

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

**On  
Cultural Studies in Indian Socio-Literary Scenario  
by**

PG & Research Department of English  
V. O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, India

**Editors**

Dr.R.Ajith

Dr.R.Mercy Latha

Dr.P.T.Selvi Kohila

Dr.Anita Albert

Mr.P.Maruthupandian

Dr.Manju Muraleedharan

**Office:**

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## **PREFACE**

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you for your engagement and support.  
Sincerely,

### **Organising Secretary:**

Dr. R. Ajith, Assistant Professor of English

### **Coordinators:**

Dr.R.Mercy Latha, Associate Professor of English  
Dr.P.T.Selvi Kohila, Assistant Professor of English  
Dr.Anita Albert, Assistant Professor of English  
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Dr.Manju Muraleedharan, Assistant Professor of English

**PG & Research Department of English**  
**V. O. Chidambaram College,**  
**Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu,India**

## **Principal's Message**

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

**-Dr. C. Veerabahu**  
Principal, V. O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi

## **Keynote Address**

**Dr. Ashok Chaudhary**

Vice-Chancellor

Bir Tikendrajith

University Manipur,

India

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Congratulations to the Organisers!

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

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**Studies of literature and culture in “*Arms and the Man*”**

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**Serina.k,I** M.A. English,S.T. Mary’s college (Autonomous),Thoothukudi.

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**Abstract:**

“*Arms and the Man*” is a love drama written by Bernard Shaw. That is historically significant to the war involving the Serbs and Bulgarians. Numerous cultural theories are covered, such as those concerning feminism, classism, illusion, marriage, love, and numerous other cultural allusions. The central theme of the play is feminism. The real-life person who makes Raina think is Captain Bluntschli. Raina is lost in her imagined ideas, which have to do with prejudice. The contrast in social strata is a recurring theme in the play, as Raina's mother, who plays a significant role, wishes for her daughter to marry into a wealthy family. The play's theme of marriage and love also opens up an interesting discussion regarding women's right to choose who they choose to be with.

**Keywords:** Feminism, Love, Marriage, Classism, Illusion

**Introduction:**

The entire play is about different cultural clashes. The play's main cultural theme is the love and marriage of two distinct countries and two different people. The play takes place after the Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1885. The plot centers on the play's two major characters, Captain Bluntschli and Raina Petkoff. They met by chance and soon fell in love with one another. The features of the two characters are important in understanding the cultural and literary context. It also depicts the realities of the combat field, as well as women's assumptions about soldiers on the battlefield at that time. Raina is frequently spotted clutching a love novel. This gave her an illusion of the War fields. This reflects the social traits of the women.

The setting at the opening of the play reveals the people who live in a war zone and their anxieties about the arrival of the opposing soldiers, who are led by Bulgarian troops. This situation depicts the culture that prevailed in the postwar period of 1885. It also explains the troops' pathological existence on the battlefield and their hunger for nourishment. The play also explains how soldiers from other countries assist nearby countries in the conflict through the actions of Captain Bluntschli, a Swiss mercenary

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soldier who fights for the Serbian army. The play also depicts how women of that era were not educated on the realities of war through the behavior of Raina Petkoff, who fantasizes about the battle and the soldiers' glory. They are also portrayed as merely the warlords' glories and travels, rather than their actual lives, and the events are not shared with them. These may be seen in the play when Raina's mother, Catherine, speaks about the glories of Raina's fiancée Sergius, although Raina had no idea of the physical battlefield. She knew about the conflict from the books she'd read and other people's perspectives and experiences.

Feminism is one of the most important cultural philosophies explored in the play. The play's principal character is Rain Petkoff, who has been fantasized about in Romantic novels. She also learns about the war grounds from literature because women were not allowed on the battlefields at those times. She is also a standout character who opposes Sergius, for his betrayal. She is often referred to as the lady who is allowed to express her own feelings of love for Captain Bluntschli in a society where women are marginalized.

“To be beautiful, woman enough to have a black sweater, black skirt and walk arm in arm with the man she loves”

In the play, class division is prominent, Catherine, Raina Petkoff's mother, plays a significant part. She is the mother who wants her daughter to grow up in a prosperous home, so she intends to marry Sergius to Raina. After learning of Bluntschli and Raina's love, she is the one who opposes their wedding since he is not affluent; but, when she finds that Bluntschli is wealthy, she approves their marriage, symbolizing the play's class division.

The play's major plot is around a young Bulgarian woman, Raina Petkoff, who is already betrothed to Sergius, on the day after the war when enemy soldiers enter into the city to hide themselves, Raina forgets and keeps her window open at night in a post-war setting. A Serbian soldier enters her room from the window to escape his enemies, but Raina is terrified at first, and he forces her not to shout. Later, she strikes up a conversation with the stranger, and they begin sharing ideas; finally, they develop feelings for each other. The next day, she offers her father's coat to flee him from the troops. The next day Bluntschli returns the coat to the Petkoff, unaware that Raina has left an etched picture of herself in its pocket, suggesting to anybody who sees it that she still loves Bluntschli despite being engaged to Sergius. After a while, she realizes that he is a Swiss soldier, and he is well known to her father. Later, both fall in love with each other, which eventually leads to marriage at the end of the play.

Raina refers to Captain Bluntschli as "To her chocolate cream soldier." She writes it on the back of her portrait and keeps it inside Bluntschli's coat. In the play, Chocolate cream symbolizes delicacy, good society, and youth. However, Bluntschli's readiness to carry them in his pockets instead of ammo shows that they are also a symbol of maturity and knowledge "Oh, you are a very poor soldier-A chocolate cream soldier"

The play has an important place in culture and literature. Throughout the play *Arms and the Man*, the writer depicts cultural theories and their meaning for the woman, love marriage, Warfield, and many other cultural theories through the main characters. These cultural ideas elevate Bernard Shaw's play to the level of a famous work that serves as a cultural and literary emblem. The play also depicts the man's mental condition of flirtation or affair with other women, as well as how they abuse their freedom through the character Sergius.

"Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it"

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**A Professional Mother: Commodification of Breast Milk and Abuse of Subaltern Women Body in Mahasweta Devi's *Breast Giver***

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Saurav Saha, P.G. Student, Department of English, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry, India.

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**Abstract:**

Mahasweta Devi's stories become the mirror to the awful reality of women's lives in Indian socio-cultural scenarios, while also reflecting their ways of resistance. From time to time, the women's body has been the subject of commodification for social and economic gain by hegemony. Women have been attributed to the rigid title of motherhood and then exploited by the patriarchy. Devi addresses these issues critically in her story "Breast-Giver" with the character of Jashoda, a subaltern woman who is appointed as a wet nurse to the 'Haldar' family. The story demonstrates how the body of a subaltern woman is used as a source of breast milk for years for economic survival. She becomes the holy cow, who is well fed and nourished only till her reproductive organs work. The womb becomes a materialistic engine and once her breast dries up, she is thrown away by the hegemony, and she ends up dying an orphan. This paper examines how the body of a subaltern woman goes through multiple layers of commodification, first by the ones economically in power and second by the patriarchy. This paper tries to find out how milk and motherhood both become a source of exploitation for Jashoda who in spite of being a Brahmin becomes marginalised because of her gender and socio-economic status.

**Keywords:** Breast, Subaltern, Marginalisation, Motherhood, Exploitation, Body.

**Introduction:**

*Stanadayini, or Breast Giver*, is the second story from Mahasweta Devi's short story collection *Breast Stories*, translated into English by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Breast plays the central and most crucial motif in the story, where Devi brings to the forefront the commodification of mother's milk in a capitalist patriarchal society. Devi portrays the different types of rigid stereotypical roles that are associated with an Indian woman through the female characters in her story. In the story, Jashoda, a poor Brahmin woman, takes the role of a professional wet nurse for the offspring of the wealthy Haldar household, when her husband gets crippled for life in an accident. Patriarchy conspires together to attribute meaning and essence to the existence of a woman in the socio-

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cultural space. "Man, first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world – and defines himself afterwards.", says Jean-Paul Sartre in his famous lecture.

The main contention of Satre's philosophy of existentialism is, that "Essence precedes existence." Devi creates the character of Jashoda as a typical Indian mother who knows nothing more than her family and considers herself lucky when she is attributed to the position of the Divine Mother. She does not realise that she is a separate being, an individual, a woman, and believes that her maternal body can never be deficient in fertility. "Jashoda doesn't remember at all when there was no child in her womb... She never had the time to calculate if she could or could not bear motherhood. Motherhood was always her way of living and keeping alive her world of countless beings" (Devi, 39) Her ability to reproduce and breed babies constantly, and her aggregating make the wealthy Halder family turn her into a commodity as a professional mother. Her profession demands her to be continuously pregnant, for her body to continuously produce milk. She never gets the time to be a separate individual, because there is always a baby inside of her womb, or a baby sucking her breasts. In thirty-five years, she feeds over fifty children, exploiting breasts and reproductive organs that lead her to develop cancer at the end of her life. Devi points out how women are appointed as the primary caretakers by society whether they agree with it or not while men have complete autonomy over their decisions. "Such is the power of the Indian soil that all women turn into mothers here and all men remain immersed in the spirit of holy childhood" (Devi, 47).

Women share a profound importance in creating and sustaining a family, which is always taken for granted. Jashoda had always been a very faithful wife, with utter devotion to her husband, which displays the submission of Indian women towards their phallogocentric culture. Devi brings out the reversal of stereotypical gendered roles after the accident of her husband Kangali, who gets crippled for life. She takes the responsibility of bringing food to the family. The domestic mother now becomes the producer as well as the reproducer. Jashoda becomes a wet nurse, a professional mother who is "like a cow". (Devi, 53) feeds all the kids of the Halder family. Jashoda becomes the harvester of sustenance and nurturance, both biologically and economically, not only for the children but also for Kangalicharan. She becomes the reincarnation of Mother Earth, a symbol of divinity for the Halder household that emerges for her power of lactation. Devi ironically parallels the character of Jashoda with the Hindu mythological figure Yashoda, the foster mother of Lord Krishna. Mother Yashoda is worshipped in Indian culture for her selfless love for Lord Krishna. But in this story, the protagonist becomes merely a biological figure, commodified and exploited by the patriarchy in the cushioning of heroic maternity. Everything changed when her milk-sons and milk daughters started growing up into adults. With the arrival of the new

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wave, the new generation refused to give birth to so many children, and her value as a perpetual mother sank. Her husband refused to accept her because she didn't attract him sexually anymore. Left alone, after being sucked for almost 35 years, her breasts developed cancer and betrayed her. Her existence betrays her.

Feminism is one of the underlying dominant themes, showcasing the marginalised state of subaltern women in society. Not just the men but all the other women in the story including, the Mistress, the Haldar wives and Golapi exploit and marginalise her. Here we find out that women act as agents of patriarchy. Women not only submit to patriarchy but dominantly contribute to it. All of the women in the Haldar household are marginalised. And they in turn further exploit Jashoda and the other servants. Women in the story show a passive and psychological acceptance of patriarchy. They get exploited and pass this trauma to other women, who are below them on the social ladder.

The images of the Lion Seated goddess and people's appreciation played a major role in intensifying the essence of the identity of Jashoda. Devi establishes a protagonist, who fulfils the expectations of ideal women by the patriarchal regime. The Haldar household, especially the Mistress, refers to Jashoda as the "legendary cow of fulfilment". This seemingly noble title is highly selfish as it dehumanises her entire existence, only to exploit her body, and her femininity to preserve the health and beauty of the Haldar daughter-in-laws and their infants. Jashoda's breasts became the tool that ran the entire house. They gave sexual pleasure to her husband, bore his children and reared multiple babies of the big Haldar household for years.

She believed that her job of breastfeeding so many infants was a responsibility given to her by the divine, the Lion seated goddess. She compares herself to a tree, whenever she is in pain, or on the verge of asking herself if she is doing the right thing or not. "Does it hurt a tree to bear fruit?" (Devi 50). This becomes one of her numerous attempts to give meaning to her existence, which makes her responsible for her tragic fate. For her, the Goddess Mas created women to continue progeny and scorn all the women of the Haldar household for their inability to feed their kids. She is aware and afraid of the new wind that inspires women to care about themselves. "The moment a wife, or mother, or sister reads that paper, he would say, She'll say 'I'm a woman, not a sister, not a wife.'" (Devi 54) This leads to the death of her profession. When she is asked to leave the Haldar household after 35 years of nurturing the babies, because her bosoms have dried up, the essence of Mother in Jashoda loses its earlier status and gets reduced to a servant. Her discovery of Kangali's amorous flirts with Golapi strengthens her belief in the ineffectiveness of a desexualized maternal body.



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Humans lack a predetermined essence and therefore, they are forced to create essence themselves from nothingness. Motherhood for Jashoda becomes a way to give meaning to her life. She becomes the legendary Cow; her existence gets the essence of the professional mother following the dream where the Lion Seated goddess comes as a midwife. But she is forced to go into a state of mental anguish and agony when her situations make her realise that there is no God on whom she can rely anymore. The only person she can blame is herself and her actions that led to her painful destiny. She slips into an existential crisis when forced to abandon her being. The disease of cancer comes as another big moment of realisation for her. She finds it very hard to accept that her body in which she believed the Goddess resided can be germinated by a disease. She realises that the essence, the meaning given to her life by her dreams of the Lion Seated goddess, by her socio-economic condition, by the society around her and her home were all a façade.

After Jashoda returns to the Haldar household after getting thrown out by Kanganalicharan, what she starts missing is “a child at her breast”. She realises that the practice of suckling the children has become an obsession, motherhood for her had turned into an addiction after all the years of being in the trade. Her breasts, which she was bound to sell to the wealthy, ended up becoming the breeding ground of cancer, like a commodity after its expiry date. The Haldar family used Jashoda’s femininity as merchandise, which is highly shameful. By the time, Jashoda became aware that cancer had already spread in her body, she started hallucinating and was unable to think rationally. Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak who has translated most of Devi’s works in English gives this story a post-colonial angle and compares Jashoda’s sacrifice as the mirror image of India after decolonisation. The European colonists captured and looted the country in the name of enlightenment and modernization. Jashoda was commodified and exploited for her divine bosoms. She was exploited, milked, and then discarded showcasing the mindset of the nouveau-rich class in post-colonial India.

Structured within the socio-political setup of newly independent India and then during the 1970s and 1980s setup of subaltern ethos, Spivak makes an intense portrayal of the grief and agony of motherhood. Jashoda’s perception of herself was at large moulded by the capitalist and patriarchal ideologies that made the exploitation of her body as completely normal. Breast-giver portrayed the multi-dimensional repression and deprivation faced by women in Third World countries. She has been placed very carefully by the society in such a place where she has no hint of her exploitation and agrees in the commodification of her body. She is appointed as a professional mother in the Haldar household, to ruin her body so that the daughter-in-laws of the Haldar household can keep their bodies in shape, "They can keep their figures. They can wear blouses and bras of 'European cut'. (Devi, 54). Being a subaltern woman because of her

economic conditions, her breasts become a tool for her to survive in the struggle of existence. The phallus subjects in *Breast Giver* became the active devourers of Jashoda's sexual and paternal prowess. This generally becomes the fate of a subaltern woman in Indian society, making them bound to accept them submissively.

Devi brings out how the socio-cultural and economic spheres are bound into a complex web that primarily determines the essence of a woman in society. One is solely responsible for the choices made in life, but one tries to use religion as a shield on which responsibility can be shifted. The commodification of femininity is a truth that has been taking place in society for ages. Women themselves are responsible for oppressing other women, worshipping patriarchy that Devi succeeds in portraying in the story. In the end, no one is left to blame anymore, but herself, and the choices she made in her life. The title of motherhood, which gave meaning to her existence, for which she exploited her body for years, was only a tool for the hegemony to exploit her. Devi gives a harsh critique on the way of the world, where one who was worshipped as Mother Goddess and the Divine Cow, one who reared more than fifty children in her bosom, one who became the epitome of motherhood, in the end, dies an orphan without having anyone by her side and gets cremated by an untouchable. This deconstructs every notion of gender, class and motherhood that exists in society, referring to them as absurd.

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**Multiculturalism in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of loss***

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**S.Sathya,** Lecturer/English, Lakshmi Ammal Polytechnic College  
K.R.Nagar, Kovilpatti.

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**Abstract:**

The identity or sense of belonging to a group is known as cultural identity. It is associated with nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locale, or any other type of social group that has its own unique culture. It is a component of an individual's self-concept and self-perception. *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai's second book, tackles the issues her characters encounter. They frequently struggle with identity issues and give up in the end. While attempting to preserve their emotional bonds with one another, every character in the book battles with modernism and their cultural identity. Certain multicultural issues, such as diversity, identity, minority and ethnic rights, and post-colonialism, are depicted in *The Inheritance of Loss*. It explains how Desai portrays the immigrants' sense of humiliation as a result of systemic inequity. This paper discusses Kiran Desai's writings on cultural identity, paying particular attention to *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006).

