction in whatever they do and seek for self-realization. So the readers can see some women perceiving marriage as freedom from parental restrictions according to the conventional norms and dominating and suppressing hold of the parents. Some consider marriage as a way to self-realization. As long as the patriarchal and conventional male defined norms and values exist in our country, there won’t be any such thing as freedom of women and individuality of women. Moreover the women’s dreams and hopes of attaining freedom, self-discovery and self-realization won’t occur unless the patriarchal system is exiled from our country. Even the empowerment of women through education can’t be successful unless the mothers who play the passive, fated and sacrificing roles in the family stop their pampering of sons and discouraging daughters. First of all, the senior women generation in the society should understand the value and power of the fellow women in the society and should start so stand in support of them to attain victory in the march of freedom, self-respect, individuality and emancipation.

This Time of Morning provides an insight into the working of politics. On the other hand it seeks to explore the effects and outcome of these as they work out in the life of persons. Rakesh notices the disorder in his country and notes also the signs of progress. He realizes that the time has come to find an identity of their own as Indians of the new era—an identity based on a well judged mixture of modern ideas and ancient values. The seeking of identity that Indians craved for in these early years of independence and an identity based on an admixture of the best aspects of the west without separation of their own heritage is paralleled by Rashmi, Nita and Rakesh who themselves seeking to express their own uniqueness and establishing their own identity.
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Tradition Verses Modernity in Salman Rushdie’s *Fury*

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Abstract  
This article comprises of woman’s firm growth and feminism in Indian Fiction in English. Commencement from conventional phase, travelling to transitional stage and finally accomplishing modernity is studied critically with suggestions from the novels by Salman Rushdie. Female characters seek for their goals in the normal tasks of womanhood and in helping her family members. She often does not locate what she struggles for. The earliest consciousness of a woman, charged with misery and response and it looks as if to be in her to have brimmed and over-flowed, and expressed the need for liberation.

Keywords: self-assured, assertive, educated, protesting, ambitious, identity.

Rushdie’s female protagonists fight endless battles to continue in the society where they are still slaves to habits, parents, husbands, and children. It is remarkable that the novelist expresses his deep anxiety about the problems, being faced by a woman in male-dominated society. He treats mainly with the troubles, faced by the Indian women. His learned protagonists try to state their personality and make an effort to lead a moderate life. Firmly, Rushdie pressures on the changing images of woman, from traditional into modern gradually more.

Rusdie’s works encourage the readers understanding of the psyche of a woman, who is caught in the web of relationships, partly made by her, and partly made for her. The women’s inner struggle between the desire to take care of their husbands and children and the desire to discover deeper modes of fulfilment that falls outside the traditional social norms. In these novels the reader notices the traditionally glorified woman reinstated with the genuine modern one, who is trying to throw off the burden, she has been carrying for ages. The image of woman is changing with the passage of time. The protagonists, portrayed by this novelist, are away from the traditional portrayals of the self-sacrificing, enduring, meek and quiet woman. They are the modern portrayals of self-assured, assertive, educated, protesting and ambitious ones; making society aware of their needs and proving their identities.

Rushdie portrays the changing image of women moving away from traditional depiction of lasting, self-sacrificing women into self-confident assertive and motivated women making society know of
their needs and in this way provided that a medium for self expression. He has been triumphant in creating brawny women protagonists who reject to get compressed under the burden of their personal tragedies, and face life with great guts and power. Fury draws upon the Roman myth of the three furies: Tisiphone, Alecto and Megaera, the female embodiments of vengeance.

Rushdie’s novels show a marked slant to the beautiful, in the woman, and the plain, almost ugly in the man. The reader is introduced to Mila and Neela and Eleanor and every time, Rushdie takes care in introducing them as women in irre physical sense.

Solanka and Mila both play act their fantasies while continuing a charade of innocence, “In that charmed space, during Mila’s visits, almost complete silence remained the norm. There were murmurs and whispers but no more” (F 136). Dr. Jann Gumbiner, a psychologist and a daughter of a divorced mother, shares her own experience in her article Divorce Hurts Children, Even Grown Ones as:

During the 70s, when the psychological literature first discussed the effects of divorce on children, the general view was that divorce doesn’t have to harm children. But, it does. My grades went down. Not studying was a form of rebellion, anger, and apathy. I really didn’t care what became of me. Perhaps, the kid is stuck with a depressed mother who can’t leave her room, clean up the kitchen, or take the child to school. This child is ashamed to invite friends home from school and friendships suffer. My brother couldn’t play Little League because there was no one to drive him to games. Extra-curricular activities suffer. (Gumbiner 1)

Jack Rhinehart, the phone-smasher invited Solanka to watch the Holland-Yugoslavia Euro 2000 Football quarter final on pay-per-view. After watching, Solanka has refreshed in Rhinehart’s building. When he climbs out of the cab at Rhinehart’s building, he sees a woman who is in shades rushing into it; jostling him later he remembers that she is familiar to him. Her name is Monica, Rhinehart has tried to get divorce for years, but his wife denies to give him. Solanka has wondered how a man with so much energy would handle a woman in an inferior manner. Rhinehart has done his wife wrong which cannot be denied. But he doesn’t speak of the slow deep pain of a child. Instead of divorcing him she has told him sweetly that, she intends to make the rest of his life a misery, bleed him slowly.

Rushdie goes on to bring out the differences between Neela and Mila and one can instantly see that both are different types of Fury. Neela is the quiet, seething anger that is not quick to flare up but lethal when it does and Mila is the spontaneous bubbling over turbid anger that is deadly but does not last long. This duration can even be compared to the time they have in Professor Solanka’s life. Mila is an obsession, but also a weakness, but Neela is a calming presence that means more.

Rushdie considers it a triumph of sorts when this woman who has everything going for her, is attracted to a man who is unremarkable. He also seems to indicate that these women seek out the wrong kind of man for themselves: “Sensing in him ferocity of commitment that was rarely found in modern men, women had allowed themselves these wised up cautious women” (F 29-30). And once they have these men, the women find nothing strange in subsuming their own identities in order to keep than. “To hold on to her beautiful Eddie, the college sports hero- whom she described to Solanka as “not the brightest bulb, but a dear heart and to whom a brainy, cultured woman would not doubt be a threat and a turnoff- she had dimmed her own light” (F116).

Neela works as a producer. She is specialized in documentary programming for television. She is planning a project that could take her back to her roots. Professor Solanka sees the hot blood rising in her to the conflict of Ethenic ‘Elbee’ community. Neela herself is determined to march. But this conflict is not a small matter for the beautiful Neela, she is still connected to her origins and Solanka almost envies her for it. When Solanka has stepped out of the house, he sees a headline; concrete killer strikes again. Below that headline “Who was the Man in the Panama Hat?”
is written in smaller type. Everything has changed at once, darkness rushes in through the open window, blinding him.

Some years back Solanka has gone for vacation at the cottage in the ‘springs with Rhinehart and his’ waitress of the moment, who is a dead ringer for the cartoon sexpot Betty Boop and to whom Rhinehart refers affectionately as Roscoe. He has drunk in the men-only drinking session, and drives home. Professor Malik Solanka speaks to his mirthful friend of the abnegation of the self he couldn’t say that at he is a knife in the dark and he endangers those he loves.