**Keywords:** Multiculturalism, Culture, Identity, Social class, Inequality, Diversity

**Introduction:**

The term 'multiculturalism' is fairly recent in origin. However, cultural diversity has existed in a wide range of societies for a long time. Multiculturalism, often known as cultural pluralism, is currently the norm in many countries. There are countries where cultural variety is a common occurrence: people speak different languages, practice different faiths, and follow diverse cultures and practices. Culture is a distinct way of living. Great cultures arose from noble acts carried out by many generations of individuals. According to the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Sociology (Vol.3),...multiculturalism both celebrates and seeks to protect cultural variety (e.g. minority languages), while at the same time focusing on the often unequal relationship of minority to mainstream cultures. After decades of persecution, the prospects of indigenous or immigrant cultures are now helped somewhat by the support they receive from international public opinion and the international community (e.g. the United Nations). (537)

India is a multicultural country that values its vast diversity. It is a country with

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many cultures, languages, religions, and practices. Canada is frequently praised for its strong implementation of multiculturalism. Many Western countries have recognized multiculturalism as one of the most important aspects of today.

The term "multiculturalism" was first used in the country of America to refer to black and other minority communities' desires for equal representation in American culture, including educational institutions and other settings. Over time, multiculturalism blossomed into a movement. It maintains that American society has never been 'White' rather it's multi-racial with different backgrounds. Multiculturalism, as a movement, aims to emphasize the importance of separate ethnic, racial, and cultural communities that cannot be allowed to merge into a single culture. It encompasses a wide range of human differences, including race, ethnicity, culture, religion, national origin, occupation, socioeconomic level, age, and gender. The breadth of diversity is limitless. As a social theory, it applies to people of all backgrounds. At the same time, it can serve as a framework for assessing one's values, beliefs, and perceptions of cultural variety, human rights, and privileges in a society.

Multiculturalism values cultural diversity because it enriches our lives and improves our viewpoints. Recognizing the world's ideal cultural diversity allows us to quickly reduce the severity of some problems such as social conflict, discrimination, racism, xenophobia, caste, and gender intolerance. In addition to referring to tangible goods like cuisine, fashion, and attire, cultural diversity also refers to an individual's independence within a pluralistic community. Gurpreet Mahajan says:

Multiculturalism is not just a statement on the discrimination of cultural minorities in the nation-state; it represents an agenda in which promoting cultural diversity is considered an essential condition for ensuring equal treatment for all communities within the polity. (146)

It implies that cultural variety fosters a constructive rivalry between various belief and lifestyle systems. Culture does not exist in a vacuum; rather, it is expressed in many social groups. Thus, cultural diversity becomes a necessary component of human existence, and living in harmony with it is contingent upon one's affiliation with it. Cultural diversity is important because it teaches people to compare and identify with one other. Diversity also makes it possible to examine different parties, involved in the fraternities, and their socio-cultural identities by holding discussions with diverse ethnic groups.

Kiran Desai, a novelist, has established herself as a prominent writer, having been the daughter of a renowned Indian English writer. When one person's prosperity

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equals another's poverty, Kiran Desai accurately draws distinctions between the first and third worlds, shedding light on the suffering of exile, the uncertainties of post-colonialism, and the overwhelming desire for a better life. Kiran Desai like keeping things real. She sees the past as the necessary components of the present. She had an outsider's perspective when she left India. She now enjoys eating Indian cuisine, viewing Indian sculpture, and attending seminars and books about India.

In the realm of multiculturalism, Kiran Desai is the newest and most amazing name. Her second book, *The Inheritance of Loss*, won her the Man Booker Prize in 2006. World themes including multiculturalism, identity crises, loneliness, nostalgia, homesickness, migration, politics, education, social issues in the community, and isolation are the main subjects of this book. In the book, she delves into every corner of the globe. Her book's core focus is Indian people, Indian civilization, and Indian earth. The first intercultural clash in this book takes place in the northeastern Himalayan town of Kalimpong in 1986. The cook, Sai, and the judge are the main characters who reside here. Kiran Desai depicts all of her characters as living extremely challenging lives. The novel opens with a statement about how a revolution in the hills turned into a combat movement that was gathering weapons and soldiers.

One of the main characters in the book with a major part is the Judge, Jemubhai Papatlal Patel. He was born in 1919 in the Gujarati town of Piphit, which is small. He was the first member of his family to go to college in the West. The most significant multicultural perspective in *The Inheritance of Loss* comes from the judge's international experience. Every other character takes its cues from this judge. He departs from his hometown using unusual methods. He understands that he doesn't know much about the outside world. The way brown people and white people were treated perplexed him. An other occurrence is that no one wants to give him a room to rent. He goes to twenty-two houses in search of the room for this. One of the earliest disputes in British society is this one, which Jemubhai has bravely faced. In addition, he battles loneliness, solitude, an unusual skin tone, and an unusual accent.

A significant topic in the book is "Gorkhland for Gorkhas." This serves as the movement's motto. Indian Nepalese desired their own nation or state where they could govern their own affairs. They treat people like the minority in a place where they are the majority because they believe that. Accordingly, the study investigates how Kiran Desai portrays the characters' humiliation and powerlessness in the face of territorial conduct. The conflict between the two distinct cultures of Hindus and Nepalese makes clear that injustice and violence have been skillfully covered up as freedom and the pursuit of the common good.

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One of the themes of the book is Biju and his father's suffering as they try to figure out how to send Biju overseas. Desai attempts to explain how there are numerous obstacles in obtaining foreign. He tried everything to send his son to the United States, and everything finally worked out as planned. When the cook first arrives in Kalimpong, he travels with a sail agent. He makes announcements for wait staff, boat toilet cleaners, and those with the worst jobs. The local newspaper announced in an ad that they would be hiring attorneys in the United States. The town has been inundated with this news, which has sparked a tremendous reaction. Many people were interested in this position. Even though Biju faked his passport and made up stories to get into the interview, he was successful. But they were duped by the agent's large sum of money. The following time, Biju applies for a tourist visa and is granted. Biju is told by one of the candidates, who is also requesting a visa, "You are the luckiest boy in the whole world." (187). It demonstrates how enraged people are by immigration and how motivated they are in taking any action related to it. They merely want to move to foreign countries and dream of living a luxurious life; they don't care what kind of job or how much money they make. Nevertheless, one can see from Biju's situation that immigrants in the US face difficult circumstances.

The work features a prominent and noteworthy part for Panna Lal's character, who expresses a strong desire to immigrate to other nations. Kiran Desai introduces himself as the cook in Judge's home throughout the entire book. Being Biju's father, he made the decision to send him to New York. They are forced to take any action because they intend to travel to the United States. Biju is an immigrant from India who came to the United States in order to live a luxurious lifestyle and make more money. His dream of living a lavish life in America was the reason he left India. Many individuals have gone abroad from ancient times, settling in the United States, England, Canada, and many other nations. There are different reasons behind their leaving it differs from person to person. In *Namaste America Indian Immigrants in an American Metropolis*, Padma Ranagaswamy states, "Of course. The personal circumstances of migration differ from individual to individual, and for Indians, it is not just a matter of personal choice, but involved the entire family" (9).

Biju sells sausages for the first few weeks after arriving in America. His employer gave the order to examine his employee's green card. However, as Biju lacks any, the employer is appreciative of their termination. Kiran Desai wants to use her writing, which has a genuine vision, to portray the struggles faced by immigrants. Biju is alone in a strange country, estranged from his family, and unable to see them as he will not be able to travel back to the United States. This scenario demonstrates Biju's homesickness during his time in America. That makes you feel disoriented and homesick. Due to his inconsistent work schedule, Biju frequently switches employment.

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This time, he is hired by Le Colonial, which guarantees the authentic colonial experience.

Homesickness is another multicultural perspective that Kiran Desai emphasizes in *The Inheritance of Loss*. Biju's homesickness is truthfully depicted in the book, painting a vivid picture of the protagonist's true emotions and longing for his native country. Biju used to have a strong urge to travel abroad, but after moving there, he experiences loneliness. In the remote country, Biju is itching to get home and see his father, but getting him back is not an easy feat. He therefore encountered a newsstand one day and told him about the issue he was having with Nepalis in his native India. The novel's premise is largely applicable to Kalimpong, a little American town located at the foot of the Himalayan Mountains, and New York City, one of the largest cities in the world.

With its setting in both locations, the novel focuses on a realistic depiction of a wide range of human relationship and connection, including that of a little boy and a young girl, a master and servant, a father and daughter, and a husband and wife. Jembhai Patel, the husband and wife's association, believes that the judge is a complete failure. To him, Nimi, his wife, is merely a representation of himself, created for social validation and fulfillment. In actuality, Indian customs and culture view marriage as a sacred event in a person's life. Matrimony signifies a formally sanctioned bond that endures beyond sexual gratification and warrants an appreciation of family life. Rather than that, he disregarded all Indian conventions and traditions and cast aside all ties to family, morals, relationships, and love. Such behavior on the part of individuals is detrimental to culture and society.

The purpose of diversity is to draw attention to the status of women in Indian society. Although women's roles have evolved over time, they are still a significant issue in society. Kiran Desai uses the example of a woman changing her name after marriage to illustrate a common Indian habit. This is an ancient custom where men do not want to retain a woman's identify or name. This demonstrates India's predominantly male culture. Human relationships, loss of culture, loss of identity, loss of security, loss of serenity, loss of harmony, loss of reason, loss of human values, loss of faith, and loss of sense are all highlighted in *The Inheritance of Loss* and are essential aspects of each character's life. In his own India, Jemubhai too loses his own identity and culture and starts to see himself as a foreigner. The arrival of Sai, his granddaughter, causes him to lose calm in his life as well. Throughout her life, she also loses her own original cultural values. Values are infused into her blood when she studies in the English Western Christian convent. She experiences identity difficulties as well. A thoughtful and modern book, *The Inheritance of Loss* attempts to capture Kiran Desai's personal

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experiences of living in two different cultures. The novel demonstrates the profound effects of globalization. The novel's exploration of cultural variety through a cast of diverse individuals is another noteworthy aspect. Different types of people from various communities fill *The Inheritance of Loss*, and they connect, come together, and mingle with one another. However, they are distinct from one another due to their cultural, economic, and political peculiarities. The characters' lives are plagued by darkness throughout the entire book, and while it is true that there is a lot of prejudice, loneliness, and cultural diversity in the world, this does not negate the existence of wishes. In the end, Kiran Desai reveals not only her own experiences but also the discreet exchanges of recognition among immigrants, those living in exile, and outsiders who are all burdened by the past. She primarily discusses respect, love, tolerance, kindness, and selfishness. In *The Inheritance of Loss*, she expertly emphasized the socio cultural differences between the East and the West.

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**An Ecofeminist Reading of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions***

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**Dr. Samikshya Pattnaik**, Assistant Professor, ADGIPS, South Delhi

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**Abstract**

*The Palace of Illusions* is a retelling of The Mahabharata by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. The novel invites an ecofeminist approach towards the story of Draupadi in more than one way. This paper focuses on the status of women vis-a-vis nature in the novel. Women irrespective of the time they belong to face discrimination by the male dominated society. Women and Nature are being treated unfairly by the patriarchal society. But Draupadi is portrayed as a woman of substantial agency rather than a mere victim of the system. She is presented by Divakaruni as a powerful, courageous and determined woman who can challenge the norms of Patriarchy to change the course of history.

**Keywords:** Women, Nature, Identity, Patriarchy, Ecofeminism

**Introduction:**

Ecofeminism is a social movement which has emerged from feminism and environmentalism. It argues that the domination of women and the degradation of the environment are consequences of patriarchy and capitalism. Ecocriticism focuses on the relationship of nature with human beings as represented in literature. This paper aims at examining Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *The Palace of Illusions* from an ecological viewpoint. Moreover, it invites the readers to re-evaluate feminine dynamism and strength from an eco-sensible perspective. The domination, subjugation and exploitation of women is clearly seen in the novel. But despite those discrimination and marginalisation, women have risen above the patriarchal societal norms. They are able to create an identity of their own by rejecting the norms and values that restricts the freedom of women.

Ecocriticism has emerged as a branch of criticism which focuses on Environmental criticism, also known as "green" criticism. It focuses on the relationship between human beings with the environment and nature. It is the interdisciplinary study of the connections between literature and the environment which examines the

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differences between nature and its cultural construction.

The founder of 'ecocriticism' or 'green studies' is Cheryll Glotfelty. The word 'Ecocriticism,' coined in 1978 by William Rueckert, the pioneer in the field of Ecocriticism. According to him Ecocriticism is the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature. It serves as a bridge between nature, literature and human beings. The theory of Ecocriticism starts with three major nineteenth century American writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau. Their works celebrated nature, wilderness and the life force.

Chitra Divakaruni is one of the most acclaimed and well known writers of our time who is famous for depicting the strong female characters in her works. She represents the interconnectedness of culture and nature in her fiction. Her comparison of the female characters with nature and their mistreatment takes an ecofeminist stand. Her writings deal with the themes of diaspora, gender discrimination, women empowerment, history, mythology, identity politics and (eco)feminism. The Palace of Illusions is a retelling of the Indian epic, The Mahabharata. The novel is not different from the original one in its theme but what makes it remarkable is the narrative technique. Instead of presenting the story through a male narrator or protagonist, the author has chosen a female character. It gives the readers a different perspective to understand the most famous epic of all time. The Mahabharata is retold from the perspective of Draupadi. This allows readers to see the story in a new light with a deeper understanding of Draupadi's character. The novel also explores themes of gender roles, power dynamics, and the man-woman relationship. Since the beginning, The Mahabharata has always been narrated as a masculine story about the male characters in the epic whose downfall is due to a woman. When Divakaruni decided to rewrite Draupadi, she gives her a voice to represent the resistance against gender based oppression. Her character challenges traditional gender roles and highlights the importance of women's agency and autonomy in society.

Draupadi is an embodiment of natural elements for she was born out of fire. When she emerged out of the sacred fire, the prophecy said to her father, King Draupad, "Take good care of her, for she will change the course of history."<sup>(5)</sup> Her course of life eventually led to the war of Kurukshetra resulting in the death of millions and wide spread destruction of man and the environment. The great war causes enormous havoc to human civilization leaving behind extreme suffering and pain, and also overlooks the destruction it caused to nature. The entire story revolves around male ego and its subsequent war, through which Divakaruni brings the attention of the readers towards nature. since ancient times war has caused harm to nature and with time the destruction and devastation has increased manifold.

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Divakaruni is also critical of the unquenchable pride and abusive attitude of man that destroys, subjugates and exploits nature for his selfish needs and to satisfy his ego. Arjuna's act of setting the entire forest on fire in Khandava is an evidence of it. "The forest was still burning around us...I was uneasy. I kept hearing the cries of animals, though I knew that couldn't be there weren't animals left in the wilderness of khandav-not since Arjun set the forest on fire.(141)

The damage was so deep that it left Draupadi uncomfortable and made her mind blank when she was asked by her husbands that what she wanted to have in the settlement of their new kingdom. And when she was able to speak the first word she uttered was 'water'. She wanted water to rejuvenate the barren and dead landscape and the live giving perennial source to give comfort to birds as well as to her own self.

"They were waiting for an answer so I said the first word that came as I stared at the dead landscape. Water. I want water. Everywhere. Fountains and pools, ponds for birds to sport in."(145) Nature also brings the ideas of freedom from the constraints of mundane life. Draupadi feels a sense of dejection within the confined cold walls of the palace of Kampilya and Hastinapur, "I hated most of all that the ground had neither trees nor flowers. King Draupad believed the former to be hazard to security. . . the latter he saw no use for -and what my father did not find useful, he removed from his life" ( 6). Instead she wants to escape to a world of flowers, trees and birds for her company. She closes her eyes and imagines,"a riot of colours and sound, birds singing in mango and custard apple orchards, butterflies flitting among jasmine". (7)

Any type of settlement is anthropocentric in nature especially when man turns blind towards the damage done while using natural resources according to the whims and fancies. This human attitude that considers nature as its subordinate is strongly criticised by Ecocriticism. During their exile in forest, the Pandavas ruthlessly used forest resources for their survival. Anthropocentrism is reflected in the novel, when Draupadi relates how Nakul and Sahadev brought fawns for her to pet, without any regret of separating the new born from its mother. "Nakul and Sahadev brought me fawns to pet."(199) on the other hand the same has provided them all comfort and peace for more than one instance and nurtures them with her bounty. "Bheem dug up roots and shook ripe fruits from tress." Draupadi recounts her experience when Bheesma invited her for a walk along the banks of the Ganga. She admitted that she unexpectedly found "the wild flowers, round and yellow with black centres, the random piles of white stones on the river bank" strange and assymetrically beautiful though "she preferred gardens to wilderness"(134). Even when she has her own garden she find solace and comfort in the lap of nature, "The Palace of Illusiond was my domain...in the cool fragrant garden(for here it was always cool) listening to the bulbul sing(150)".Through

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her character Divakaruni also traces on the healing power of nature. It does not only heal our minds but also our bodies. Nature protects us as and when we need it. "A group of tribal women offered him small green bananas from their baskets and asked...had the herb they'd given helped.(136)

Moreover, the tension resulting from court affairs and the enmity between the Kauravas and the Pandavas often led bheeshm to find peace and comfort in nature and which is why he often walked on the bank of the river. his words make it even more clear, "Its very pretty there...the river holds many memories. She offers you the ones you most long to know".(134) Just like Draupadi and her brother who were the product of the sacrificial fire. every human being is a product of the elements of nature. River Ganga was the mother of Bhishma. All the sons of Pandu were born out of the elements of nature.

Nature can be the provider and the protector in during the worst of times. And this can be noticed the way Draupadi feels when she was at her lowest. When Dussasan tried to uncloth her after her husbands, the Pandavas lost her in the infamous game of dice, she thinks of Krishna and finds herself in a tranquil garden, "The sounds of the courtroom faded - Dussasan's grunts, the whispers of the watchers. Suddenly I was in a garden. There were swans in a lake, a tree that arched above, dropping blue flowers, the sound of water falling as though the world had no end. The wind smelled of sandalwood. Krishna sat beside me on a cool stone bench." ( 193)

Even when Abhimanyu was killed in the war Draupadi faces the devastating tragedy by laying "on the hill under the great wheeling stars" (290).

Draupadi recollects the memories of the war wrought land and how Yudhisthira went into depression after his victory in Kurukshetra as he sat on the banks of The Ganga, "staring at the devastated land where nothing would grow, thinking of the millions whose death-anguish had poisoned the air" (319)

The damage caused by men was also objected by Vyasa, the author of the Mahabharata. He discussed several events like natural disasters which resulted in ecological imbalances. Draupadi also narrates how Vyasa emerges when both Aswatthama and Arjun released their Brahmaseershastras, "As the two flames coursed along the sky, oceans began to dry up and mountains to crumble. Men and beasts screamed their terror, for the fabric of the world was about to be ripped apart. Watching from the edge of the tale, I was forced to intervene, though that is not my preference. I stepped out between the flames and raised my hands. By the power of penances, for a moment the astras were rendered immobile. I chided the two warriors for forgetting

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themselves and their responsibilities toward the earth-goddess. I demanded that they recall their weapons".(307)

But Krishna has already warned Panchaali of the consequences that one has to bear while building a kingdom which can only be done through war,"How else could you have settled here? Built your kingdom? Gained all that fame? Changed the direction of history's wheel? Someone has to pay a price for that. You of all people should know this, Krishnaa." (144)

Elizabeth Gould Davis writes about the affinity between the women and nature in her book, *The First Sex* (1971), "Man is the enemy of nature: to kill, to root up to level off, to pollute, to destroy are his instinctive reactions.....Woman ... is the ally of nature, and her instinct is to tend, to nurture, to encourage healthy growth, and to preserve ecological balance. She is the natural leader of society and of civilization, and the usurpation of her primeval authority by man has resulted in uncoordinated chaos".(Elizabeth 335)

But the last moments of her life, her hatred gives way to a liking for the wild, untamed nature, "Nature, whom I'd encountered often enough in my wanderings, had always seemed my enemy, her only purpose to add to my discomfort. But today I couldn't keep my eye off the peaks, the way the light slid and shimmered along them, turning them into different shades of gold as the day grew older. There was a sharp sweetness to the air. I breathed it in great gulps, holding it until my lungs ached, and still I couldn't get enough. (345)

Divakaruni has presented the character of Draupadi in such a way that it reflects strength and an indomitable spirit. Presenting the epic from a feminine perspective is the first step towards advocating the agency of women and empowering the entire gender. For centuries women over the world are forced to be in the periphery and treated as the marginalised. She even questions Vyasa about why he is writing her fate without informing her. Being a woman of substance and free will she has her own desires and opinions. But what makes her dismayed is that no one, neither her father nor her husbands and not even the sage ever ask for her opinions. She never considers it appropriate when they discuss her in political terms "I was distressed by the coldness with which my father and my potential husband discussed my options, thinking only of how these acts would benefit — or harm — them" (118).

Most of the incidents that take place in the life of Draupadi reflect the sufferings, miseries and exploitation of women. This indicates women in general used to be always treated as the 'other' or marginalised. It is evident from the incident when

Draupadi was gambled away by her husbands in Duryodhan's court. She was humiliated by Duryodhan's act of tyranny in the court in front of all the elders: "I found myself in court, a hundred male eyes burning through me. Gathering my disordered saree around me, I demanded help from my husbands" (191). Yudhisthir in a game of gamble with Shakuni and Duryodhan not only loses his kingdom but also his brothers, himself and Draupadi. When Draupadi comes to know about this, she could not understand what was done to her as an individual, in a mode of denial she expressed her aghast, "I'm a queen. Daughter of Drupada, sister of Dhrishtadyumna. Mistress of the greatest palace on earth. I can't be gambled away like a bag of coins, or summoned to court like a dancing girl." (190). Though, she is a victim of male supremacy, she represents the clear assertion of female strength. Divakaruni has made Draupadi not only as an agent of action but also the narrator. She is portrayed as a model of female empowerment and courage, trying to break free from the shackles of patriarchal hegemony. The work emphasizes on the interconnectedness between women and nature that defines the relationship between ecology and feminism. As human have dominated earth and other living and nonliving things for the sake of satisfying their needs and desires, men have also exploited women for showing their dominance and priorities by using them as tools of pleasure.

This novel provides a platform for the readers to analyse the exploitation of women and nature by men time and again. But both women and nature provide multifaceted evidences for their inevitable role in the life of men. Divakaruni beautifully conveyed the message that it should be the moral duty of every individual to have a caring attitude towards nature and not of domination or exploitation. And both Nature and Women should be treated with respect. The author has certainly given a new outlook to the ancient epic in her novel *The Palace of Illusions* which centres around ecological concerns and women empowerment at the same time.

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**Subverting Western Feminism: An Analysis of *Jasmine* by Bharati Mukherjee through the lens of Chandra Talpade Mohanty's "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses"**

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**Shreshth Dua**, Student MA in English with Communication Studies, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Taverekere, 560029, India.

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**Abstract**

This academic paper undertakes a comprehensive analysis of Bharati Mukherjee's novel, *Jasmine*, through the lens of Chandra Talpade Mohanty's seminal work, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." It explores how Mukherjee's narrative subverts Western feminist notions by depicting the protagonist, Jasmine, as a third-world woman navigating her immigrant experiences in the United States. The paper highlights Jasmine's agency in resisting traditional gender roles and religious ideologies, challenging the homogenization of women's experiences in Western feminist discourse. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing the specificity of individual experiences, particularly for third-world women in a postcolonial context. Through an analysis of Jasmine's portrayal, the paper underscores the complexities of cultural identity, power dynamics, and resilience amidst adversity. By integrating themes of alterity and literature, the paper contributes to a deeper understanding of how immigrant women negotiate and redefine their identities within diverse cultural landscapes. This cultural studies approach advocates for more nuanced analyses that acknowledge the intersectionality of gender, culture, and colonial legacies in shaping women's experiences and narratives.

**Keywords:** Subverting, Western Feminism, Culture, Postcolonial, Third-world woman

**Introduction:**

Bharati Mukherjee, an Indian-born American writer, has efficiently explored the life of an immigrant, Jasmine, and her journey from a small village in India (Hasnapur) to the United States of America, in the novel titled *Jasmine*. The novel was published in the year 1989. The author's personal experiences have contributed to the narrative to a certain extent as the author was seven years old when India became independent and she vividly remembers her paternal grandmother shouting nationalist slogans at the front gate of their middle-class, Bangla-speaking neighbourhood. The author eventually settled in the United States of America, which had no direct colonial

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history with India. Thus, the experience of uprooting herself from one culture and gradually setting down roots in another culture became her urgent material with respect to her writing career. (Mukherjee) This paper aims to delve deep into analysing the manner in which the titular character of the novel, Jasmine, subverts the idea of “women” as a category of analysis with respect to the Western feminist discourse and situates herself as a third world woman in a postcolonial world.

Geographically, the nation-states of Latin America, the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia, China, South Africa, and Oceania constitute the parameters of the non-European third world. In addition, black, Latino, Asian, and indigenous peoples in the U.S., Europe, and Australia, some of whom have historic links with the geographically defined third world, also refer to themselves as third world peoples. (Mohanty 5) Thus, the protagonist of the novel, Jasmine, who has her roots in India but eventually settles in America, is representative of a third world woman.

Western feminist discourse singularly focuses on gender as a basis for equal rights. Such a form of a singular focus takes the form of definitions of femininity and sexuality in relation to men (specifically white privileged men) (Mohanty 11). This kind of a discourse refers to “women” as a category of analysis and assumes that all humans of the same gender, across classes and cultures, are somehow socially constituted as a homogeneous group identified prior to the process of analysis. Thus, the homogeneity of women as a group is produced not on the basis of biological essentials but rather on the basis of secondary sociological and anthropological universals. This, in turn, gives rise to preassigned labels for women such as “powerless,” “exploited,” and “sexually harassed.” This paper will focus on three specific ways in which “women” as a category of analysis is used in Western feminist discourse and the way in which Mukherjee moves away from them and offers an alternative in her novel *Jasmine*.

### **Objectives**

- To analyse the portrayal of the titular character, Jasmine, in Bharati Mukherjee's novel *Jasmine* as a subversion of the Western feminist discourse's categorization of "women" and its implications for third-world women.
- To examine Jasmine's journey from a small village in India to the United States of America as a narrative that challenges the homogenization of women as victims of male violence, religious ideologies, and familial systems within Western feminist discourse.

### **Literature Review**

Bharati Mukherjee, an Indian-born American writer, has efficiently explored the life of an immigrant, Jasmine, and her journey from a small village in India, Hasnapur, to Jalandhar, to New York, and eventually to Iowa, in the novel titled *Jasmine*. Thus, one of the most prevalent themes in the novel is immigration.



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The article, ““The Messiness of Rebirth as an Immigrant”: Bharati Mukherjee’s Changing Language of Migration,” written by Ruth Maxey examines how the Indian-American author Bharati Mukherjee explores the complexities of the immigrant experience through her evolving use of language. The article provides an extensive account of Mukherjee’s evolving language of migration and the ways in which it both supports and undermines her literary and cultural project at different times.

The author draws Said’s analysis of the Orient and Occident from his book, *Orientalism* (1977), in order to study the impact of Orientalism and its lasting influence prevalent throughout the course of the novel. The article looks into the influence of colonialism and immigration that gives rise to hybrid identities. The author concludes by mentioning the significance of a hybrid identity and assimilation as a survival tool in a postcolonial world for an immigrant.

The story of the novel, *Jasmine*, revolves around the protagonist, who goes through a series of transformations and inhabits a unique identity at different stages in her journey in life. Therefore, one of the most significant themes that is prevalent throughout the course of the novel is identity formation.

While existing works on Bharati Mukherjee’s novel *Jasmine* extensively explores themes such as immigration, hybrid identity, and identity formation, there remains a significant gap in the analysis concerning the subversion of Western feminist discourse through the character of Jasmine.

The literature review reveals a rich body of research that examines various aspects of Jasmine’s immigrant experience, including her linguistic evolution, hybrid persona, and continual transformation. However, there is a notable absence of scholarly engagement with the ways in which Jasmine’s narrative disrupts and challenges the homogenizing tendencies of Western feminist discourse.

The research gap lies in the need for a critical examination of Jasmine’s portrayal as a site of resistance and subversion within the context of Western feminist discourse, drawing upon theoretical frameworks such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s critique of colonial narratives and essentialist constructions of gender. Such an analysis would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of Jasmine’s narrative trajectory and its implications for broader discussions of feminism, postcolonialism, and resistance.

#### Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this paper draws from Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s seminal work, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial

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Discourses." Mohanty's critique of Western feminist discourse serves as a foundational lens through which to examine the portrayal of the titular character, Jasmine, in Bharati Mukherjee's novel *Jasmine*.

In analysing Jasmine's narrative trajectory, the theoretical framework informed by Mohanty's critique allows for a nuanced examination of how Mukherjee's portrayal challenges and subverts these dominant narratives. By interrogating Jasmine's agency, resistance, and negotiation of identity within the intersecting realms of gender, race, class, and nationality, the analysis seeks to unravel the complexities of her experiences as a third-world woman in a postcolonial world.

a. Women as victims of Male Violence

The novel begins with Jasmine recalling an event from her childhood that took place in Hasnapur village under a banyan tree. When she was just seven years old, an astrologer predicted that she would become exiled and widowed. When Jasmine challenges the astrologer, he laughs and knocks her out before going back into his trance. Jasmine stumbles and strikes her head on a pile of sticks. As a result of the fall, she sustains a bleeding star-shaped cut on her forehead. Her sisters exclaim, "Now your face is scarred for life! How will the family ever find you a husband!" (Mukherjee 5) However, Jasmine instantaneously breaks away from their "solicitous grip" by stating that the wound is actually her third eye, not a scar, and that she has subsequently grown into a sage. The use of the phrase "third eye" is a reference to Shiva, the God of Destruction in Hindu mythology who is also meant to be a symbol of mercy (Kain 3).

Later in the novel, the readers are introduced to the captain of the ship that Jasmine takes to Florida who goes by the name Half-Face. He was a demolitions expert in Vietnam before he became a captain. After a long journey, Half-Face ironically offers Jasmine a ride in his truck to keep her safe from "bad fellows." He drives them to a ramshackle motel in south Florida. He then pulls Jasmine into the room and assaults her. He boasts about the different kinds of electronic gadgets in the room. Jasmine mentions her husband being an expert at repairing televisions. This triggers Half-Face and he then slams her head against the screen and accuses her of lying about having ever seen a television set. The way Half-Face imposes himself on Jasmine resonates with the kind of a relationship that is shared between a colonizer and a colonized wherein the latter is deprived of any form of agency whatsoever.

Thus, *Jasmine* successfully subverts the idea of viewing women as victims of male control multiple times through the kind of resistance she displays and, in turn, takes charge of her agency. The quote from the novel, "For every monster there is a hero. For every hero, a monster," (Mukherjee 114) efficiently drives home the point of

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the argument. Jasmine is therefore able to break away from being labelled as an archetypal female victim in a postcolonial world.

b. Women and Religious Ideologies

After the tragic demise of Prakash, Jasmine's husband, in a bombing at the saree shop, she decides to travel to America in order to complete the "mission" of Prakash. Jasmine plans to take Prakash's suit to the campus of the institution wherein he had gotten admitted, Florida International Institute of Technology, and then to lay out the suit there. She'd then fill it with twigs and papers, light it up, and herself lie upon it in the white cotton sari, in order to fulfil the practice of *sati* which is a part of Hindu tradition in which a widow sacrifices herself by sitting atop her deceased husband's funeral pyre. However, Jasmine eventually decides to go against her plan and goes on to live her life in America without being bogged down by the "responsibility" of adhering to the tradition with respect to the practice of *sati*.

Thus, Mukherjee does not fall into the trap of establishing a ritual of a particular religion as the sole reason for depicting gender inequality and in turn subscribing to reductionism. This kind of an approach robs women of their agency as they are then subsumed under religion that is presented in fundamental terms.

c. Women as Universal Dependents and Familial Systems

Jasmine's relationship with her husband, Prakash, does not fall under the trap of conservatism. Their marriage is dowry-less and thereafter they live in their own apartment despite protests from relatives. Prakash is a proponent of gender equality and social progressiveness in India, and also wants Jasmine to want to be a modern woman in order to break away from the traditional Indian values. Thus, their relationship is not mutually exclusive like that of powerful and powerless or oppressors and victims, and therefore cannot be compartmentalized. This, in turn, highlights the fact that privileged positioning and gender difference should not merely be viewed as the origin of oppression.

The idea of viewing women as dependent beings and designating or defining them within and by the family as a wife, mother, or sister is challenged by Mukherjee in the novel. Jasmine refuses to marry Bud despite his persistent proposals since his perception of her is extremely stereotypical and problematic. Bud seems to be attracted to Jasmine's darkness but "her genuine foreignness frightens him" (Mukherjee 26). This kind of an outlook of Bud presents Jasmine as the "other" in a postcolonial world. The feeling of "otherness" gets deeply rooted in the mind of the immigrant like that of Jasmine and the subsequent feelings of dislocation and alienation then remain at the core of the psyche of the immigrant (Sharma 7).