Saskia “sky” schuyler today’s big picture, and her predecessors have their own power of smiles. They are not poor girls, but they are penniless now, she is a great girl, a living doll, but she is very perfect in business. She sees business as a business. Her mother is handling it all. This woman is made of iron and she never sheds a tear. She is only nineteen but she is a dedicated fashionist, a linguist and pianist. She is also an expert horse woman, an archer with hopes of making the Sydney Olympic team, a long-distance swimmer, a fabulous dancer, a great cook, a happy weak end painter a hoster in her mother’s grand manner, sensual in newspaper. Her friends are Bindy Candell and Ren Klein.

These three young women are born to be trophies but unfortunately they are killed by concrete killers. These dead girls are conformed to Eleanor’s definition of Desdemona’s. Othello has broken them simply to reveal their lack of humanity, their breakability. They are the android women dolls of the modern age, mechanized, computerized but fully realized avatars of human beings. These dolls have tales to tell. Behind their mechanism, they are stuffed with behavioural chips, thoroughly programmed for action, so perfectly groomed and war drooped, that there is no room left in them for messy humanity. Thus the three have represented the final step in the transformation of the cultural history of the doll. They are more free than any women in any country in anytime, and they belong to no man, whether father or lover or boss. They are nobody’s dolls, but their own women, playing with their own appearance, their own sexuality, and their own stories: the first generation of young women to be truly in control. They can be businesswomen and flirts, profound and superficial, serious and light and they could make those decisions for themselves. They have all that are emancipation, sex appeal, cash and they too love them. No one can take them away from these girls. Such girls are killed by the concrete killer, Solanka tears burying his head into his hands.

Saskiaschuyler lives in an apartment but she doesn’t like this ugly building. She hates the apartment, her parent’s former Manhattan pied-a-Terre, “If she wins, she’ll be off to D.C and the senate, and if she loses, she’ll leave even faster” (F 97). She plans to sell this Madison. Then she walks out by herself and she never comes back. Her body has found near the Midtown Tunnel. A study of the last hours of Lauren Klein and Bindy Candell shows that they too come house late, refuse their boyfriends. As if these girls have turned Life away then set out to keep their assignations with Death. They have not been robbed nor have they mentioned seeing the Panama-hated stranger “lurking oddly”. “It’s like somebody sentenced her to death and carried out that sentence in, like, cold blood”. (F 97).

Though the women, she pictures, are intelligent, smart and resourceful, they are deprived of freedom and they lack guts to openly defy the social order and are torn between traditional norms and modern attitudes. To recollect the words of Walker Percy quoted in his book “Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book”:

Marriage and family life are disappointing. Even among defenders of traditional family values, e.g., Christians and Jews, certain dreariness must be inferred, if only from the average time of TV viewing. Dreary as TV is, it is evidently not as dreary as Mom talking to Dad or the kids talking to either. (Percy 27).
Neela demonstrates that in affairs of the heart she is very much like the man and what women had always accused him of being. When she loved solanka, she loved one hundred percent, with no holds barred; but plainly she is also an axe-murder capable at any moment of severing the head of a suddenly rejected love, and she has told him, with great seriousness “that you are the last man with whom I will ever sleep”. (F 230) The power of such promises is great, and under their enchantment he has even allowed himself to dream of return, has permitted himself to believe that the past could be-had been-stripped of its power, so that in the future all things could be achieved. But now Neela has vanished like a conjurer’s assistant and his strength too has gone with her. Without her he could never walk the Indian Streets again. If she forgives him, he would be the servant of all her desires. He begins to speak with greater animation and looked directly at Neela. Neela has gone she did not come back. Young men and women have attended Solanka’s daily needs. The women characters in the novels of Salman Rushdie eminent radiance fromwithin and without and use beauty as a mean to an end, rather than allow themselves to be defined in purely corporeal terms.

The women characters struggle for their individuality and fight with family and society through which they drive into a committed attempt to shape individuality for themselves as capable women of with flawless surroundings. Rushdie has depicted her protagonists as women caught in the clash between the fervours of the flesh and the yearning to be a part of the political and intellectual movements of the day. He declares that writing in India tends to involve the family and community to a far greater extent than in the West. Here, women are commonly defined in terms of their roles.

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Psycho – Spiritual Adaptability of Mama Day in Gloria Naylor’s
Mama Day

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Abstract
“Psycho Spirituality” becomes a natural medication through which the soul or the ‘True Self’ attains the spiritual truth. In Mama Day, Gloria Naylor uses her ancient inheritance of magic and herbal medicine, the weapons of women, sinking all the rational thoughts underneath the suffrage status, unfolding the potential of women. Mama Day, a timeless generational saga, a tale of the supernatural power and homage to the redemptive power of African American traditions that span into two worlds; the southern barrier in island of Willow Springs, a place exempted not only from the laws of nature but from the racial laws of men; the other world, New York City, the polyglot, multi-racial, governed by strict and seemingly heartless codes of love. She digs and probes required reconciliations between the blacks’ rural past and their urban present; between myth and history, between individuals and communities, and faith and logic. Mama Day would communicate with nature which is reflected in her vision of using supernatural powers. Mama Day brings up the validity of her meditative healing with the mystical state to get rid of depression and anxiety to maintain the transpersonal relationship and their integrity. There arises a new evolution of consciousness which makes them forget their previous identification to lead to her identity of “self.”

Keywords: psycho-spirituality, magic, herbal medicine, healing, transpersonal.

Psycho-Spiritual adaptability is a concept which pertains to the relationship between spirituality and the mind wherein the soul becomes the catalyst to preserve the values of life, spiritualizing of psychology, interpreting or explaining through our deeds and relationship despite the so-called Imperialism, black female oppression, East-West conflicts, and racism. To have a real escape from the world of alienation, or to transcend the spirit from the alleviation, “Psycho Spirituality” becomes a natural medication through which the soul or the ‘True Self’ attains the spiritual truth. It gives oneness to our heart, soul and body, which help move further in any activity beyond our knowledge. Naturally, the mind is free to think of some positive progression leaving the problems and receiving a new transformation to solve the previous issues, by concentrating
on other developmental resources. The humanistic philosopher and psychoanalyst Erich Fromm expresses that the psychoanalytic patients suffered from an “inner deadness” and an “alienation from oneself.” Fromm continues that:

“Zen is the art of seeing into the nature of one’s being; it is a way from bondage to freedom; it liberates our natural energies; ... and it impels us to express our faculty for happiness and love [...] [W]hat can be said with more certainty is that the knowledge of Zen, and a concern with it, can have a most fertile and clarifying influence on the theory and technique of psychoanalysis. Zen, different as it is in its method from psychoanalysis, can sharpen the focus, throw new light on the nature of insight, and heighten the sense of what it is to see, what it is to be creative, what it is to overcome the affective contaminations and false intellectualizations which are the necessary results of experience based on the subject-object split (140).

Naylor’s character Mama Day finds “a way from bondage to freedom” which “liberates” her “natural energies” to lead her people to possess “happiness and love.” Naylor makes her women characters undergo all these struggles but to give a spiritual encounter to strengthen their adaptability with a resilient nature or a transformation to enhance their development from the darker phase to the brighter side of consciousness during trials and tribulations. The Psycho-spiritual approach is highly subjective and very personal and close to heart. Naylor provides the characters with the correct directions to get along with their lives.

Each novel has the uniqueness of presenting the characters, especially women, to maintain a well-balanced relationship to renewing their community living to give moral support to African American people. All the five novels The Women of Brewster Place (1982), Linden Hills (1985), Mama Day (1988), Bailey’s Café (1992), and The Men of Brewster Place (1999). The Women of Brewster Place has seven women whose survival techniques made them happy despite their odds of life or threatened external forces with their strong binding of relationship maintained as their diversified black female experiences. They escape from their ghettos mentally resisting physical, mental, and spiritual violence with their bondage of friendship.

In Mama Day, Naylor uses her ancient inheritance of magic and herbal medicine, the weapons of women, sinking all the rational thoughts underneath the suffrage status, unfolding the potential of women. African American women were required “to fill the role of angel of some one else’s house, cooking, cleaning, washing, sewing, nursing, and rising or even bearing the children of the master/employer” (Hayes 669). Naylor creates a strong foundation for the new hope of community living by setting aside all social bureaucracies. Mama Day, a timeless generational saga, a tale of the supernatural power and homage to the redemptive power of African American traditions that span into two worlds; the southern barrier in island of Willow Springs, a place exempted not only from the laws of nature but from the racial laws of men; the other world, New York City, the polyglot, multi-racial, governed by strict and seemingly heartless codes of love. She digs and probes required reconciliations between the blacks’ rural past and their urban present; between myth and history, between individuals and communities, and faith and logic. Symbolically, she reconciles the scattered children of Africa with their first, home.

Mama Day recounts the lives of Miranda. “Miranda functions as a healer and visionary, whose abilities to save children’s lives, birth babies, and provide aid and succour to the ill are legendary on the island” and, Mama Day’s “powers of conjure-used-for-good bring peace to the island and its environs (Duran 4).” Her healing works as therapy on all the three levels: physical, mental and spiritual wherein the psychological and spiritual experience get matured to create a psychospiritual perspective and transpersonal surface with individuality and freedom of mind and thought. It is a kind of psycho-therapy to clear the clutter from the mind and body.
Naylor employs three alternating voices in the introductory pages. The first voice belongs to the omniscient Mama Day and her sister Abigail; the second voice belongs to Abigail’s granddaughter, Ophelia also called Cocoa because of her light brown skin, living in New York City and coming back to Willow Springs on the occasion of Candle Walk.

Willow Springs. Everybody knows but nobody talks about the legend of Sapphira Wade. Sapphire Wade. A true conjure woman: satin black, biscuit cream, red as Georgia clay; depending on which of us takes a mind to her. She could walk through a lightning storm without being touched; grab a bolt of lightning in the palm of her hand; use the heat of lightning to start the kindling going under her medicine pot: depending on which of us takes a mind to her. (Naylor 3)

Nostalgia is a way to go back to their past and relive their lost identity. Naylor brings back her identity when she "implicitly juxtaposes active and passive forms of nostalgia through her depiction of Cocoa’s and Georgia’s reflections on Willow Springs, a home space that exists in memory, in imagination, and in its material reality” (Lamothe 156).

The conjure woman is called as “Sapphira Wade” (Hayes 674), the representative of the land. Sapphira’s death is immortalised in a local ritual called Candle Walk which takes the place of Christmas, itself tainted by commercialism when the residents of Willow Springs provide extra food and supplies to families whose crop did not do well that year. They march throughout the town carrying candles, singing and chanting “Lead on with light, Great Mother” (Naylor 111). Harmony between Willow Springs’ communities is restored at Candle Walk:

Things took a little different turn with the young folks having more money and working beyond the bridge. They started buying each other fancy gadgets from the catalogues, and you’d hear ignorant things like, ‘They ain’t gave me nothing last Candle Walk, so they getting the same from me this year.... There’s a disagreement every winter about whether these young people spell the death of Candle Walk’. (Naylor 111)

Miranda’s magic of striking Ruby’s house with lightning makes everyone sick. George is helpless. Cocoa undergoes hallucination. Miranda knows very well that she needs George’s help to rescue Cocoa. Miranda could command natural forces and could feel on-coming natural disasters. Her supernatural powers do not derive only from a mythical past but her experience of Willow Springs. Mama Day would communicate with nature which is reflected in her vision of using supernatural powers. “A wave over a patch of zinnias and the scarlet petals take flight . . . Winged marigolds follow them into the air. A thump of the stick: morning glories start to sing” (152). Miranda could interpret the signs and sounds of Willow Springs a real gift of African-derived tradition of divination: “these generally double-sided characters act as mediators between this world and the other, between men and gods, and between the rational and the intuitive” (143). “Outside white traditions, Willow Springs – with its Candle Walk instead of Christmas, its “standingforth” in lieu of funerals – is culturally independent as well” (Meisenhelder 405).

Mama Day also practices such grounds, in which George and Cocoa meet each other. Prospero, through his magic power, controls each and every things as well as people and, on the other hand; Mama Day, through her supernatural powers, controls and protects the Willow Springs and its folks. As Prospero uses his magic to control Caliban with the crudest sorts of physical punishment and eventually liberates Ariel, as Mama Day uses her powers to control hurricane, Bernice and witch Ruby and sets free Junior Lee from Ruby’s trap. Thus, control is central to the use of magic–control of creatures, spirits, natural elements and finally other human beings. Master of the isle and its residents as he was once King of Naples, Prospero uses sorcery as quasi–legitimate extension of his rule. Miranda has tremendous power but she does not practice magic. She mostly uses her herbs as well as seeds and relies upon the prescribed waiting period.
Mama Day shows a nonstop progression in her artistic imagination. Gloria Naylor creates the perfect conjure woman in Mama Day. She is much closer to her roots than the rest of Willow Springs, as is demonstrated with her conversations with her dead father and her experience while making the wedding quilt. She inherits her mantle of power from her great grandmother who the reader knows is versed in midwifery and witchcraft from the prefatory documents of the novel. Mama Day follows in her footsteps as a midwife and herbal doctor to her people. (Selvaraj 285)

Mama Day brings up the validity of her meditative healing with the mystical state to get rid of depression and anxiety to maintain the transpersonal relationship and their integrity. There arises a new evolution of consciousness which makes them forget their previous identification to lead to her identity of the “self.” Storhoff feels that “Naylor achieves in Mama Day what Gates calls a “speakerly text” – one that “would seem primarily to be oriented toward imitating one of the numerous forms of oral narration to be found in classical Afro-American vernacular literature” and “Mama Day’s voice serves as a spiritual ballast in the narrative, a guide to elemental truths (Storhoff 35).

When our body, mind, and soul work together, our psychotherapy leads to holistic approaches to the person with extraordinary experiences of embodiment and transpersonal experiences. Psycho-spiritual energy make a woman a holistic person to attain what is correct and what is required. Mama Day is such a woman with psycho-spiritual power to maintain smooth relations with authority. He becomes a healer and protector of her people and tradition.