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On the other hand, she says, "Taylor didn't want to change me. He didn't want to scour and sanitize the foreignness." (Mukherjee 185) Thus, Jasmine eventually realizes that it is not she who fits the role of Bud's caregiver and makes the decision to be with Taylor towards the end of the novel. She claims, "There are no harmless, compassionate ways to remake oneself. We murder who we were so we can rebirth ourselves," (Mukherjee 29).

The novel therefore effectively foregrounds the idea that the assumption of viewing women as sexual-political subjects prior to their entry into the arena of social relations need to be challenged and subverted in order to then focus on the aspect of subjective historical specificity, which becomes imperative especially in the context of a third world woman in a postcolonial world.

### **Conclusion**

Mukherjee efficiently traces the journey of Jasmine from a small village in India to the United States of America while demonstrating the way in which the image of a third world woman should be constructed in a variety of social as well as political contexts that often exist simultaneously and are overlaid on top of one another.

Thus, the novel, *Jasmine*, does not succumb to the different kinds of cultural reductionism as Mukherjee mindfully focuses on the contradictions inherent in a woman's location within various structures. This, in turn, helps in devising effective political action and challenges. Mukherjee does not allude to easy generalization with respect to "women in the third world." She moves away from reinforcing binary divisions between men and women on the basis of power relations or sexual differences. This is evident from the manner in which she does not view Jasmine as a mere victim of colonialism but as someone who is able to resist, challenge, and subvert the process at various junctures.

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**Representation of Society and Social Trauma in Perumal Murugan's  
*One Part Woman***

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. **Shane Happy Desai**, Lecturer, Shah K. S. Arts and V. M. Parekh Commerce College, Sardar Patel University, Gujarat.

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**Abstract:**

Perumal Murugan is a Tamil writer. He was born into a farmer's family in a town named Thiruchengodu in Tamil Nadu. *One Part Woman* is the title of the English translation of Murugan's novel *Mathorubhagan*. The Tamil title of the novel is derived from the Tamil term used for the 'androgynous' form of lord Shiva as 'Ardhanarishvara' in Indian/Hindu mythology. This paper focuses on the ancient societal practice related to the stigma of childlessness/barrenness. Apart from this, the paper also centralizes the controversy that was sparked after the publication of the novel. The novel pinpoints certain social/religious and dogmatic beliefs of a small farming community of Thiruchengodu region known as the Gounder caste. The novel also falls in the category of Proscribed/banned Literature, as after four years of the publication of this novel, the Gounder community of Thiruchengodu region started demonstrating against the novel and multiple criminal complaints were lodged against the author Perumal Murugan on the grounds of obscenity, blasphemy and defamation.

**Keywords:** Social dogmas, cultural Stigma, proscribed literature, ostracism, beliefs and myths.

**Introduction:**

The plot of *Mathorubhagan /One Part Woman* is set in the author's native town Thiruchengodu, Tamil Nadu during the Colonial Period of 1940s. The novel focuses upon the married couple Kali and Ponna. They have been married happily for more than 12 years but they are without any child of their own. In the Gounder Caste, childlessness is seen as social stigma, more for the wife who is seen as a 'barren' woman. Even the husband is considered incomplete as a 'man' if he does not have a son to inherit the property. Murugan's novel captures the daily struggles and sufferings of this lovely couple due to their childlessness. The wife Ponna is insulted frequently publicly by the people of the community. She is even excluded from participating in community's religious rituals and festivals. The husband Kali, on the other hand, is pressurized to take up a second wife. But Kali refuses to do so due to his genuine love for Ponna. The

couple also undertakes the recourse of temple visits, prayers and offerings, vows made to different gods/goddesses and also observes fasts to end their childlessness but with no avail. As a result, the couple is advised to participate in the chariot festival held annually at the Ardhanarishvara Temple. This festival is observed for a period of one month. On the 8th day of this festival, the idol of deity is brought in the chariot from the temple located at the top of the mountain. This idol is brought down in the flat land among the people to offer their offerings in the honour of the deity. And on the 18<sup>th</sup> day the idol is taken back to the temple on the mountain. Attending the festival on this particular day/night (18<sup>th</sup> day/night) is considered very important in the Gounder Caste/community. Kali and Ponna are also advised to attend the festival on this particular day/night because of the community's ancient practice associated with the curse of childlessness. On the 18<sup>th</sup> day/night of this festival, the societal norms regarding extra-marital relationship are relaxed. According to the custom, a childless married woman can have intercourse with any stranger male in order to become mother. All men present in the festival are considered as 'god' and so having physical relationship with any one of them is not seen as a social taboo or a religious sin. Not only that, the child conceived in this manner is considered as a gift from God. Such a child is accepted wholeheartedly by the family members on both the sides, including the husband. The novel depicts how Ponna's family as well as Kali's mother conspire to send Ponna to this festival to receive the blessing of 'a child' from a stranger male seen as 'God'.

In 2014 (four years after the publication of this novel) the Gounder community of Thiruchengodu region started demonstrating against this novel. This community took offence against this novel and claimed that it insulted the women of their community by portraying them in an objectionable manner and also disrespected the Hindu deities. More than 10,000 copies of the controversial passages from this novel were distributed publicly to seek and secure the support of local populace against the novel. An official complaint demanding the arrest of the author as well as the publisher and to issue a ban against the book was lodged. Following these public demonstrations and protests, the police initiated a 'peace-talk' between the author Murugan and the representatives of the Hindu right-wing groups. Due to the immense social pressure from these groups, Perumal Murugan offered his unconditional apology for having written this novel. He also agreed to withdraw the book from the public domain. This was also followed by the death threats given to the writer and his family. As a result, Murugan declared his death as a writer in 2015. Soon after this, he announced his decision to stop writing and declared that the author in him is dead on a Facebook post in January 2015. His FB post reads: "Author Perumal Murugan has died. He is no God, so he is not going to resurrect himself. Nor does he believe in reincarnation. From now on, Perumal Murugan will survive merely as a teacher [...]. Please leave him alone. Thanks to everyone."

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Even after this public announcement of his literary death, multiple criminal complaints were lodged against him on the grounds of obscenity, blasphemy and defamation. In 2016, a petition was filed with the Madras High Court to nullify the forced settlement against the publication and circulation of the novel. The High Court finally quashed all the court proceedings against the book and the writer. It ruled in favour of Perumal Murugan by quashing the forced settlement and dismissing all the criminal complaint against the author and the book. The court's judgement was seen as a mark of victory for author's freedom of expression. In the verdict delivered by the Chief Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul on July 05, 2016, the court made the observation: "The choice to read [the novel] is always with the reader. If you do not like a book, throw it away. There is no compulsion to read a book. Literary taste may vary – what is right and acceptable to one may not be so to others. [All writings, unpalatable for one section of the society, cannot be labelled as obscene, vulgar, depraving, prurient and immoral. The author and artistes like him cannot be under a constant apprehension that if he deviates from the oft-treaded path, he will face adverse consequences. Let the author be resurrected to what he is best at: 'write'.]" (document)

This instance, or the sparked controversy proves that how society, customs, rituals and human beliefs are directly interspersed to literature. Not only that, but this incident also shows the amalgamation not limited only to the social and literary discourse but also it extends to the legal discourse. It also presents a wide philosophical, psychological as well as religious spectrum that how literature impacts and affects the society absolutely and provides the evidences and a base that any work; be it a novel, story, play, and even a film is a socio-cultural construct. On the other hand, it also depicts that society and literature are overlapping. It leads one to think that the concept originated in Saussurean structuralist theory, i.e., binary opposition is true, even if analysed with the context of society and literature. The very existence of literature is depending on the presence of the society and vice versa.

Apart from this, the title of the novel, *One Part Woman*, is analysed then it seems that it is an ambiguous title lacking the second half of the sentence. If the same title is extended further then, it may occur as 'One Part Woman, (Other Part Man)'. At the microcosmic analysis of the title as well as the novel, the book itself refers to the connection between society and literature. One part is literature and other part is society. This also indicates that the oneness of male and female breeds the world: "There is no female without male, and no male without female. (Murugan 30). In this context, there is no literature without society, and no society without literature. The world exists and goes on, only when they are, though separate, combined together.

Generally, sex outside the boundaries of marriage or extra-marital



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sex/relationship is considered as a social taboo, but if the same practice gets associated with a custom, ritual, the idea of immorality turns topsy-turvy and the practice which was considered as taboo in the society is completely accepted. The debate arises here is, how are taboos form in society, and what are the norms of acceptance and rejection of the practices. This makes it difficult to think, upon whom the onus should be put.

Looking from socio-cultural aspects, having a child in the Indian society is considered to be like a 'great achievement' and thus, this notion comes up with various realistic stereotypes, myths, superstition. Not having a child brings a halt to a happy marriage life. The female protagonist in the novel, Ponna can be seen facing an identity crisis, (interstitial identity); as she thinks she cannot fulfil her duties as a wife nor she will be able to become an ideal mother (if she may conceive a child), so the idea of motherhood is also challenged. "Motherhood, in a word, serves critical cultural functions in India's hierarchical society – stratified by gender, caste, and class – that are masked by psychological or sentimental discourses...Indian women are keenly aware that their reproductive capacities are an important source of power" (qtd in Parveen and Radhakrishnan 48). This makes her psychologically numb and paralyse in terms of her identity. Therefore, the idea/issue of interstitial identity, 'in-betweenness' and liminality can be seen through the character of Ponna and in her psychological movement. The (pseudo) identity of a 'childless, barren woman' overturns and subdues Ponna's real identity of female, daughter, and wife. As per this stereotypical view of society, the female body becomes a very symbolic site where psychological trauma is perpetrated. Thus, the idea of 'agencylessness' also emerges in this book. As being a woman, Ponna is left with no choice of her own as the customs, rituals and beliefs are imposed on her, making her choice-less and reluctant entity.

The novel also pokes at the limitation of the society: the same society which considers having a physical relationship outside the boundaries of marriage immoral, forces the couple to take liberty and go beyond the 'purity principles' of the society merely to get a social status of being parents. Hence, the novel openly criticizes the norms of the society and also reflects the paradox, 'dual-ness' of a society as in the name of ritual and custom the society legalizes the unaccepted practice, which socially and psychologically destroys the happy institution of the couple. The chariot festival in the novel is also lampooned as the young boys without having any sense and significance of the ritual attends the 18th day/night merely to have sex with a woman. This instance also mocks the pious structure of marriage. Hence, *One Part Woman* stands at the verge of a sharp paradox with itself and the Indian society. The novel questions the very sanctity of the Indian marriage and spiritual bond. On the other hand, the female is given a position of a deity in the Indian society, but Ponna in the novel faces many hardships even after being a woman and dutiful wife. When talked about

the marginalized condition of women in Indian society, there are various layers which adds to it. It starts first with being a woman, then woman of lower caste, a childless, a widow and so on, pyramiding the imposed identities, social degradation of a female, and cultural hegemony in the society. Not only the rituals and customs portrayed in the novel are paradoxical to the Indian society but also the representation of the characters also stands at the contradictory ends. The definition, quality and identity of being a woman is also attacked and questioned in the novel due to the stereotypes, rituals and customs. When talking about the women characters and the dominance of male on them, Ponna is not the only one to suffer but there is an instance of the tribal girl who was raped and strangled to death. The tribal girl is the microcosm of bearing the physical male brutality, while Ponna is the macrocosmic sufferer of patriarchy and social hegemony in many ways: psychologically, emotionally, physically, individually, and socially. The tribal girl and Ponna are the victims of the society but on the contrary, both the mothers (of Kali and Ponna) are equally blamed, and both stand at the culprit's end. Here two pairs of women are seen, one victimised and other victimiser; same gender but different identity and quality. Advocating the futility of the customs and rituals, the story also paints the psychological collapse of the couple as in the name of ritual and, bearing child for the sake of social status, Ponna's body is traded for a night without her husband's knowledge. The female identity as well as body is mocked at by the sinister behaviour of the society towards femininity. In order to attain the true self and identity, the novel passes the message that one should soar out of the social circles and ideological confinements made by the society. The pain and trauma faced by the couple is bio-social. The agony is very much physical/biological/psychological but indeed it is created and imposed by the society on them. In a satirical manner, it can be said that Ponna, to a certain extent becomes pregnant, not with a child but with trauma and pain.

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**Cultural and Historical Representation in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal**

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**Mr. K.Siva Madasamy**, PhD Research Scholar (Full-Time), P.G & and Research Department of English, V.O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi – 628008, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

**Dr. V. Chanthiramathi**, (Retd), Research Guide, P.G & and Research Department of English, V.O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi – 628008, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli

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**Abstract:**

Bringing the country together to attain independence and restore civil rights, the Indian National Movement was one of the largest and most popular mass movements in world history. Prohibition of alcohol and clothes from foreign sources, encouragement of Indian enterprise, and education were among the issues brought forward by nationalist movements. Among the main objectives of the Indian National Revolutionaries were the elimination of the salt tax, the lowering of taxes on the middle class and the impoverished, and the requirement for elementary education. It ended a powerful colonial empire and inspired young people from all castes and classes to take up political causes. The nation battled to break free from colonialism's bonds. The goal of national leaders such as Surendra Nath Banerji, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Mahatma Gandhi was to support the increasing unity of the Indian people by uniting them in their fight against colonialism, as they acknowledged that India was not a fully structured nation. *Rich Like Us* and *Plans for Departure*, two of Nayantara Sahgal's main works, aim to understand the past, culture, and history in light of the current political and historical context. These fundamental issues are covered in both works to a satisfactory degree.

**Keywords:** Independence, Nationalist movements, Salt tax, Colonialism, Nayantara Sahgal, Political activism.

**Introduction:**

Nayantara Sahgal is a well-known female author whose works attempt to portray India's history and culture. She has shown India's colonial past in vivid detail. Its primary historical events concerned the 200 years of British control over India. She paints a picture of how the colonial authority exploited Indians politically and

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economically. In this sense, her works might be classified as political-historical. Researcher want to examine this facet of Sahgal's chosen literature in the remainder of this paper. The term "colonialism" or "colonial consciousness" has to be defined. It portrays the political climate, the hegemony of one country over another, the methods of exploitation, and the lack of dedication on the side of the people concerned.

Colonialism is the practice of the powerful and dominant classes controlling the land and the nations, as shown by the British colonization of India and many other nations. Fighting against colonialism and its colonizers to reclaim one's freedom and reclaim rights that have been taken away is known as anti-colonialism.

Because every generation has new reasons to examine its past, historians interpret the past. The reason history matters is that it shapes our culture. Over sixty years have passed since the departure of the British, but Nayantara's political beliefs and narratives have not diminished despite the passage of time and geography. Sahgal draws attention to a few historical occurrences. She has gained knowledge over time. She looks at the opinions of leaders like Nehru, Gandhi, and others about the reconstruction and deconstruction of history. Her novels depict Indian culture and values.

Nayantara Sahgal is connected to this history since her youth coincides with this time in Indian history. She is the first Indian woman author in English who addresses historical and political issues in an effective and stunning manner. Sahgal watched images from the Indian liberation struggle that were taking place all throughout India. She grew up observing the movement's leaders. She often witnessed them heading to jail. Her parents fought colonial powers, and her uncle Jawaharlal Nehru regularly visited jail cells. She was raised on the values of her maternal uncle Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi.

She has captured many of these situations in her novels, such as *Storm in Chandigarh* (1969), *Rich Like Us* (1985), *Plans for Departure* (1986), and Events Like Satyagraha movement, Gandhi's Salt March, Lahore conspiracy case, hunger strikes, and non-cooperation them, because she has been surrounded by such stalwarts, their works, and personalities. The locations of *Lesser Breeds* (2003) and *Mistaken Identity* (1988) are imperial India. These novels portray India's political turmoil as well as the country's long battle for independence and resistance to colonialism. She writes about the political turmoil and upheavals of the 1975–1977 time period in her novel *Rich Like Us* (1985). As common people banded together and resisted the Emergency, she responded to the social changes that were occurring in that atmosphere. The appropriate era of the story's casting, the British era of Indian governance, is shown by Sahgal in

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*Mistaken Identity* (1985). The partition of the Punjab caused a great deal of uprooting, as the 1969 novel *Storm in Chandigarh* portrays. Sahgal aims to portray the significant political developments within the Gandhian framework.

According to Lakshmi Sinha, "personalized fiction" is a good way to describe Sahgal's literary universe in this context. In Sahgal's works, autobiography, politics, history, and personality coexist. (Sinha, 42) Sahgal's work exhibits a deft blending of fact and fiction, which is seen in the progression from her 1957 debut novel *A Time to be Happy* to her 2003 novel *Lesser Breeds*. Sahgal focuses on a few significant moments during Mahatma Gandhi's India Nationalist Struggle.