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Harsh Reality of Childhood in Toni Morrison’s *God Help the Child*

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Abstract

Morrison’s *God Help the Child* is published in 2015, is narration by a girl protagonist. She is led to query her self-constructed adult identity and to address her past. In the course of the story, Bride’s body is textually grounded as the privileged site for the building of her identity, where the signs of an identity crisis will appear as symptoms of a childhood trauma. This article aims at analyzing how the novel’s revelatory structure links the actually unrelated transformations undergone by Bride’s body into a single narrative of secrecy and trauma. The novel draws on black feminism, gender studies, trauma studies, and an attempt to bridge the gap between two apparently different aspects: the thematic importance of the main character’s body and the peculiarities of the narrative arrangement used to tell the story.

Keywords: Trauma, body, womanhood, child abuse secret.

*God Help the Child* is a persuasive novel where one can feel the splendor just beyond the reach. The characters and storytelling are utterly influential, but too much is exasperingly defective. The novel describes the shape of a far grander book, where the characters are more fully travel around is far more at risk. The characters only can know the depth or significance of Bride, Sweetness, lesser extent, and Booker. Others can learn little so the narrative clearly demands much more. Sub-plots are prove that a deceitful co-worker and friend, Brooklyn that completes little. One of the characters who might appear the ripest for more growth, Queen, graces valuable few pages only. Yet still, there is the majesty, flaming beneath the surface of every word. The language, shifts in point of view and the brave of the novel’s principles are overwhelming. Morrison remains a powerful writer. She concentrates on attention and no matter the story.

In *God Help the Child*, the story of an adult woman’s in arrested growth. In Ernest Hemingway on Writing, the bearded misanthropist famously asked: “What is the best early training for a writer?” The answer is: “An unhappy childhood.” (*GHTC*) (15). In that case, the characters in 84-years-old Toni Morrison’s *God Help the Child* holds all the Nobel prize-winning authors like their creator and indeed Hemingway himself.

The direct of Morrison’s lean 11th novel includes a woman Bride, who was as eager for maternal affection as a child that she tells an overwhelming lie to win her mother’s attraction. Brooklyn, Bride’s
Dimensions of Women in New Literatures in English

best friend, is so toughened by her determining years that she seduces her friend’s boyfriend and taken her job. The boyfriend, Booker, had his youth hasten into pieces by the murder of his older brother, Adam. The planned behind cast contain child molesters getting away with murder and a deserted girl rescued from the streets after run away her mother’s offensive relationships.

The first section of the novel is divided into a series of monologues, conquered by Bride, and fleshed out by her mother, Sweetness, and Brooklyn. The opening stages feel harshly like Morrison caricature Morrison. The split is caused by her skin colour, which is significantly blacker than that of her parents. It asks likewise challenging questions of American acceptance and fairness:

“It didn’t take more than an hour after they pulled her out from between my legs to realize that something was wrong, really wrong. She was so black she scared me. Midnight black. Sudanese black” (GHTC 56).

Questionably the critical plot describes, however, is driven by a instant of noncompliance when Bride’s need for maternal love motivates her to tell a lie. This disloyalty of her primary value system is mirrored as she changes her name in the hunt for an important identity. Her affection for masks becomes something of a benefit in her business life. She becomes a success, a little bluntly, in marketing a cosmetic line called “You, Girl”. The name is given to her by the love of that week, a apparently arty mystery named Booker, who loves her skin quality in quite sinister fashion. Black is the new black, he tells to her persuasively, before instructs her to be dressed in nothing but white.

“You’re more Hershey’s syrup than licorice. Makes people think of whipped cream and chocolate soufflé every time they see you” (GHTC 58).

God Help the Child is an odd, fascinating but strangely indefinable novel. The narrative machinations, moving from the first person to a third person epic as Bride pursues Booker and herself. The voices prove rough while Sweetness is superbly dreadful - vanity made flesh - Bride is less persuasive. “Would someone that hip, cool and youthful use the word “pudenda”? Her story too is doled out in lumpy spoonfuls, with quite a lot of slop (Brooklyn, Sofia Huxley) simply falling out of view onto the floor. As the title suggests, the novel’s heart is obviously in the correct place. Stress “God”, and it sounds like an appeal for sympathy in a world that says it loves children then throw away, mistreatment, abandon and kills them.

The old wicked Sweetness returns full strangle when she find out Booker and Bride are going to have a baby of their own. Her narrow-minded just-you-wait unpleasantness is too bad to be true: “Listen to me. You are about to find out what it takes, how the world is, how it works and how it changes when you are a parent” (GHTC 107). But unluckily, God Help the Child takes only a light echo of that earlier novel’s influence. The tale revolves around a successful cosmetics designer who calls herself Bride.

The instability is more severe at the novel’s center. Bride meets just after her lover, Booker, has peremptorily rejects her. “If thoughts like that strike you as both fresh and somehow eternal, you’re in luck: There are a lot of them here” ( ). The upset of Bride’s misfortune causes her to lose her pubic hair. Soon her earring holes close up, her period stops and then her breasts shrink. In the semi-magical worlds Morrison has produced before, such strange touches appear both reminiscent and oddly natural, but in the plane language of this novel, they’re clunky signs, unnecessarily explain about changing back into a little black girl. It doesn’t help that Bride and Booker’s romantic travels which are not chiefly convincing are predicated on much more dramatic stories of pedophilia and murder in their pasts.

This interlude is astonishing, expressively multifaceted and oval without being sketchy. It’s everything, in other words, the rest of this novel should be. In spite of being a very winning focused, Bride as she prefers to be known is troubled by her unlikable reminiscences of her childhood. For example, the countless instances of sadism or of child abuse such as witnessing the rape of a young
boy by their landowner. As an adult too she is ill-treated and comes crossways other victims such as Rain. It is as if this drain of violence simultaneous with “normal” life is a given. There is a instant when Bride hopes that she can be right or wrong. She is in her childhood with a consequence she does not expect. While getting better from the incident, Bride concludes to set off on a pursuit in search of her boyfriend, Booker, who left from her life.

_God Help the Child_ is a well merge of all that is well-known in Toni Morrison’s novels and interviews. Morrison’s obsession with depiction of women is black culture and their history, race and child abuse. Her well skill as a master crafts person proves in the novel. There is a suggestion of magic realism in the storytelling along with the certain play of diverse narratives, juxtaposed in a manner that jerk the reader into understanding none of the narrators can be relied upon. Yet, every voice that tells their description of actions is a strong behavior. It is probable to envisage the speaker, particularly the women, obviously whether it is Booker’s elderly and kind aunt Queen, Bride’s mother Sweetness, ex-convict Sofia, or child prostitute Rain. The ending of the novel is frightening with its troubling note, ironically understood in conditions that offer optimism.