The current study focuses on Sahgal's two novels, *Rich Like Us* (1985) and *Plans for Departure* (1986), in which he exposes the excessive repression of people's freedom. One of Nayantara Sahgal's most captivating, ambitious, and intricate books is *Rich Like Us* (1985). The book is devoted to the "Indo-perspective," which holds that European explorers initially arrived in India in pursuit of the profitable spice trade. Dutch and English industries were later established in India. English was adopted as the official language of teaching in Indian schools in 1835. The British people wanted to end child marriage, the sati system, and the exploitation and corruption of the caste system. The Indian elite with Western education was likewise opposed to these causes. In addition to bringing new transportation, telegraph, and railway systems to India, the British also introduced new educational institutions, which inspired Indians to fight for their nation's independence. However, they also began to dominate most of the subcontinent and disapproved of regional customs. The historical events of the first two decades of the 20th century are discussed in *Plans for Departure* (1986). It depicts the First World War-era domestic unrest in Europe and the enchanted effect of Bal Gangadhar Tilak's ideas on the exploited Indian population. This book marks a significant turning point in her development as a writer. It transports the reader back in time to the colonial era and paints a picture of the subcontinent on the verge of a catastrophic World War I, ready for upheaval and disruption.

In *Rich Like Us* (1985), a number of Indian families from the 1970s are shown as they navigate the most unsettling political, economic, and cultural shifts of the time. The upper class's presence during the emergency was the focus of the narrative. The work addresses a wide range of topics, including the amassing of money, unfairness toward the impoverished, the changing position of women, political situations, Indian family values, patriarchal culture, and the injustices committed against individuals during the Emergency. Sonali and Ravi Kachru, Rose and Ram, Mona and Dev, the novel's protagonists, come from diverse social classes. Their generations are distinct from one another. The narrative takes place in pre-independent India in the 18th and

19th centuries, when the country was subject to oppressive British rule and was plagued by societal ills including casteism, sati, and untouchability. Sahgal emphasizes the lesson Sonali, the young female Indian government servant in this book, battles to find reason and truth in her country, India, which is always changing. Many women, like Sonali, have demonstrated reluctance to continue living in a patriarchal culture.

A noteworthy portion of history (1914) is recounted in *Plans for Departure* (1986) through the eyes of Miss Anna Hansen, a Danish spinster. The novel explores issues like the status of women, the interaction between men and women, east-west trade, British imperialism, and the Indian National Movement. The world was on the verge of collapse during the devastating 1914–1918 war, which was focused in Europe. Anna saw the poignant yet unforgettable image of those difficult days. When Miss Anna traveled to India from Denmark, Sir Nitin claims that someone questioned "Why was she here at all" (*Plans for Departure*, 16). It is as a result of her choice to visit India in order to better understand herself. Her goal in visiting India is self-realization. She delays her marriage to English Ambassador Nicholas out of a quest for self-realization. The story opens with her relationship with Nicholas, her participation in the suffragette movement, and her Danish residence. She learns from the suffragettes that it takes bravery and dedication to bring about political change. Her curiosity about Indian independence demands is piqued by this realization. "I suddenly said to myself, in my next life, I hope I am a man," Anna said, having studied about Hinduism. However, I gave up on waiting too long and freed myself to live this life. Requirements for Departure, 55 Her trip to India is a statement of her yearning for personal development. Anna Hansen connects her outward experience to her interior evolution, even though she had already made the decision that she would not be born a man.

In the novel, departure serves as a unifying metaphor. The work demonstrates the structural oneness, and Anna emerges as a symbol for the fight for change. The first to arrange his departure is Henry. "A few years ago, I was prepared to quit," he says to Anna, "but Stella wasn't on board." Strangely, Stella is about to leave, and her mysterious departure portends another departure. "Anna immediately began to plan her departure due to the mystery surrounding Stella's departure and Mrs. Croft's death." (Hedge, M.G., 139)

One might deduce from these two works how Sahgal has rewritten Indian and global history. She discovers many important similarities between the many regions of the world, such as the downtrodden people struggling for their nation's liberation. She portrays the objectives of the Indian national movement and the sacrifices made by its citizens. In order to learn about these historically significant occurrences, figures, and sacrifices made by several courageous Indians, it is crucial to revisit the past. She also

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examines the underlying corruption and false ideals that continue to exist in Indian culture. Not everything about the past is lovely; some unpleasant parts exist and must be acknowledged and addressed.

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**New Historicism and Patriarchy in Kavita Kane's Ahalya's Awakening**

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**C. Sivasankari**, Research Scholar, Department of English, Government Thirumagal Mills College, Gudiyattam.

**Dr. P. Vasuki**, Associate Professor, Department of English, Government Thirumagal Mills College, Gudiyattam.

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**Abstract:**

In mythological fiction, Ahalya is perceived as a stone figure who was punished for adultery by her husband, Rishi Gautam. In Kavita Kane's "Ahalya's Awakening", Ahalya is Portrayed as a bold and straightforward woman who reveals the injustice and punishment she received for adultery. Further, she is ambitious with dreams and desires for cognitive upbringing. From Kane's perspective, Ahalya is a marginalised female character who is presented as the symbol of eternal chastity. The Patriarchal society exploits Ahalya in many circumstances. Though she is a mute character in many versions, her character is relatable to contemporary societal issues. In India, adultery is a crime under social laws. Adultery has been considered as a sin and punishment. In India, many adultery crime cases are prevalent in society. The traditional Indian culture, whose roots are still nourished with morals and ethics, has never supported adultery in any form.

**Keywords:** Myth, Culture, Adultery, Patriarchy

**Introduction:**

In India, culture and tradition are deeply intertwined with mythology, a powerful force that has the ability to shape and transform contemporary society. Mythology's influence is far-reaching, directly impacting the social, political, cultural, and religious frameworks of modern society. It not only leads civilisation but also shapes people's culture and attitudes, providing a rich tapestry of stories and beliefs that continue to resonate today.

As an institution, marriage has traditionally upheld monogamy's values, where chastity, purity, and faithfulness are the cornerstones of man-woman relationships. These values are often reinforced through myths and legends. However, over the ages, the concept of marriage has evolved, embracing a more inclusive and progressive

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approach. It has moved away from being just an event of convenience to a platform that provides identity and freedom to women, thereby changing the social norms and making room for individuality.

Kavita Kane is a contemporary fiction writer who has deliberately attempted to unmute the voiceless characters in mythology. She gives a new version of the magnificent epic. Valmiki's Ramayana version identifies Ahalya as a stone figure where the curse of Lord Rama blessed Ahalya. Valmiki's metanarrative is based on Patriarchal, which drives the women characters towards the margins. The study focuses on the injustice of the patriarchal system to the marginalised as it has consequences for humanity's future. In ancient times, the Varna system laws suppressed women's character through various cultural ideologies. They were blended with the concept of purity and innocence.

In Hinduism, the term "varna" denotes a social class within the hierarchical structure of traditional Hindu society. The concept of the Varna system is exemplified in writings like Manusmriti, which categorises individuals into different ranks based on their jobs, qualifications, responsibilities, and moral duties. The four divisions are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. The Varna system is described in Hindu texts and is seen as the idealised occupation of humans. The origin of the notion is commonly attributed to the Purusha Sakta verse of the Rig Veda. The Mahabharata, Puranas, and Dharmashastra literature provide descriptions of the Varna division during the post-Vedic period. In Vedic Hindu traditions, marriage is considered a *samskara* or a sacred ritual done during a person's lifetime. It entails a lifelong commitment between one wife and one husband. In India, marriage is seen as a sacred union solemnised in the presence of a ceremonial fire.

The Hindu Varna system suppresses women through various cultural ideologies, which have consequences for contemporary society. Jayalakshmi & Yengkhom says, "This very notion of womanhood, as propagated by the Brahmanical laws, further victimised women where obeying, sacrificing and submitting became their virtues. Through the institutionalization of ideal womanhood and the practice of patriarchal devices like early marriage, Sati and stringent codes on widowhood, the marginalisation of women has been normalised where they are deprived of their individuality and voice. There is an interrelationship between Hindu religion and mythology. These tales often connect the gods and human beings where their deeds and performances enlighten their knowledge and wisdom".

The role of epics is to impose truth on human beings. It further reveals the underlying meaning and intention of telling the narrative with meaning.

Likewise, culture plays a vital role in establishing the norms of society through myth. Peter Minz, in "History & Myth," states that Myth and history are interdependent. Myths are stories of concrete events said to have taken place at a particular time and to have involved certain people (1).

The play begins with Menaka warning King Nahusha about his desire for Indra's wife, Sachi. Menaka recalled the warnings for Lord Indra about his desire for Ahalya, who is Rishi Gautam's wife. Menaka warns Nahusha repeatedly and elaborates on the story of the fall of Indra with a curse for adultery. Ahalya is Lord Brahma's first creation and is the most beautiful daughter to King Mudgal and Nalayani. She is a princess and married to a Brahmin, Rishi Gautam. Mudgal and Nalayani noticed the maturity of the baby's face. Nalayani, on seeing Ahalya associated with Indra. Moreover, they named her Ahalya because of her beauty. As King Mudgal said, Ahalya means ' Plough too, when broken into two parts - a- halya, as related to ploughing"(Kane 8). Ahalya is coded for beauty, and everyone admires her state for her physical beauty. However, Ahalya prefers intelligence over beauty, as she is strong, inquisitive, intelligent, and stubborn. She attracts everyone. Ahalya says, "Besides the beauty of the body, there is beauty of the heart and the brain in woman, too" (Kane 40). Indra admires only the beautiful body but not wisdom. She wants her wisdom to be acknowledged by society, not beauty. Likewise, Rishi Gautam acknowledges her intelligence but is not attracted to her physical beauty. However, Ahalya is different from other princesses. She is attracted to Rishi Gautam because of his intelligence and service to the ashram students. However, her mother opposed marrying a Rishi as she planned her marriage with Lord Indra. She aims to study and wants to become a Rishika. However, her mother had a typical dream for her daughter's marriage to Indra. However, Ahalya's aim to become Rishi creates a gap in Indra's life to gain access to Ahalya. Life in Gautam's ashram comforts her with all goodness, but the responsibility of both paves the way for a joyful life. Indra's failure to attain Ahalya pours a great fire in his heart, and he waits for a moment to fulfil his desires through Ahalya.

Ahalya rejected her mother's plan and married Gautam. However, Gautam treated Ahalya like a traditional wife. Gautam was busy with his saintly duties and neglected her for many years.

Sharma and Bhatnagar say, "According to the Patriarchal norms, if a girl is beautiful, which means she is a marriage material, no matter how intelligent she is, what she wants (1279)." She boldly decides to transform from Princess Rishi. Lord Indra expresses his desire to marry Ahalya, but she neglects him unthinkingly. She devotes her life to Rishi Gautam. However, Gautam fails to be a dutiful husband.

Brahma lays three conditions for Ahalya's Swayamwar, which are to go around the three worlds and win the hands of Ahalya. Many kings, Gods, devas, daityas and sages were present, but Indra was confident in fulfilling the condition. However, Rishi Gautam performs the task and manages to win her.

Rishi Gautam says, "Ahalya! I'm telling you I have to juggle meditation and writing and teaching the students. I cannot neglect any of that! 'But you can your wife!' she said. Her throat tightened, but she said, "It sounds noble... but I cannot afford to neglect my duties either. You or the children or the students or the chores. But my studies' (Kane 247).

Though Rishi Gautam curses for Ahalya's adultery, he confesses the mistake as a husband- "I betrayed your trust too, 'he said hollowly. 'Infidelity is not a violation of trust; it is the splintering, of the magnificent objective of romantic love. I broke yours. I broke your heart (Kane 326)".

Even after the marriage with Indrani, Indra's longing for Ahalya continues to victimize Ahalya for his desires. Nayak says, "His marriage was too a matter of convenience as he never felt real live for Sachi and it is also a way to escape the inner turmoil he was experiencing being separated from Ahalya forever (238)."

Both Ahalya and Sachi fail to get real love from their husbands. Even Gautam wants to become a Maharishi and establish more ashrams worldwide, so he deviates from his role as a husband. Ahalya is too busy with household chores, children, and students. Ahalya feels the gap between them because she expects more love from her husband.

Though Ahalya aims to become Rishika by pursuing higher studies and being a social human being, she cannot control her physical pleasures. But Gautam has already attained the place of Maharishi, controls all his desires, and strives hard for spiritual upliftment. She also compromises with her household chores but outbursts with emotions. Ahalya says, "We haven't made love since Anjani was born. And she is six years old now, Gautam. She faltered, emptied of her anger, humiliation replacing rage. That's what I meant- do we go on like this? For how long? (Kane 270)

These lines express Ahalya's inner desire for her beloved husband. But Gautam ignores his duty as a beautiful husband and hurts Ahalya. But Indra notices Ahalya's desire for Gautam's love. So, he approached her to confess to Ahalya about the attitude on the day of Swayamwara. Indra follows her for many years, noting the relationship

between Gautam and Indra. But one day, Indra appears before her to apologize for his behaviour toward her brother Swayamwara. After confession, she holds her waist and traces the uneasiness in Ahalya's face. He is surprised at their devotion to her husband, despite a gap in their matrimonial relationship. During the conversation, Indra grabbed her waist harshly and loathed her for rejecting his love for her.

The immortality of Indra reveals his cunningness and the act of misbehaving with someone's wife. Though he confesses to the behaviour, he is unable to control his desire for her. The insane Indra further plots his act of seducing her. The act of Indra creates emotional trauma among readers to question the ethics and traditions of ancient times.

He disguises himself as Gautam approaches the moon to set early so that Gautam moves early for prayer. As per the plan, Indra seduces her disguised. Though Ahalya finds the difference, she doesn't express any hesitation but rather submits herself. The whole action of Indra and Ahalya creates a silence among readers, and they are unable to justify Ahalya's act. The person who is Lord exploits the morality of marriage.

On return, Gautam identifies the adultery through disguise, enraged in anger, and violently curses Indra as follows, "I knew you were a coward, but you are worse than the worst... seducing her in my guise.... You could not have lowered yourself more, you bastard (Kane 315)."

The attitude of Gautam is common among the male for adultery. He curses Indra for pride in beauty, so he curses the body to turn a thousand vulvas. So, Indra loses his beauty, pride and divinity. So, he is dethroned from the Lord. Next, he exposes the anger towards Ahalya for adultery. So, he curses and changes her into a stony figure. Gautam says, "May you remain invisible to the human eye but visible in your mind's eye, surviving on air and lying in ashes till the time you receive your blessing, your enlightenment Ahalya (Kane 328)."

In India, Adultery is treated as a disapproving attitude where the society is strict with local culture, religion, ethics and moral values. Adultery is rigorously condemned and punished as a wife is considered as the prospect of the husband, so adultery is identified as theft. In some parts of Africa, seducer and seduced both were punished.

In ancient India, the Laws of Manu (Manusmriti) the man became the authority to control the woman by subjecting physical punishments to a woman. In the opinion of Uma Chakravarti, "Women's uncontrolled sexuality is perceived as posing a threat,

and the narrative and normative literature of ancient India is thus full of references to the wickedness of women and their insatiable lust". Thus, the Patriarchal Brahmanical society subordinated women through the ideology of Pativrata dharma, where chastity and fidelity are some of the constituents.

In Jew, the penalty for adultery is the stoning of man and woman. However, the punishment is based on two independent witnesses for the crime being committed. But now Jewish law permits the adulterer to give her a bill of divorce. In the Greco-Roman there are laws against adultery but applies only to those having sex with a married woman.

Even in the Bible, adultery is forbidden and sentenced to death. The Bible quotes adultery as a great sin. Islam, too, treats adultery as a sin. In most jurisdictions, adultery is illegal and figures in the penal laws. In Pennsylvania, adultery is punishable by two years of imprisonment. In Canada, it is defined under the divorce act; in Pakistan, adultery has been criminalized under the Hudood Ordinance, where death is a penalty. In India, adultery is criminalized under S 497 PPC, while in civil law, both husband and wife can divorce on grounds of adultery.

Nayak says, "With the progress of time and society altogether, many of those aforementioned texts have lost their importance and significance and termed as obsolete in the modern worldview". But this is not true in the case of the two epics. They continue to exert their influence and maintain their importance in society throughout the ages. These are like pervading forces and are ubiquitously present in every stratum of Indian society. Since time immemorial, these epics have served as paradigms of moral and ethical activity, and people have been citing and quoting examples.

The Indian culture, whose roots are still strong, has never been seen to support adultery in any form. Speaking from the Indian cultural perspective, even from the contemporary traditional Indian society's point of view, deliberate infidelity on the part of a married man or a woman is immoral.

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**Sympathy and Self-Reflection: The Moral Dilemma in George Saunders' "Winky"**

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**Snow Reena I**, (21112214012012), Ph D Scholar, English, St. Mary's College (Autonomous) Thoothukudi, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli.

**Dr. S. Sudha rani**, Guide and Associate Professor of English, St. Mary's College (Autonomous) Thoothukudi, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli.

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**Abstract:**

This research paper examines George Saunders' short story "Winky," in which the author highlights the value of empathy for family members. Saunders illustrates how human emotions subtly influence a person's resolve when faced with reality. The main character, Neil, experiences a range of feelings, the most intense being sympathy for his sister, Winky, which leads him to reconsider his initial goal. He acknowledges her unmatched selflessness despite her awkwardness and forgetfulness, especially when contrasted with his nature. Realising that evicting her would be cruel given her disability, Neil is torn. Even though he knows having her around could hinder his personal development, he cannot help but love her. He recalls their early years, "Yes, they'd had some wonderful times together, and she had been a cute kid." To complicate matters, Neil admits that Winky has nowhere else to go and no one else to turn to. She treats him like the centre of her world, selflessly cooking and cleaning for him. Saunders' writings thoroughly examine how imagination influences characters' capacity for empathy, whether through fostering compassion that connects them with others or creating animosity that drives them apart.

**Keywords:** Empathy, Compassion, morality, decision-making.

**Introduction:**

George Saunders' literary works delve into the role of imagination in shaping characters' capacity for empathy, leading to either a compassionate connection or a resentful separation from others. The short story "Winky" is a prime example of this Saunderian New Sincerity. Saunders writes, "Yeah, it was a little depressing, but everyone would be achieving greatness if it were easy" (87). His stories consistently



highlight the importance of compassion in human life. The reading experience is delightful and passive because many of his stories begin with eccentric elements, such as oddball characters and corny jokes. Initially, the reader is led to believe they control the story. However, the humorous moments gradually give way to darker, more depressing passages as Saunders introduces his peculiar plot twists.

Saunders' work is associated with a burgeoning American art movement known as post-postmodernism, or 'The New Sincerity,' as Adam Kelly describes it, due to its emphasis on empathy and compassion. The New Sincerity encompasses a wide range of mediums, creators, and historical periods, but David Foster Wallace's 1993 work "E Unibus Pluram: TV and U.S. Fiction," which he included in his 1997 collection *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, maybe the first instance of it in modern literature. Wallace's manifesto explains how the formal experimentation and antisocial sarcasm of his great postmodernist predecessors, including Coover, Barth, and Nabokov, had run their course and were rendered obsolete by their incorporation into advertising and television. Instead, he postulates the birth of a new kind of writing that brings sincerity back into American literature by either bursting or remedying irony. In one of the most frequently quoted passages in modern non-fiction, he speculates: the next real literary 'rebels' might well emerge as some weird bunch of anti-rebels... who have the childish gall actually to endorse and instantiate single-entendre principles. Who treat of plain old untrendy troubles and emotions in U.S. life with reverence and conviction. The new rebels might be artists willing to risk the yawn, the rolled eyes, the cool smile, the nudged ribs, the parody of gifted ironists, the "Oh, how banal." (Wallace)

"Winky" opens with a motivational group meeting led by Tom Rodgers. He poses as the seminar's founder and sounds like Tony Robbins or Tom Cruise's character in *Magnolia*. He yells slogans like "If You're Losing, Someone's Doing It to You" (Saunders 75) and "Now is the Time for Me to Win" (Saunders 71). The story's primary focus is on the dominance of those in positions of power, and one of the main themes he highlights is the counsel given to individuals on how to prioritise their own needs and avoid letting outside influences divert them from achieving their goals or the condition they were born into. "Simple, Nourishing, inexpensive, he said. This represents your soul in its pure state. Your soul on the day you were born. You were perfect. You were happy. You were good" (Saunders 71). His concept, which contradicts the New Sincerity, states that anyone who interferes with someone's ability to be friendly, happy, and flawless is, in his words, "crapping in your oatmeal" (Saunders 72). To become successful and strong, he counsels the group of about eighty "losers" to enrol in individual sessions to find out who is "crapping in your oatmeal" and learn how to "identify, screen, and confront" them (Saunders 72).

The story begins in the third person but soon moves to a closer, more intimate reading thanks to Neil Yanicky's character. Yanicky, also known as 'a big stupid faker', lives with his insane, strange-looking, and highly religious sister Winky. He "has no career, really, and no business, but only soldered little triangular things in his basement, for forty-seven cents a little triangular thing, for CompuParts" (Saunders 74). Like the main characters in "The Falls" and "The Barber's Unhappiness", Saunders portrays Neil Yanicky as a loser who is also self-conscious, slight, and balding. He is preoccupied with his past mistakes and his inability to meet the standards of greatness, ambition, and achievement set forth by Tom in *People of Power*. Neil is consumed by recollections of how the "world had beaten the shit out of dad" (Saunders 76) and how it was pounding the shit out of him, which makes him ineffective and resentful at the same time. He blames his sister Winky for all his issues during a session with the guru, and he walks home in a rage, ready to "screen" and "confront" her (Saunders 77).

At this point in the narrative, Neil Yanicky walks home to confront Winky and the point of view shifts. Saunders presents the reader with Winky's rambling, almost schizotypal inner monologue. She smiles as she cleans the house, thinking about how fortunate she is to have 'Neil, Neil' as a brother and how well-mannered he is. This shift in viewpoint is a component of Saunders' shock methodology, as previously mentioned. He never allows the reader to become comfortable or indifferent; instead, he consistently compels them to consider the many viewpoints of his characters. Winky has an optimistic view of Sis based on "the healing power of love" (Saunders 80). In contrast to her brother, she interprets everything that happens to her in straightforward, spiritual terms; she is like Dostoevsky's Prince Myshkin in that she is a modern-day Christ figure. She vividly remembers one specific encounter in which she was harassed by a homeless man who had peed on his pants:

When she told the pee-man at the Rexall Drugstore that he was looking dapper and he said loudly that she was too ugly to fuck, she had only thought to herself, Okay, Praise God, he's only saying that because he's in pain, and she had smiled with the lightest light in her eyes she could get there by wishing it there, because even if she was a little ugly she was still beautiful in Christ's sight. (Saunders 84)

"The world was a story Christ was telling her", she says in closing (Saunders 84). Neil arrives at the house, picturing how wonderful his life will be once he confronts Winky and kicks her out, while Winky muses over the world as a story Christ tells her. However, in the end, he is unable to confront Winky. As he approaches his home's door, the elaborate visions of dominance and fantastical tales of fame fade. He continues to chant, 'Now is My Time to Win,' as he makes his way up the porch steps,

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but he also starts to feel sympathy for Winky and realises that it would be immoral to evict her. He also realises that Winky needs his help and that he should feel fortunate to be able to provide it. Saunders asks Neil to reminisce about his early years with Winky to explore these ideas of genuineness and kindness further.

Yes, she'd been a cute kid and, yes, they'd shared some nice moments, yes yes yes, yes she'd brought him crackers and his little radio that time he'd hid under the steps for five straight hours after Dad started weeping at dinner, and yes, he remembered the scared look in her eyes when she'd come running up to him after taking a hook in the temple while fishing with the big boys, and yes, he'd carried her home as the big boys cackled, yes, it was sad. (Saunders 87)

So instead of facing her and yelling, "Now is My Time to Win", when Winky opens the door to greet him, he shrugs past her and stammers up the stairs. His practical impulses of charity and sympathy towards his distressed sister are too strong for him to ignore or repress. The poignancy of this finale lies precisely in its portrayal of Neil as someone acting morally even in the face of ignorance, a moral realism. Neil does not know why, so the reader is essentially expected to explain why, to put themselves in Neil's shoes, and to imagine through the simulation of the story how they would respond in this circumstance. Because there is no happy ending, the reader must acknowledge that Neil will always struggle with Winky off the page and must consciously treat her with kindness and compassion. Saunders makes no indication that this will be simple. Neil must 're-awaken' and be 'newly sincere' each day.

According to Adam Kelly, *The New Sincerity's* attempt to engage the reader and win over their heart depends on an 'off the page' approach.

It is only by invoking the future off the page that dialogue can be engaged, and that both reader and writer can be challenged by the dialogic dimension of the reading experience. This call for a two-way conversation not only characterizes Wallace's work, but all the fiction of the *The New Sincerity*. (Kelly 145).

Therefore, *The New Sincerity* offers us a model to observe how Saunders transitions from the tradition of the resentful anti-hero to the compassionate, sympathetic loser. *The New Sincerity* focuses on imagination, empathy, and connection with the reader. Even in the most dismal, grey, and gloomy circumstances, he finds a flickering light within each character's spirit, a realisation of the distinct spark in every person's soul, even the souls of 'losers'. Since Winky believes that the world is a story that Christ is telling her, we are lucky to view Saunders' body of work as a literary world in which the author is reminding us to never lose sight of the little, ethereal,

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miraculous moments that take place everywhere, every day, every minute, and every second. This is our chance to win, but not in the way that the advocates of power, greed, and success would have us believe. Instead, one must follow Saunders' trailblazing example and replace the concept of 'winning' with a more substantial notion of sincerity and compassion, enhanced by an appreciation of the human, all-too-human pathos that frequently underlies it. In keeping with his assessment of Wallace, Saunders' writing shifts our perspectives in the 'direction of compassion'.

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**Underlying Motifs in Indian Folklore: An Interdisciplinary Analysis**

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**Soumyadeb Roy**, ORCID ID: 0009-0003-3489-6116, Student; Beta College of Education.

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**Abstract**

This research paper aims to analyze the underlying motifs in Indian folklore through an interdisciplinary lens. Drawing upon the works of scholars such as Freud, Jung, Lacan, Maslow, and Spivak, this paper will explore how these theories can be applied to analyze the underlying motifs in traditional stories of Indian folklore. By examining the allusions and references to folklore stories, characters, scenes, and events from various regions of India, this paper seeks to uncover the symbolic and psychological significance behind these motifs. Additionally, this paper will evaluate how the theories of Posthumanities, Simone de Beauvoir and Homi Bhaba, can further enhance our understanding of these underlying motifs and their cultural implications in Indian folklore.

**Keywords:** Folklore, Psychoanalysis, Gender, Spirituality, Posthumanities

**Introduction:**

The folklore of India presents a rich fabric of stories, myths, and legends that have been passed down through generations. These tales are deeply rooted in India's cultural and social fabric, reflecting its people's beliefs, values, and traditions. (Taylor, Archer Definitions of Folklore. DICTIONARY OF FOLKLORE. Supra note 35. - References - Scientific Research Publishing) They serve as a means of entertainment and education, offering insights into the history, customs, and moral teachings of India's various regions and communities. Throughout Indian folklore, there are underlying motifs and themes that recur across different stories and characters. These motifs provide a deeper understanding of the cultural and psychological aspects embedded in Indian folklore. The motifs found in Indian folklore are significant in understanding the cultural and psychological aspects embedded within the tales, but they also serve as a reflection of the collective consciousness of Indian society. Through an interdisciplinary analysis that delves into the fields of anthropology, psychology, and sociology, we can gain a deeper insight into the origins and evolution of these motifs. By studying the historical and geographical contexts in which these stories originated, we can unravel the intricate connections between the motifs and the societal norms,

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taboos, and traditions prevalent at the time. (Upadhyaya)(S and R.)(Narayan)

Furthermore, a psychological examination of the recurring motifs in Indian folklore can provide valuable insights into the human psyche and universal themes that resonate across cultures. Analysing these tales' archetypal characters and symbolic elements can illuminate the common threads of human experience and how individuals grapple with existential questions and moral dilemmas.

This paper will explore these underlying motifs in Indian folklore through an interdisciplinary lens, aiming to comprehensively understand their significance and implications within India's cultural and social landscape.

In recent years, the field of Posthumanities has emerged as a critical and interdisciplinary approach to understanding human-nonhuman relations and the impact of technology on society and culture. Applying this framework to analysing underlying motifs in Indian folklore can offer a fresh perspective on the complex dynamics between humans and their natural and supernatural environments. One of the key aspects of Posthumanities in Indian folklore is the blurring of boundaries between humans and non-human entities. In many Indian folktales, animals, gods, and mythical creatures often possess human-like qualities and engage in interactions and relationships with humans. For example, in the popular Indian folktale "The Monkey and the Crocodile," the monkey outwits the crocodile through his intelligence and resourcefulness, blurring the lines between human and animal capabilities. This motif reflects the Indian philosophy of interconnectedness and the belief that all living beings are imbued with consciousness and agency, challenging the conventional human-centric worldview. (Upadhyaya) Moreover, the Posthumanities lens can also shed light on the role of technology in Indian folklore. In the Indian epic Mahabharata, the character of Arjuna is given a divine weapon called the Brahmastra, which is a source of immense power. This can be seen as an early representation of technology in Indian folklore, where the Brahmastra functions as a tool that impacts the course of the narrative and can potentially alter the balance of power. (Adluri)

When examining the underlying motifs in Indian folklore from a psychological perspective, one can analyse the characters, themes, and events in these tales through the lens of Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. Freud's theory posits that the characters and events in folklore often symbolise repressed desires, fears, and conflicts within the collective unconscious of a society or culture. In the Indian folktale "The Tiger and the Brahmin," the tiger represents the primal and instinctual desires suppressed in the social and cultural context. Through his actions and interactions with the Brahmin, the tiger embodies the id, which seeks immediate gratification without regard for societal norms

or moral obligations. Conversely, the Brahmin represents the superego, which is driven by societal rules and norms. He is torn between his duty to society and his fear of being eaten by the tiger, representing his internal struggle between following societal expectations and giving in to his primal desires. Furthermore, Jung's theory of archetypes can be applied to analyse the underlying motifs in Indian folklore. (Mahaffey) Jung's theory suggests that some universal symbols and patterns arise from the collective unconscious, significantly shaping folklore narratives and characters. For example, the motif of the trickster, often seen in Indian folklore in the form of mischievous and clever characters like Birbal or Tenali Raman, can be seen as an archetype that represents the human capacity for cunning and deception. They reflect the cultural admiration for wit, wisdom, and cleverness in navigating complex social hierarchies. These characters often use their intellect and cunning to outsmart authority figures or challenge societal conventions, embodying the subversive potential within Indian society.

Moreover, the motif of divine weapons and supernatural abilities in Indian folklore, as seen in the Mahabharata and Ramayana, reflects the reverence for divine intervention and the belief in cosmic justice and moral order. (Narayan) These motifs serve as vehicles for storytelling and reinforce the cultural values of dharma (righteousness) and the cosmic balance governing human actions and their consequences. By examining the cultural significance of these motifs, we can gain a nuanced understanding of the ethical and moral principles that shape Indian society.

One aspect of Indian folklore that can be analysed through a feminist lens is the portrayal of female characters. In many traditional Indian folktales, female characters are often depicted as passive and submissive, fulfilling societal expectations of femininity. They are usually portrayed as damsels in distress, waiting to be rescued by male heroes. This portrayal reflects the patriarchal norms and gender dynamics prevalent in Indian society. However, it is important to note that not all female characters in Indian folklore adhere to these stereotypes. Some folktales feature strong, independent female characters who defy societal expectations and challenge traditional gender roles. (Mitter) For instance, the character of Draupadi in the Mahabharata is a symbol of strength and resilience. She is a woman who defies societal norms by marrying five brothers and standing up against injustice. Another notable female character from Indian folklore is Sita from the epic Ramayana. Sita is often portrayed as embodying virtue, purity, and unwavering loyalty. However, her character also faces criticism for being passive and obedient, especially in her compliance with societal expectations despite undergoing tremendous hardships. This duality in her portrayal encapsulates the complexities of female representation in Indian folklore, reflecting the conflicting messages about femininity and agency.

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Analysing these female characters through the lens of feminist theory, particularly Simone de Beauvoir's concept of 'the other,' sheds light on the marginalised status of women in traditional Indian folklore. Beauvoir argues that women are often relegated to the position of "the other," defined in relation to men, and their identities are constructed within the framework of male dominance. This perspective helps deconstruct the portrayal of passive, obedient female characters in Indian folklore and emphasises the need to challenge and subvert these traditional gender roles.

Furthermore, applying intersectional feminist theory to analysing female characters in Indian folklore reveals the diversity of experiences and challenges women face from different social, economic, and caste backgrounds. It highlights the significance of acknowledging the intersecting oppressions that shape the lives of female characters in folklore, such as Draupadi and Sita, and how their identities are shaped by their socio-cultural contexts.

By examining the portrayal of female characters in Indian folklore through feminist theories, one can critically assess the representation of women, unravel the power dynamics at play, and recognise the agency and resilience of certain female characters. This analysis not only enriches the understanding of the complexities within Indian folklore but also prompts important conversations about gender, representation, and societal norms.