To conclude, _God Help the Child_ displays major hope. There is no doubt that the psychological and affecting childhood blemish that dwells in this narrative are somehow finally predetermined. Most of the main characters, true survivors of child abuse, skill a purifying modification in their lives. Rain finds in the hippy couple the choice of rising up and remedial from her childhood injury. All the characters of Morrison one way or another, carry the burden of childhood pain: “[A] set of connections, which extend from her [Bride] to Booker and on to a semi-feral girl named Rain [. . .]: a cycle of abuse, of molestation” (Ulin, 2015). Morrison “carefully explores the nature of victimhood and the consequences of domestic violence through a series of fascinating and believable narrators.” (Iqbal, 2015). Toni Morrison does not hide from exposing the harsh realities children face, and how the shocking past is continuously influencing their lives. _God Help the Child_ is a tribute to all the innumerable victims of domestic cruelty, an continuing dreadful drama that has no end.

**Work Cited**

Reading of Beatrice’s Recollections of Memory in Kazuo Ishiguro’s The Buried Giant

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Abstract
Highly inspired by the fourteenth century Arthurian chivalric romance, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Ishiguro recorded the The Buried Giant on the collective memory and forgetting, concentrating more on “the blank period of British history.” Recollections activate the mind moving towards the past journey of life to relive the happy moments or to learn lessons from the unwanted sufferings. There are two parallel lines interlinked to ensure the peace and nostalgia over the past memories. The first line carries the story of the couple Axl and his wife Beatrice who are in search of their son whom they believe to be alive. The second line tells the story of Sir Gawain, the Knight who tried to comprehend the morality between good and evil and the connection between present and past. Ishiguro has created a boatman Charon, the mythical character who would take the couple to the other island, the symbolical representation of Heaven or hell. Euphoria, the momentous joyfulness stays till untangling the mystery. Let the mystery stay as mystery to celebrate the existing joy of life and instructing the phantom of emotions to bury the giant of sorrows and reverberations due to grieves soulfully to stand the test of time.

Keywords: collective memory, recollections, Charon, Euphoria.

Introduction
Kazuo Ishiguro, the Japanese born British Novelist, screen writer and a short story writer was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature 2017, and Booker Prize for his most renowned novel, The Remains of the Day with themes such as “memory, time, and self-delusion.” His other works include A Pale View of Hills (1982), Artist of the Floating world (1986), The Unconsold (1995), When we are orphans (2000), Never Let me go (2005), and The Buried Giant (2015). The former Poet Laureate Andrew Motion has said that “Ishiguro’s imaginative world has the great virtue and value of being simultaneously highly individual and deeply familiar– a world of puzzlement, isolation, watchfulness, threat and wonder.” As Ishiguro feels that “memory is quite central” to him and he likes “the actual texture of writing through memory.”

Ishiguro’s The Buried Giant is a challenging work of medieval romance set in post Arthurian time’s talks of the Sixth Century...
King Arthur’s reign. Highly inspired by the fourteenth century Arthurian chivalric romance, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Ishiguro recorded the *The Buried Giant* on the collective memory and forgetting, concentrating more on “the blank period of British history.” Axl and Beatrice, an elderly Briton married couple traverse in the mainstream structure of the novel with their problems of memory loss. Everyone suffers from memory loss.

Recollections activate the mind moving towards the past journey of life to relive the happy moments or to learn lessons from the unwanted sufferings. In the former, recollection is a kind of willing journey to remember things with gratitude and reliving the ever loving moments of the lost life whereas in the latter, it becomes a caution not to repeat the unpardonable mistakes which had brought the ruin, a lesson to be taken from it. Recollection helps us on both ways to rejoice on our happy moments or to regret on our uncouth behaviours. It’s a meditative moment wherein the soul analyses the presence of God. It needs a lot of self esteem and considerable mental discipline to accept ourselves with all good and bad actions. During the course of recollection, the action which is vibrant creates reverberation, creating persistence of moods and sounds depending on the incident showing optimum explanations. It creates a kind of storm and feelings, as it creates in music or sound.

There are two parallel lines interlinked to ensure the peace and nostalgia over the past memories. The first line carries the story of the couple Axl and his wife Beatrice who are in search of their son whom they believe to be alive. The second line tells the story of Sir Gawain, the Knight who tried to comprehend the morality between good and evil and the connection between present and past. Ishiguro creates a dragon Querig which is old and feeble, a composite creature with unmatched parts. She has wings like a bird and eyes like a turtle. It is created by king Arthur to have a conservative force but this dragon becomes a problem to the people. The couple had to enter Querig’s land, which was possessed by the she-dragon as the mother of Grendel in *Beowulf*. Wistan’s quest is to slay the she dragon Querig as she is responsible for creating the mist that covers the land with amnesia. Father Jonus found that Querig caused the mass memory loss, due to “the mist.” The “mysterious Island” “had become cursed with a mist of forgetfulness.” The war is another greater cause for the memory loss, as “the thick mist” the symbol of forgetfulness covers the minds of the people so as to indulge in forgetfulness. The dragon Querig is not heroic because she is not the enemy. After Wistan killed Querig, the mist released memories with a few reverberations.

Memory carries both positive and negative sides which affected the protagonist Beatrice. Memories create will power and clarity, a clear way to focus their tasks. The other side memories create negative effect of fear, worries, shattering hopes, immorality, and guilty feelings. The couple believed very strongly that the bond between them is stronger despite their painful memories. “The christian monks leverage the act of forgetting in order to atone for the sins they have committed.” Gawain reveals father Brian’s treachery and has a feeling that the monks cast people to the beast in the tunnels because they know the mist will help them forget their sin. The entire novel is a challenging metaphor of the forgotten violence done by Arthur’s soldiers upon innocent Saxons. Mist is again used as a tool to keep up the collective forgetfulness with which the land suffers. But people were really happy as they forget others’ misbehaviors and they forgive all ultimately. The couple was really happy before regaining the memory. When they are in their normal sense they could find out that they lost their son. So they started their journey to find out their son. They come to know about their bitter past. Their unfaithful relationship was opened. Axl is a Briton who lives on the outskirts of their Warren away from the communal fire that keeps everyone else
warm though they live in dark without even a candle. They are trying to bury their past to live their present. Their past was filled with worst atrocities. As they restored their memories, there is no better feeling.

Before the mist could close their memory again, the Britons had attacked a Saxon village in which Axl took part by revealing himself to Witson and Gawain. The journey was disrupted because of a rainstorm. When they took their refuge in the ruins, they happened to meet a boatman whose job is ferrying the persons from the mainland to the Island. As the couple getting ahead on each step, they find their recollections one by one. Loss of memory disappears as the mist disappears after the risen Sun. As Ishiguro himself told The Paris Review, “You do have to choose a setting with great care, because with a setting come all kinds of emotional and historical reverberations.” Reverberations via recollections help the couple to realize their mistakes in life, the quarrel between Axl and Beatrice gave way to Beatrice’s adultery. Though Axl proved to be a loving and caring husband, his ignoring of Beatrice made her indulge in adultery for which Axl felt sorry.

Ishiguro has created a boatman Charon, the mythical character who would take the couple to the other island, the symbolical representation of Heaven or hell. In Greek Mythology, Charon is the ferryman of Hades, who carries souls of the newly deceased across the river Styx and Acheron that divides the world of the dead. Here the boatman acts as Charon who agreed to take them across the river to see their son but with a condition that they should be “bonded by love.”