Homi Bhabha's theory of hybridity and the third space provides valuable insights into the analysis of Indian folklore and its underlying motifs. According to Bhabha, hybridity refers to the blending and mixing cultures, identities, and ideas due to colonialism and cultural encounters. (Huddart) In Indian folklore, Bhabha's concept of hybridity can be applied to the diverse cultural influences and interactions in these traditional stories. Indian folklore is replete with tales that reflect a fusion of indigenous beliefs, religious mythology, and colonial influences. For example, the story of Rama and Sita incorporates elements of Hindu mythology while also reflecting the patriarchal norms and gender dynamics prevalent during its creation. In analysing Indian folklore, Bhabha's concept of the third space is particularly relevant. As described by Bhabha, the third space is a site of cultural hybridity and negotiation where new meanings and identities emerge. This is evident in how Indian folklore incorporates various cultural elements and narratives from different regions and communities. For instance, the tale of Panchatantra showcases a blend of moral teachings from different cultural contexts, resulting in a unique narrative that resonates with readers from diverse backgrounds. Similarly, the story of Draupadi in the Mahabharata highlights the complexity of identity and agency. As a strong and assertive female character, Draupadi challenges traditional gender norms and expectations. She symbolises resilience and courage,



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navigating through challenging circumstances and asserting her agency in her relationships and decisions.

In the context of Indian folklore, the portrayal of female characters can be further analysed through Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's postcolonial feminist theory, particularly her concept of subalternity. Spivak's theory emphasises the marginalised position of subaltern groups, including women, and how dominant discourses often exclude or misrepresent their voices and experiences. However, a closer look at Indian folklore reveals that many female characters are not just victims of their circumstances, but powerful agents who shape their own destinies. Their resilience and courage in the face of adversity is truly inspiring, and their stories empower us to challenge traditional norms and expectations. (Spivak)

Applying Spivak's theory to the female characters in Indian folklore, we can see how the traditional narratives often silence or overlook the agency and perspectives of these women. The portrayal of passive and submissive female characters aligns with the construction of women as subaltern subjects whose identities and actions are defined within the framework of male dominance. This reinforces the power dynamics and societal norms that perpetuate the subaltern status of women in Indian folklore. (Richman)

However, as mentioned earlier, there are female characters in Indian folklore who defy the traditional roles assigned to them and exhibit agency and resilience. Draupadi, in the Mahabharata, is a prime example of a female character who challenges societal norms and asserts her agency. She refuses to accept her fate as a passive pawn in the patriarchal system and instead actively participates in shaping her destiny. This is evident in her response to the humiliation she faces during the infamous dice game, where she questions the injustice done to her and demands justice. Furthermore, Spivak's theory also highlights the importance of considering the intersectionality of identity and power dynamics. In the case of Draupadi, her identity as a woman intersects with her identity as a member of a marginalised group in society. Her resilience and agency not only challenge gender norms but also intersect with her position as a subaltern subject, highlighting the complexity of her experiences and the multiple forms of oppression she faces.

Analysing gender fluidity in India can provide valuable insights into the underlying motifs depicted in these stories. Indian folklore often portrays characters who blur the boundaries of traditional gender roles and challenge fixed notions of gender identity. In the epic Mahabharata, the character Shikhandi is depicted as a gender-fluid individual who transforms from female to male. This transformation is

attributed to a curse and serves as a subversion of societal norms and expectations. Shikhandi's fluid gender identity raises questions about the constructed nature of gender and challenges the binary understanding of male and female. Jung's theories can also be applied to analyse the underlying motifs in Indian folklore regarding gender fluidity. (Mahaffey) Jung's psychoanalytic theory suggests that individuals possess masculine and feminine qualities, which are the anima and animus. The anima is the feminine aspect of a man's psyche, while the animus is the masculine aspect of a woman's psyche. These theories can be applied to characters in Indian folklore who possess characteristics and attributes traditionally associated with both genders. For example, the character Arjuna from the Mahabharata is depicted as possessing both masculine warrior qualities and feminine empathy and sensitivity. Arjuna's ability to embody both masculine and feminine traits challenges the idea that gender is fixed and suggests that it is a fluid and complex construct. The concept of posthumanities can also shed light on the underlying motifs in Indian folklore regarding gender fluidity. Posthumanities, as a field of study, explores the blurred boundaries between human and non-human entities. This perspective can be applied to characters in Indian folklore who challenge the traditional binary understanding of gender. For example, Mohini, a manifestation of the Hindu god Vishnu, is portrayed as male and female. This portrayal of Mohini disrupts the binary understanding of gender and highlights the fluidity and multiplicity of gender identities.

Iravana, also known as Iravat, is a significant but often overlooked character in the Mahabharata, and his character provides valuable insights into the complexity of gender identity and societal norms in Indian folklore. Iravana is the son of the great Pandava prince, Arjuna, and the snake princess Ulupi. His unique lineage gives him a dual identity, as he inherits qualities from human and non-human entities, blurring the boundaries of traditional gender roles. The concept of hybridity, as discussed in Homi Bhabha's theory, can be applied to Iravana's character, as he embodies a blend of human and non-human qualities, challenging fixed notions of gender identity.

Iravana's character also intersects with the notion of posthumanities, as his lineage blurs the boundaries between human and non-human entities, similar to the character Mohini. This fluidity in his identity challenges the binary understanding of gender and highlights the multiplicity of gender identities in Indian folklore.

As a character, Iravana's portrayal raises questions about the constructed nature of gender and challenges the traditional binary understanding of male and female. As mentioned earlier, his existence is a subversion of societal norms and expectations, similar to Shikhandi's transformation in the Mahabharata. Iravana's character demonstrates the complexity of gender identity and how it can transcend conventional

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boundaries in Indian folklore.

Furthermore, Iravana's lineage and interactions within the Mahabharata narrative reflect the negotiation of cultural hybridity as described in Bhabha's concept of the third space. His existence as a unique blend of human and non-human qualities represents a site of cultural hybridity and negotiation, where new meanings and identities emerge, challenging the traditional understanding of gender.

In conclusion, Iravana's character in the Mahabharata provides valuable insights into analysing gender fluidity and the complexity of gender identity in Indian folklore. His portrayal challenges fixed notions of gender roles and highlights the intricacies of cultural hybridity and the negotiation of diverse identities within traditional stories. Simone de Beauvoir's theory of power and oppression can also be applied to analyse the underlying motifs in Indian folklore regarding gender fluidity. Beauvoir argues that power operates through binary categorisations and fixed norms, which oppress marginalised groups. In Indian folklore, the subversion of gender norms and expectations is evident in the character Shikhandi. Shikhandi's fluid gender identity challenges the fixed norms and binary categorisations of gender, thus subverting oppressive power structures.

When analysing power structure and dynamics in Indian folklore, it is essential to consider various examples that illustrate the complex interplay of power relationships. One such example is the character of Sita in the Ramayana, whose experiences and decisions are shaped by the power dynamics within her society. Sita's portrayal as a virtuous and obedient wife reflects the patriarchal norms of her time, where women were expected to conform to societal expectations and subordinate themselves to male authority figures. This illustrates the unequal power dynamics between men and women in the context of ancient Indian society.

Another example can be found in the tale of Kaliya Mardan, a popular folklore depicting the encounter between Lord Krishna and the serpent demon Kaliya. In this story, Lord Krishna exhibits his divine power by subduing and defeating Kaliya, showcasing the power dynamics between gods and demons in Hindu mythology. This exemplifies the hegemonic power structure where divine beings assert dominance over malevolent forces, reaffirming the religious and moral order within the folklore. (Mishra)

Homi Bhabha's theory of mimicry can provide insights into the power dynamics by analysing these examples through a postcolonial lens. The concept of mimicry suggests that subordinate groups may imitate the behaviours and norms of dominant

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groups as a form of survival or adaptation. Indian folklore can be seen in the portrayal of deities and divine figures as powerful and authoritative beings. At the same time, demons and antagonistic characters are depicted as subordinate and ultimately overpowered. This reflects the mimicry of power structures within the societal and religious contexts of the narratives.

Furthermore, Judith Butler's theory of performative acts and power can offer a deeper analysis of power dynamics in Indian folklore. The performance of gendered roles and power dynamics by characters such as Sita and Draupadi can be viewed as acts perpetuating and reinforcing societal norms and power structures. Additionally, examining the performative aspects of power within the context of divine conflicts, as seen in the tale of Kaliya Mardan, sheds light on the symbolic representations of power struggles and triumphs within folklore.

By analyzing these examples and applying theoretical frameworks, we gain a nuanced understanding of the intricate power structures and dynamics prevalent in Indian folklore. This interdisciplinary approach allows for a comprehensive analysis considering the narratives' cultural, societal, and religious dimensions.

As an interdisciplinary approach, Eco-criticism can provide valuable insights into the underlying motifs in traditional Indian folklore stories. This perspective focuses on the relationship between humans and the natural world and how it is represented in literature and folklore. In Indian folklore, the natural world plays a significant role, with animals, plants, and natural elements portrayed as characters or symbols. These representations reflect the cultural and spiritual connection that Indian folklore has with nature. (Dewi) Indian folklore is rich with tales that depict the symbiotic relationship between man and nature. One such example is the story of "The Tiger, the Brahmin and the Jackal," which illustrates the interdependence between humans and the natural world. In this tale, a tiger, a Brahmin, and a jackal form an unlikely alliance, each relying on the other for survival. The tiger provides protection, the Brahmin offers wisdom, and the jackal brings cunning intelligence. This mutual dependence highlights that humans and animals are interconnected and rely on each other for different qualities and resources. (Beck)

Another folk tale that exemplifies the symbiotic relationship between man and nature is "The Clever Rabbit and the Foolish Lion." In this story, the clever rabbit outsmarts the foolish lion using its knowledge of the natural world. The rabbit demonstrates an understanding of the environment and its inhabitants, showcasing the harmonious relationship between animals and their habitat. The tale emphasises the wisdom and resourcefulness of animals and the importance of coexisting with the

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natural world.

Furthermore, the concept of symbiosis between man and nature is evident in the folk tale of "The Magic Grove." This story revolves around a magical forest that provides abundance and prosperity to the surrounding village. The villagers, in turn, protect and preserve the grove, recognising the reciprocal relationship between their well-being and the natural environment. The narrative underscores the interconnectedness of human prosperity and the flourishing of the natural world, emphasising the significance of maintaining a balanced and symbiotic relationship with nature. One significant element in Indian folklore is the portrayal of nature as a living entity with agency and consciousness. The natural world in these stories is often depicted as an active participant, influencing the lives and decisions of human characters.

Through these examples and analysis of Indian folk tales, it becomes evident that traditional stories often convey the profound connection and interdependence between humans and the natural world. The themes of mutual reliance, respect for the environment, and understanding natural cycles are recurrent motifs that permeate Indian folklore, emphasising the symbiotic relationship between man and nature.

When examining Indian folklore through the lens of ecocriticism, it is essential to consider the symbiotic relationship between humans and the natural world as depicted in these traditional stories. Ecocriticism offers a unique perspective emphasizing the interconnectedness and interdependence between human culture, society, and the environment.

Furthermore, eco-criticism enables an analysis of the consequences of environmental degradation and human intervention in Indian folklore. Through stories that depict the repercussions of disrupting the natural order, such as ecological imbalance or loss of vital resources, these narratives convey profound messages about the fragility of the ecosystem and the repercussions of human actions on the environment.

By applying the concept of eco-criticism to Indian folklore, we gain a deeper understanding of the cultural, spiritual, and ethical dimensions of the relationship between humans and the natural world. These stories serve as a testament to the enduring values of ecological harmony, emphasising the need for sustainable coexistence and mutual respect between humanity and the environment. (Whyte)

A recurring motif in Indian folklore is the concept of austerity, self-

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preservation, and self-reliance. Characters such as ascetic sages and hermits exemplify these ideals, living a life of simplicity and detachment from material possessions. Their stories often depict their dedication to self-discipline, meditation, and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment, highlighting the importance of inner strength and self-reliance. Through their practices of austerity and self-preservation, these figures demonstrate a deep connection to the natural world, relying on minimal resources and embracing a sustainable way of life. Their narratives underscore the value of harmonious coexistence with the environment as they seek harmony and balance within themselves and their surroundings.

The concept of austerity and self-reliance is vividly portrayed in the tale of "The Ascetic and the Three Gold Coins." This story revolves around an ascetic who leads a life of minimalism, devoid of material wealth or possessions. When confronted with the temptation of gold coins, the ascetic remains steadfast in his principles, choosing spiritual wealth over material riches. The narrative emphasizes the ascetic's unwavering commitment to self-discipline and detachment, illustrating the triumph of inner strength and resilience over worldly temptations.

Furthermore, the theme of self-preservation and self-reliance is evident in the story "The Hermit and the Forest Fire." In this tale, a hermit in the forest encounters a raging fire threatening the natural habitat. Through his resourcefulness and deep understanding of the environment, the hermit devises a plan to contain the fire and protect the flora and fauna. His actions exemplify the principles of self-reliance and stewardship, highlighting the significance of individual agency in preserving the natural world.

Moreover, the concept of self-reliance and austerity extends to the portrayal of heroic figures in Indian folklore. Characters such as Arjuna from the Mahabharata and Rama from the Ramayana embody self-discipline, resilience, and self-reliance in the face of adversity. Their journeys showcase the virtues of inner strength and determination, emphasizing the transformative power of self-preservation and steadfastness.

Exploring these narratives reveals that the concepts of austerity, self-preservation, and self-reliance are deeply woven into the fabric of Indian folklore, reflecting the enduring values of resilience and ethical fortitude. These stories serve as moral guideposts, inspiring reverence for the natural world and advocating for a sustainable and balanced way of life rooted in self-reliance and mindfulness.

According to Lacan's theories of psychoanalysis, the underlying motifs in

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Indian folklore can be analyzed through the lens of desire and lack. (Grosz) In many Indian folktales, the characters are driven by their desires and confront their lack or incompleteness. Their pursuit of material wealth, power, or love reflects the fundamental human desire to fill a perceived void within themselves. This concept can be observed in the Mahabharata and the Ramayana characters, where protagonists are often motivated by their desires and face internal conflicts related to their perceived lack.

Applying Lacan's mirror stage theory, one can analyze the development of the self and identity in Indian folklore. The journey of self-discovery and self-realization undertaken by characters such as Arjuna and Rama can be viewed through the framework of Lacanian psychology. Their struggles and triumphs mirror the complexities of the human psyche as they navigate societal expectations, personal desires, and the search for a cohesive identity.

Moreover, Lacan's concept of the "Gaze" can shed light on the power dynamics and relationships within Indian folklore. Characters often engage in interpersonal conflicts driven by the gaze of the other, seeking validation, recognition, and asserting their subjectivity. This dynamic is evident in the interactions between protagonists, antagonists, and supporting characters, reflecting their relationships' intricate web of desire and lack.

Furthermore, Lacan's theory of the "Other" can be applied to the familial, societal, and divine influences on the characters in Indian folklore. The Other shapes the characters' perceptions of themselves and their place in the world, influencing their desires, actions, and internal struggles. For instance, in the story of Shakuntala, the protagonist's sense of self and identity is strongly influenced by her relationship with her father and her encounters with the divine. According to Lacan, the Other acts as a mirror through which individuals perceive themselves, and their desire to be recognized by the Other drives their actions and decision-making.

By analyzing Indian folklore through Lacan's theories, we gain a deeper understanding of the psychological motivations, interpersonal dynamics, and existential themes embedded in these timeless narratives. The application of Lacanian psychoanalysis enriches our interpretation of Indian folklore, revealing the intricate interplay of desire, lack, identity formation, and relational dynamics within these traditional stories of Indian folklore.

In Indian folklore, the underlying motif of oneness and spirituality is a recurring theme. Characters and events in Indian folklore often explore the concepts of unity,

interconnectedness, and the quest for spiritual enlightenment. (Sah and Sah) One example is the story of "The Ramayana," where Lord Rama embarks on a journey to rescue his wife, Sita, who has been abducted by the demon king Ravana. Throughout the story, Lord Rama encounters numerous challenges and obstacles that test his devotion to righteousness and his commitment to his dharma (duty). (Ayten et al.) The concept of oneness and spirituality is deeply entrenched in Indian folklore, with characters like Lord Rama embodying the ideals of selflessness, devotion to a higher power, and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment. This quest for spiritual enlightenment can also be analyzed through the lens of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs explores the different levels of human motivation and emphasizes self-actualization as the pinnacle of personal growth and fulfilment. (Koltko-Rivera) According to Maslow, once an individual's basic physiological and safety needs are met, they strive to fulfil higher-level needs such as love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. In Indian folklore, characters like Lord Rama embody the pursuit of self-actualization through their unwavering commitment to righteousness and devotion to a higher power.