The strength of the couple’s bond (and thus their worthiness) is judged by boatmen who question the supplicants about their shared memories. In this afterlife, Charon is paid not in coins, but in memories. It eventually becomes clear that what is best for Beatrice and Axl might not be what is best for England, and the elderly couple must come to terms with their individual responsibility in the face of bleak and destructive consequences. (Teng)

The readers are not sure whether the couple is also alive or dead, whether it is their journey before death or after death. They recollect things as they move forward in their journey and get so much of reverberations in every move to identify their real position. The boat image can be compared to the ship image, one of the classical symbols for Christians, with a mast shown as a cross, a sign of hope, below the tempestuous waves. The couple contemplates with the problem of memory and loss as “memory is selective, necessary and haunting. Memories are unreliable and often painful but personal relationship can’t be forged without them” (Rambler). They cannot remember their past. Though they live in their past, they inhabit an eternal present.

Ishiguro identifies the difference between the human treachery, betrayal, and the threatening of animals. According to Karen, the novel depicts that how “honourable knights fight to the death for damsels in distress, they aspire to impossible perfection, and they are unfailingly earnest and uncynical” (Rambler). “Memery that is deliberately suppressed whether by the Britons generally or by our two main character preserves less that it destroys” (Rambler). Parents forget children and knights forget their orders.

In the second layer, the novel’s emphasis is on the historicity of story setting. The Buried Giant creates visual forms of winding lane or tranquil meadow, the land is desolate, rough paths over craggy hills or bleak moor land and ogres. The Buried Giant makes us understand the history of obliteration people. The Historical and social context is revealed as The Buried Giant is set at the time of a war between Saxons and Britons. New Historicism is the contingent, stressing note in the development of the story from the Sixth Century to the Modern themes of Memory loss and forgetfulness. In the course of the Journey, the couple encounters many adventures and battles with ogres, pixes, dragons and menacing soldiers. The characters took up challenges as “Cultural poetics” view the history of challenges and declared it to be subjective to provide with the final truth. The giant who was buried, “now stirs.” Ishiguro makes a clear picture of the war and its
destruction: “Men will burn their neighbors’ houses by nights. Hang children from trees dawns. The rivers will stink with corps bloated from their days of voyaging. And even as they move on, our armies will grow larger, swollen by anger and thirst for vengeance (324).”

Ishiguro is of the view that “Tolkian that what has been forgotten can be redeemed.” Tom Holland in his “The Buried Giant review Kazuo Ishiguro ventures into Tolkien Territory” in The Guardian says that “the shimmering of literary influences within Ishiguro’s prose is like that of memories within a fading mind: fragments shored against ruin. Yet always, haunting the novel, lurks the possibility that the memories themselves may be false.” The couple’s quest was not in vain: “The quest undertaken by Axl and Beatrice is not merely a search for their son, but one that follows in the footsteps of Sir Gawain, and Tennyson’s King Arthur, and Frodo” (Holland). Our modern civilization makes us feel elated with “what is new and present” is the ultimate happiness and thus make us dig our past history along with our past life.

Mary Carruther’s *The Book of Memory* (1990), offers fresh insights into the function of memory in the medieval world by drawing on instances relating to the role of memory in the works of Dante, Chaucer, and Aquinas to the symbolism of illuminated manuscripts. In the words of Carruthers, “The difference is that whereas now genius are said to have creative imagination which they express in intricate reasoning and original discovery, in earlier times they were said to have richly retentive memories, which they expressed in Intricate reasoning and original discovery” (58).

The result ends up in unleashing the greatest of treasures or even ends up in discovering the deadliest of sorrows leading to the darker shade of our psychological state, a miserable condition. The truth revealed or the moment of revelation instead of escalating into a state of triumph, buries the couple into deep sorrow. Certain secrets of the past are to be buried or to be drowned in the ocean of history so as to reach “being and becoming.” Euphoria, the momentous joyfulness stays till untangling the mystery. Let the mystery stay as mystery to celebrate the existing joy of life and instructing the phantom of emotions to bury the giant of sorrows and reverberations due to grieves soulfully to stand the test of time.

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Internal Dimensions of Maya Angelou being a Child, an Artist, a Mother and a Social Activist

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Abstract

Maya Angelou believes that the real history is created by ordinary people. For her, the endless source of inspiration for writing used to lie in “amazingly noble human beings” and their sufferings. Maya Angelou is an African writer and social activist, who has been fighting against racial discrimination and women’s issues, ever since she started holding a pen for a purpose. The paper attempts to explore the internal Dimensions of Maya Angelou being a Child, an Artist, a Mother and a Social Activist. Keywords: liberation, sufferings, oppression, social prejudice.

Maya Angelou is one of the most renowned and influential voices of present world. She is celebrated poet, memoirist, novelist, educator, dramatist, producer, actress, historian, filmmaker and civil rights activist. She has published seven autobiographies, many books of essays, numerous books of poetry and is credited with long list of plays, movies and television shows. Maya Angelou is one of the most decorated writers of generation, with dozens of awards and over thirty honorary doctoral degrees. With the publication of her first autobiography I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (1969), deals of her first seventeen years, and brought her international recognition and acclaim. She was heralded as a new kind of memoirist.

As a person who dramatizes the songs and dances of various old traditions. She is in the position of giving dramatic expressions to other people’s words and music. But it is only in The Heart of Woman, the fourth of Maya Angelou’s autobiographical series, does she begin the difficult task of giving voice to her own narrative. In the more personal opening sequence of a The Heart of A Woman published in 1981. Maya Angelou and her son Guy are living communality on a houseboat near San Francisco, trying to bridge the gap between black and white and living on the savings which Maya Angelou had earned in California and Hawaii. After a year Maya Angelou and Guy move from the commune to a rented house near San Francisco and finally in 1959, they cross the continent to New York City. The Heart of A Woman begins in the following atmosphere.

As a story opens, Maya Angelou and Guy have moved from the security of Vivian Baxter’s home to a houseboat near San Francisco
that they share with four Whites. Her connection to her white roommates parallels her affinities with Kerouac, Ginsberg and other liberated white writers of the 1950s. Maya Angelou is still somewhat distrustful of White people. She does not describe either her character or the characters of her roommates in a positive way. She never names the people with whom she lives for almost a year, even though “naming” has been an important process in Maya Angelou’s writing. As autobiographer, Maya Angelou hastily bypasses the year on the houseboat, giving the impression that it was either, too unpleasant, too embracing or too trivial to recollect. However it is an evidence to prove the researcher that things have changed and the relationship between blacks and whites became liberal especially in areas in San Francisco.

In The Heart of A Woman Maya Angelou is seen as somewhat a relaxed woman becoming imaginative with her hairstyle and clothing. She particularly enjoys the experiment because her roommates neither ignore Maya Angelou’s and Guy’s skin colour nor do they romanticize it. Maya Angelou’s sojourn in a commune reveals her capacity for co-operation and anticipates her later group involvements with writers, actors and civil rights workers. Within a year, Maya Angelou is tired of sharing space and longs for privacy. She makes an unsuccessful attempt to rent a small house in a segregated white neighbourhood. But once again the theme of racial discrimination crops up as renting a house is not at all possible for the black people as the landlords mostly prefer the whites. Maya Angelou begins to encounter the racial prejudices similar to the episodes in I Know Why the Caged Birds Sings, where dentist Lincoln refused to look into her mouth or in Gather Together in My Name, when the saleswoman in Stamps insults her. “We do not interrupt students during class, for anyone. And we do not make a student a special case, just because he happens to be Negro. And we do not allow Negro boys to use foul language in front of our girls” (19).

Maya Angelou moves further to present the pain of social prejudice by deciding to change the school and the area “where black skin was not regarded as one of nature’s more unsightly mistakes” (21). She decides to move to the Westlake district where Mexican, black American, Asian and white families lives side by side in old rambling houses. Maya Angelou also finds the neighbours cordial and they speak with each other as they mowed their lawns or shaped in the long-established local grocery stores. Maya Angelou describes her new area thus:

I rented the second floor of a two-story Victorian, and when Guy saw the black children playing on our new street, he was giddy with excitement. His reaction made me see how much he had missed the close contact with black people. “Boy!” He jumped and wriggled “Boy! Now, I’m going to make some friends!” (21)

Maya Angelou becomes more relaxed in Westlake district. She begins to write sketches, songs and stories. She also meets the celebrated African American novelist John Killens who is in California writing a screen play from one of his novels Youngblood. Killens reads through her material, urging her to come to New York, where she will get feedback from other aspiring black writers. The first dramatic change in Maya Angelou’s character in The Heart of a Women occurs when mother and son move to New York, where she and Guy live with John and Grace Killens and their family in Brooklyn until they find an apartment of their own. Guy is at first skeptical and disapproving but they soon settle in by attending schools, meeting neighbours and “grappling” with differences they discover in leaving the West for the East. Maya Angelou now seems confident in her lifestyle, her self-assurance deriving in part from the close relationships she is able to form with black singers, actors and writers. Maya Angelou got an opportunity to move with Martin Luther King Jr. as she was introduced to a fund-raising project at the Village Gate by one Mr.Cambridge at a popular night club in Greenwich Village to benefit the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Called “Cabaret for Freedom” the fund-raiser is created, directed and performed by Maya
Dimensions of Women in New Literatures in English

Angelou and Cambridge with help from comics, dancers and other theatre people. Yet despite the cabaret project and a developing personal friendship, Maya Angelou and Cambridge never become lovers.

In The Heart of a Woman Maya Angelou becomes a far more public person than she was in the earlier volumes. She begins to identify with emerging civil-rights movement after working on the fund-raiser programme. Eventually Maya Angelou becomes Northern Coordinator of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). She is also committed to a women’s organization called the Cultural Association for Women of African Heritage (CAWAH). Soon after meeting the South African hero Vusumzi Make in 1961, Maya Angelou and the women of CAWAH almost halt the operations of the UN General Assembly when they conduct a sit-in at the United Nations building after the Prime Minister Zaire and Patrice Lumumba are assassinated in 1961. Maya Angelou and her friend Rosa Guy sought the support of Black Muslim leader Malcolm X. Maya Angelou and Rosa hoped that he and his organization with support the activities of CAWAH and make use of the energy incited by the protest gathering. But on the contrary Malcolm X did not approve the protest strategy. Even though Maya Angelou is disappointed with Malcolm X’s response, but she is entranced by his good looks and his fire, traits that had also attracted her to South African rebel Vusumzi Make. The second major change in Maya Angelou’s character occurs in The Heart of a Woman, when she meets Vusumzi Make, a freedom fighter recently released from a South African prison.

Vus Make appears to be the perfect choice for her husband as a handsome dazzling intellectual, given Maya Angelou’s desire to be loved and her growing concern for Africa liberation movements. Meanwhile, Maya Angelou is already engaged to a bail bondsman, Thomas Allan, a smooth man of “reddish-tan colour” who gives her “lavish satisfaction” (100). But Vus Make is electrifying, exciting and beautiful. If she marries Thomas, Maya Angelou would always regret her decision. Vus and Maya Angelou go through the emotions of marrying in England but such a thing never happened in Maya Angelou’s life. Maya Angelou reflects thus:

At the end of the string of parties, Vus and I left for England, leaving Guy in the home of Pete and T Beveridge, who lived a few blocks from my Brooklyn house. We sat on the plane holding hands, kissing, seeing our future as a realm of struggle and eternal victory. Vus said we would marry in Oxford, such a pretty little town. I explained that I wanted have my mother and son present at my wedding and asked if we could wait. (133)

But in London Maya Angelou and Vus begin to spend less time together. Maya Angelou starts associating with a community of middle-class African women who warn her that marriage to a African freedom fighter can often lead to desertion. As Maya Angelou listens to her sisters’ stories about their struggles and colonialism, she enthralls them with heroic tales about African American women. As Vus Make continues to neglect Maya Angelou, she again proves herself vulnerable to male authority as she was with Curly, L.D., Tollbrook, Tosh Angelos and other men in her past. In her role as Vus Make’s wife, Maya Angelou is confronted for the second time with the struggle between being a home-maker and being a professional, as she had struggled in her earlier autobiographies between being a mother and being a professional. As an African who had been trained only to see women as subservient, Vus Make is culturally insensitive to Maya Angelou’s needs as a working woman.

In one such hilarious sequence that occurs before they are a couple, Maya Angelou accompanies Vus to a Cocktail party in the Manhattan suite of a West African ambassador. Even though she was wearing her most flattering dress and can speak fluently about international politics in several languages, the guests ignore her because she is an American woman. Maya Angelou’s way out
of this embarrassment is to sit in the kitchen drinking gin with the black female cook. When Vus discovers Maya Angelou, he is humiliated and furious. Maya Angelou reflects thus:

Vus began to talk. I was his wife, the wife of an African leader. I had embarrassed him. Sitting in the kitchen, getting drunk with the cook. When he tried to talk to me, I had laughed in his face. No African lady would bring such disgrace on her husband. I looked at the other people in the elevator, but they averted their white faces. As neither Vus nor I existed in their real world, they simply had to wait until we reached the ground floor and then our sounds and shadows would disappear. (203)

Vus chases the drunken Maya Angelou around the lobby of the classy building where she eludes him, grabs a cab out from under the nose of a waiting woman and spends the night with her novelist – friend Rosa Guy. If Vus could be so uncompromising in New York, one can imagine his attitude when they move to Cairo. He expects Maya Angelou to honour the Egyptian custom of the husband providing for the wife. Moreover, Maya Angelou accepts a position as associate editor with the Arab Observer without getting Vus’s permission. In a torrent of fury, he reproaches her, suggesting that she is a man. All is chaos until a mutual friend and American journalist, David DuBois, persuades Vus that her salary would help them serve the revolutionary cause. David DuBois encourages Maya Angelou thus:

“Darling, you are a wonderful woman. Excuse the harsh words. You’re not arrogant. You are thoughtful. I appreciate your idea. But it’s not possible. You’ll never find work in Cairo.” “Vus, I have a job. Associate editor of the Arab Observer. I start tomorrow.” I watched the disbelief on his face turn to anger, then to rage. “You took a job without consulting me? Are you a man?” He stood and began to pace over the expensive rug. His tirade carried him from the sofa to the entry, over to the large chair and back to stand in front of me. His vilification included my insolence, independence, lack of respect, arrogance, ignorance, defiance, callousness, cheekiness and lack of breeding. I sat, watching him, listening and thinking. He was right. Somewhere in his swarm of words he had my apt description. I also understood that may be I had gone too far. Even an American black man would have found such a headstrong wife unsuitable, and how much more an African husband, steeped in a tradition of at least the appearance of male authority. (226-227)

During the course of time Maya Angelou begins to realize that Vus Make is too friendly with other women and too irresponsible with money. Their irreconcilable position toward fidelity and financial commitment require that they be examined. They decide to get separated and move the Egyptian court of law. The tribunal decides in Maya Angelou’s favour but asks her to stay with Vus for six more months. Maya Angelou agrees but when there is a job offer from Liberia, in West Africa, Maya Angelou accepts it.

Maya Angelou’s disastrous relationship with Vus Make evokes certain comparisons and contrasts to her marriage with Tosh Angelos in Singin’ and Swingin’ and Gettin’ Merry Like Christmas. It also recalls the failed marriage between Bailey Johnson Sr. and Vivian Baxters with its negative impact on Maya Angelou’s life as a child and a woman. In the course of her life, Maya Angelou introduces problems or conditions that echo other volumes giving them unity or offering points of contrast.

The most valuable aspect of her relationship with Vus Make is its connection to her growing romance with Africa. In the fourth and fifth volumes, Africa is a site of her growth – first in Cairo, the capital of Egypt and then in Accra, the Capital of Ghana. In these tightly interrelated volumes, Maya Angelou initiates a search for her ancestral past. A developing writer, her continuing identification with language and character makes her sensitive to her African roots. Maya Angelou begins to articulate her connections to African slaves who had been “shackled with chains” and made to carry the weight of their fears with the weight of their irons (257). Maya Angelou reflects thus:
I could look down from my window seat and see trees, and bushes, reverses and dense forest. It all began here. The jumble of poverty-stricken children sleeping in rat-infested tenements or abandoned cars. The terrifying moan of my grandmother, “Bread of Heaven, Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more.” The drugged days and alcoholic nights of men for whom hope had not been born. The loneliness of women who would never know appreciation or a mite’s share of honor. Here, there, along the banks of that river, someone was taken, tied with ropes, shackled with chains, forced to march for weeks carrying the double burden of neck irons and abysmal fear. In that large clump of trees, looking like wood moss from the plane’s great height, boys and girls had been hunted like beasts, caught and tethered together. Sacrificial lambs on the altar of greed. America’s period of orgiastic lynchings had begun on yonder broad savannah. (257)

Near the end of The Heart of A Woman, Maya Angelou meets her greatest challenge when Guy’s car is hit by a truck outside of Accra. An old couple found him on the road and brought him to the emergency ward. At the hospital while her son lies on a stretcher, Maya Angelou contemplates his rich golden skin “turned to ash-grey” (263). The deliberate repetition of her terror creates both an emotional link between the two volumes and underscores the impact of Guy’s injuries on both character and story line. The repetitions of car accidents in each volume of the autobiography heightens the dramatic effect and gives them intensity not achieved anywhere else in the series.

As in Singin’ and Swingin’ and Gettin’ Merry Like Christmas, The Heart of A Woman Maya Angelou remains in a state of flux, continuously open to changes in her life. These changes even involve her divorce from Vus Make and her suffering over her injured son. As she faces these problems, she continues the process of redefining her self. In The Heart of A Woman, Maya Angelou’s more stable character derives from the self-assurance that comes from long years of living and mothering, her success with writing and her engagements in theatre and politics. Maya Angelou’s self-assurance hinted at in earlier volumes is heightened in a The Heart of A Woman which is a major aspect of her character. As it is already observed, motherhood is the dominant theme in each of the autobiography of Maya Angelou. But it takes on a new complexity in The Heart of A Woman owing to the presence and absence of Maya Angelou’s mother, Vivian Baxter. The complications of the motherhood theme can be demonstrated by dividing it into three different issues namely Maya Angelou mothering Guy, Vivian mothering Maya Angelou and Maya Angelou mothering herself. In the opening sequences of the book, Maya Angelou defends Guy on two different occasions when he is accused of misconduct at school. She also tries to protect him against the outrageous tirades of blues singer Billie Holiday. As she gets ready to leave for New York, Maya Angelou observes that her son is changing that he is at the age of fourteen, “growing into a tall aloof stranger” (22). Despite his aloofness, Guy and his mother remain close throughout The Heart of A Woman. Mary Jane Lupton observes in this regard thus:

On one level, she improves in her ability to care for him and solicit his opinions; on another, she continues the persistent problem of separation begun in Gather Together and Singin’ and Swingin’ when she loses touch with his life and needs. (130)

Maya Angelou’s conflict with motherhood heightens in The Heart of A Woman. When Guy gets in trouble with some gangsters, Maya Angelou feels in a moment of fear that she has been, “capricious and too-often absent mother” (106). The motif of the responsible mother occurs frequently in the series. In Gather Together in My Name, Maya Angelou travels alone on a long bus ride to confront Big Mary Dalton who had kidnapped Guy. In an early incident in The Heart of A Woman Maya Angelou looks three white school teachers in the eye when they accuse Guy of upsetting some little girls. The Brooklyn gang event is also the result of a girl accusing Guy. Knowing the passions of teenagers, Maya Angelou takes extreme measures to protect her son.
When she confronts Jerry, the gang leader, she threatens to shoot his entire family if anything happens to Guy. Maya Angelou has a gun in a first to prove it.

The confrontation with Jerry reveals Maya Angelou as a strong, aggressive and too impulsive black mother who puts aside her guilt and self doubt in order to defend her son. Maya Angelou says in an interview thus:

I’ve always been adventurous or up to life. Even not adventurous, but when life says ‘Here you are, deal with it; I have dealt with it, or tried to. (Icon, 1997)

Maya Angelou in *The Heart of A Woman* becomes a representative of maternal power. In her dealings with the street gang, Maya Angelou’s embodies a type of black woman who can be described as the “outraged mother”. These types of outraged mothers are frequently found in the black American Women’s slave narratives. Maya Angelou represents the strength and dedication of the black mother.

Maya Angelou’s violent reaction in this episode goes back to *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, back to her rape, and back to the vengeful actions that grandmother Baxter and her family took against Mr.Freeman for rapping Maya Angelou. Maya Angelou’s violent behavior in handling Jerry may involve an incensing effort to rewrite her own history. Maya Angelou will be aggressive like the Baxter’s and she will not be passive like her paternal grandmother Momma Henderson who hit Uncle Willie in the Potato box when the Ku Klux Klan arrived. She also remained submissive when the three offensive white girls taunted her in front of the store. She slapped Maya Angelou and sent her away in Gather Together in My Name because Maya challenged a white sales woman. Maya Angelou will do whatever it takes to protect her son. At the same time, her aggression is played out against her fear that she cannot save Guy from harm, an attitude that reveals the vulnerability she feels as mother trying protect her child from any form of danger.

**Works Cited**