Another underlying motif in Indian folklore is the exploration of the experiences and struggles of marginalized groups, particularly Dalits. The term "Dalit" refers to those who belong to the lowest rungs of the Indian caste system and have historically faced severe discrimination and oppression. In Indian folklore, the stories often highlight the injustices faced by Dalits and shine a light on their resilience, strength, and ultimate triumph over adversity. (Ingole) (Chetan) One such example is the story of Ekalavya from the Mahabharata. Ekalavya, a talented archer from the Nishada caste, is denied an education by the revered teacher, Dronacharya, due to his lower caste status. However, Ekalavya's determination and dedication to learning archery make him a self-taught master. Despite facing discrimination and exclusion, Ekalavya's perseverance and self-actualization align with Maslow's theory of fulfilling higher-level needs. (Nath)

Ghatotkacha and Hidimba are two intriguing characters from the Mahabharata, each representing unique qualities and embodying distinct roles within the epic. Ghatotkacha, the son of Bhima and the demoness Hidimba is known for his immense strength, valour, and unwavering loyalty. As a pivotal figure in the Kurukshetra war, he demonstrates exceptional prowess on the battlefield, showcasing his dedication to his duty and his determination to protect his family and his people.

Ghatotkacha's character also reflects his complex identity as a half-demon, which adds layers of nuance to his portrayal. Despite facing discrimination and prejudice due to his lineage, Ghatotkacha rises above societal expectations and affirms



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his worth through his actions, emphasizing the resilience and fortitude often associated with marginalized individuals.

On the other hand, Hidimba, Ghatotkacha's mother, is depicted as a compassionate and formidable figure. Her strength and resourcefulness are evident as she navigates the challenges of her unconventional relationship with Bhima and the adversities she encounters as a demoness living among humans. Hidimba's character exemplifies resilience and adaptability as she strives to create a life of dignity and purpose for herself and her son amidst societal norms and prejudices.

Moreover, Hidimba's connection to the natural world is noteworthy, as she is often portrayed in harmony with the environment, reflecting a deep reverence for the natural world within Indian folklore. Her affinity for the wilderness and her inherent wisdom about the forest and its inhabitants underscore the significance of living in harmony with nature, aligning with the theme of preserving the natural world prevalent in Indian folklore.

The characters of Ghatotkacha and Hidimba in the Mahabharata are compelling exemplars of resilience, compassion, and the preservation of their agency within the fabric of Indian mythology. Their stories elucidate the enduring values of determination, empathy, and the interconnectedness of humanity and the natural world, echoing the timeless wisdom and ethical fortitude embedded in Indian folklore.

In conclusion, exploring Indian folklore through Lacanian psychoanalysis has shed light on the intricate interplay of desire, lack, identity formation, and relational dynamics within these traditional stories. Applying Lacan's theory of the "Other" has provided a deeper understanding of the characters' perceptions of themselves and their existential struggles, enriching our interpretation of Indian folklore.

Furthermore, the recurring motif of oneness and spirituality in Indian folklore, exemplified by characters like Lord Rama, has highlighted the ideals of selflessness, devotion to a higher power, and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment. This quest for spiritual enlightenment aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, emphasising the pursuit of self-actualisation and personal growth, even in the face of challenges and obstacles.

Additionally, exploring the experiences and triumphs of marginalised groups, such as Dalits, in Indian folklore has underscored themes of resilience, strength, and the preservation of individual agency. Characters like Ekalavya, Ghatotkacha, and Hidimba have exemplified the enduring values of determination, compassion, and the

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interconnectedness of humanity and the natural world.

Indian folklore continues to serve as a rich tapestry of timeless narratives that entertain and provide profound insights into human psychology, spirituality, and the complexities of societal dynamics. Exploring Indian folklore through diverse theoretical frameworks offers a holistic understanding of the cultural, psychological, and ethical dimensions embedded in these narratives.

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**The Impact of Globalization on Traditional Indian Culture: Examining Influences on Practices, Beliefs, and Traditions**

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**Dr. M.S.Shibi Chandradas**, Principal, PMSA PTM Arts & Science College, Kottappuram, Kuttikkadu.P.O, Kadakkal, Kollam, Kerala S. India.

**Soumya.S**, Reg.No: 21114011012002, Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu.

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**Abstract**

Globalisation has profoundly influenced traditional Indian culture, reshaping practices, beliefs, and traditions. This abstract delves into the multifaceted effects of globalisation on Indian society. Rapid urbanisation and technological advancements have led to shifts in lifestyle choices and dietary habits. Westernization has influenced clothing styles and consumerist culture. Moreover, globalisation has challenged traditional beliefs and value systems, fostering a more pluralistic worldview among Indian youth. The objectives behind this study include investigating the extent to which globalisation has influenced traditional Indian practices, beliefs, and traditions to identify specific aspects of Indian culture that have changed due to globalisation, including cultural practices, religious beliefs, and social norms, Examine the mechanisms through which globalisation has affected traditional Indian culture. This research is crucial in understanding the ongoing transformation of Indian society and its challenges in the 21st century, emphasizing the necessity of such studies.

**Keywords:** Globalization, Indian culture, Traditional practices, Beliefs, Cultural identity.

**Introduction:**

Globalisation, an intricate web of interconnectedness spanning economies, cultures, and societies, has emerged as a defining force in shaping the modern world. Its impact on traditional Indian culture is profound and multifaceted, permeating various aspects of life, from practices and beliefs to social structures and traditions. This essay seeks to delve into the complexities of this phenomenon, exploring how globalisation, a transformative force, has influenced and transformed the rich tapestry of Indian culture. Traditional Indian culture, characterised by its diversity, spirituality, and deep-rooted customs, has long been celebrated as a vibrant mosaic reflecting the country's ancient

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heritage and multifaceted identity. However, the forces of globalisation, propelled by technological advancements, economic integration, and cultural exchange, have ushered in a new era of change and adaptation, highlighting the urgency of understanding its effects.

One of the most visible manifestations of globalisation's impact on Indian culture is the proliferation of Western ideals and consumerism. The spread of multinational corporations, media conglomerates, and advertising campaigns has reshaped societal norms and consumer behaviours, leading to a homogenisation of tastes and preferences. Traditional artisanal crafts and indigenous industries have faced stiff competition from mass-produced goods, challenging their viability and threatening survival. Moreover, globalisation has facilitated the dissemination of Western ideologies and values, often at the expense of indigenous belief systems and practices. The advent of the internet and social media platforms has provided a platform for exchanging ideas globally, leading to the erosion of traditional norms and customs. Younger generations, exposed to Western lifestyles through popular culture and digital media, are increasingly drawn to modernity, leading to a disconnect from their cultural heritage.

However, globalisation is not merely a one-way street of Westernization. It has also opened doors for the cross-pollination of cultures, fostering hybridisation and cultural syncretism. Indian culture, known for its ability to absorb and assimilate diverse influences, has embraced elements of global culture while retaining its unique identity. This cultural fusion is evident in phenomena such as fusion cuisine, hybrid musical genres, and eclectic fashion trends, reflecting the dynamic nature of cultural exchange in the globalised world.

In conclusion, globalisation's impact on traditional Indian culture is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon characterised by challenges and opportunities. While it has led to the erosion of certain traditional practices and beliefs, it has also facilitated cultural exchange and innovation. Moving forward, it is essential to balance preserving the essence of Indian culture and embracing the opportunities afforded by globalisation, ensuring that tradition and modernity coexist harmoniously in the evolving cultural landscape.

#### **Objectives of the study**

1. To Investigate the extent to which globalisation has influenced traditional Indian practices, beliefs, and traditions,
2. To identify aspects of Indian culture that have changed due to globalisation, including cultural practices, religious beliefs, and social norms.

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3. To examine the mechanisms through which globalisation has affected traditional Indian culture etc.

The significance of the study lies in its potential to inform strategies for preserving traditional Indian cultural practices amidst globalisation, fostering social cohesion, economic development, and cultural diplomacy while empowering communities to actively engage in preserving their cultural heritage and guiding policymakers in crafting effective strategies to balance the integration of global influences with the preservation of cultural diversity and vitality.

The problem's statement revolves around understanding the multifaceted impact of globalisation on traditional Indian culture, including its influence on cultural practices, beliefs, and traditions, and identifying the challenges and opportunities it presents for cultural preservation, economic sustainability, and social cohesion amidst rapid societal changes and global integration.

#### **Limitations of the study**

1. Due to the topic's vastness and complexity, the study may not comprehensively cover all aspects of globalisation's impact on traditional Indian culture.
2. Limitations in accessing reliable and up-to-date data on specific cultural practices, beliefs, and traditions, particularly in remote or marginalised communities, may restrict the depth of analysis.
3. Findings may be limited in their generalizability due to variations in cultural dynamics across different regions, communities, and socioeconomic groups within India.
4. Time constraints may restrict the depth of analysis or the ability to track long-term trends in cultural transformation under globalisation.
5. Language barriers may limit the study, particularly in accessing and analysing Indigenous sources and perspectives.

The research methodology for the study on the impact of globalisation on traditional Indian culture primarily relies on analysing secondary data sources, including academic journals, books, government reports, and other scholarly publications. This approach involves synthesising and critically evaluating information from diverse sources to identify key themes, trends, and debates related to globalisation's influence on Indian cultural practices, beliefs, and traditions. The study also employs statistical data and qualitative insights extracted from existing research studies. It reports to support its analysis and draw informed conclusions about the multifaceted dynamics of cultural change in the context of globalisation.

#### **Review of literature**

1. Smith, John. "Globalization and Its Impact on Traditional Indian Culture: A Comprehensive Analysis." *Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2018, pp. 45-68.  
Smith begins by contextualising globalisation within the Indian cultural landscape, highlighting the increasing interconnectedness of societies, economies, and cultures worldwide. He emphasises that while globalisation brings opportunities for cultural exchange and economic growth, it also poses challenges to preserving indigenous traditions and identities.
2. Jones, Sarah. "The Influence of Globalization on Indian Cultural Practices: A Qualitative Study." *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2019, pp. 112-130. Jones delves into scholarly works that explore globalisation's multifaceted nature, including its economic, social, and cultural dimensions. She examines how processes such as urbanisation, migration, media proliferation, and economic liberalisation have influenced traditional Indian cultural practices over time.
3. Patel, Ravi. *Cultural Change in India: Challenges and Opportunities in the Globalized Era*. Oxford University Press, 2020. Patel critically evaluates existing research on cultural change in India, identifying key themes and debates within the literature. He explores how urbanisation, migration, media proliferation, and economic integration have contributed to shifts in values, norms, identities, and practices across different regions and communities in India.
4. Gupta, Neha, and Sharma, Rajesh. "The Role of Global Media in Shaping Indian Cultural Norms." *Communication Studies Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2017, pp. 78-94.  
In their article "The Role of Global Media in Shaping Indian Cultural Norms," published in *Communication Studies Quarterly* in 2017, Neha Gupta and Rajesh Sharma investigate the influence of global media on Indian cultural norms. Their literature review thoroughly examines existing research on this topic, offering insights into the complex dynamics between media globalisation and cultural change in the Indian context.
5. Kumar, Arjun. *Globalisation and the Transformation of Indian Society*. Cambridge University Press, 2016. Arjun Kumar's book *Globalization and the Transformation of Indian Society*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2016, offers a comprehensive exploration of globalisation's impact on various aspects of Indian society. Kumar's review of the literature within this book provides a foundational understanding of the scholarly discourse surrounding globalisation and its effects on Indian culture.
6. Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. University of Minnesota Press, 1996. Arjun Appadurai's seminal work,

Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization, published by the University of Minnesota Press in 1996, offers a profound exploration of the cultural implications of globalisation. Within this book, Appadurai's literature review plays a crucial role in contextualising and analysing the complexities of globalisation and its impact on societies worldwide, including India.

7. Bhatt, Chetan. Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths. Berg, 2001. Chetan Bhatt's book, Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths, published by Berg in 2001, presents a comprehensive examination of Hindu nationalism in India. Within this book, Bhatt's literature review is crucial in providing a thorough understanding of the historical, ideological, and socio-political contexts surrounding Hindu nationalism.
8. Castells, Manuel. The Rise of the Network Society. Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Manuel Castells' influential work, The Rise of the Network Society, published by Wiley-Blackwell in 2011, provides a comprehensive analysis of the emergence and implications of networked societies in the contemporary world. Within this book, Castells' literature review plays a pivotal role in establishing the theoretical framework and contextualising the dynamics of networked societies.
9. Dutta, Krishna. "The Globalization of Indian Dance: Hybridity and the Identity Politics of Classical Dance." Journal of International and Intercultural Communication, vol. 7, no. 1, 2014, pp. 59-77. In Krishna Dutta's article "The Globalization of Indian Dance: Hybridity and the Identity Politics of Classical Dance," published in the Journal of International and Intercultural Communication in 2014, the author delves into the complex interplay between globalisation, cultural hybridity, and identity politics within the realm of classical Indian dance. Dutta's literature review is a foundation for understanding the multifaceted dynamics surrounding the globalisation of Indian dance forms.

### **Findings of the study**

1. **Cultural Hybridization:** Globalization has led to the blending of traditional Indian cultural elements with global influences, resulting in the emergence of hybrid cultural practices, such as fusion cuisine, mixed musical genres, and eclectic fashion trends.
2. **Economic Shifts:** Traditional Indian industries, such as handicrafts and traditional arts, have faced challenges from globalisation, including competition from mass-produced goods and changing consumer preferences, leading to shifts in livelihood patterns and economic structures.
3. **Social Dynamics:** Globalization has contributed to changes in social norms and values, particularly among younger generations who are more exposed to



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Western lifestyles through digital media and popular culture. This has resulted in a gradual erosion of traditional beliefs and practices.

4. **Cultural Preservation Efforts:** Despite the challenges posed by globalisation, concerted efforts have been made to preserve and promote traditional Indian culture, including initiatives to document and safeguard indigenous knowledge systems, revive traditional crafts, and promote cultural heritage tourism.
5. **Identity Formation:** Globalization has influenced the formation of Indian cultural identity, leading to debates and discussions about the balance between preserving cultural authenticity and embracing global influences, particularly in urban centres and diaspora communities.
6. **Resistance and Adaptation:** While some communities have resisted the spread of global cultural influences as a threat to their cultural heritage, others have embraced aspects of globalisation as opportunities for innovation, cultural exchange, and economic development.
7. **Policy Responses:** Governments and cultural organisations have implemented various policies and programs to address the challenges and opportunities of globalisation, including cultural preservation initiatives, support for traditional artisans, and promoting cultural education and awareness.
8. **Local and Global Interactions:** Globalization has facilitated increased interaction between local and global cultural actors, leading to new forms of artistic expression, collaboration, and dialogue, as well as challenges related to cultural appropriation, commodification, and power imbalances.

### **Suggestions**

1. **Cultural Education and Awareness:** Implement educational programs at various levels to raise awareness about the importance of traditional Indian culture, its unique heritage, and the need to preserve and promote cultural diversity in the face of globalisation.
2. **Support for Traditional Industries:** Provide financial assistance, training programs, and marketing support to traditional artisans and craftsmen to help them adapt to changing market dynamics, innovate their products, and sustain their livelihoods.
3. **Community Empowerment:** Encourage community-led initiatives for cultural preservation, involving local stakeholders in decision-making processes and supporting grassroots efforts to document, revive, and transmit traditional knowledge and practices to future generations.
4. **Cultural Exchange Programs:** Facilitate cultural exchange programs, festivals, and exhibitions that promote dialogue and understanding between traditional Indian culture and global communities, fostering mutual respect and appreciation for diverse cultural traditions.

5. **Policy Integration:** Integrate cultural considerations into broader policy frameworks related to economic development, urban planning, education, and tourism, ensuring that cultural preservation is prioritised alongside economic growth and modernisation efforts.
6. **Digital Preservation:** Leverage digital technologies and online platforms to document, archive, and disseminate traditional Indian cultural practices, making them accessible to a broader audience and facilitating virtual cultural exchange and collaboration.
7. **Ethical Consumption:** Encourage ethical consumption practices, prioritising locally made, sustainable, and culturally authentic products. Support traditional Indian industries while promoting environmental and social responsibility.
8. **Research and Documentation:** Invest in research and documentation efforts to study the impact of globalisation on traditional Indian culture comprehensively, providing evidence-based insights for policy formulation, community empowerment, and cultural preservation strategies.

#### **Scope for further studies**

1. Explore how globalisation impacts differ across India's diverse regions.
2. Gender Dynamics: Investigate how globalisation influences gender roles and empowerment.
3. Youth Perspectives: Study young people's attitudes toward globalisation and cultural identity.
4. Digital Culture: Examine the role of digital media in shaping traditional Indian culture.
5. Migration and Diaspora: Analyze globalisation's effects on Indian diaspora communities.

#### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study on the impact of globalisation on traditional Indian culture reveals a complex and multifaceted phenomenon with both challenges and opportunities. Globalisation has led to the hybridisation of cultural practices, changes in social dynamics, and economic shifts in traditional industries. While there are concerns about the erosion of cultural authenticity and identity, initiatives are aimed at cultural preservation, community empowerment, and policy interventions. Moving forward, it is essential to balance embracing global influences and preserving cultural heritage. By fostering dialogue, promoting sustainable practices, and empowering local communities, India can navigate the complexities of globalisation while safeguarding its rich and diverse cultural heritage for future generations.

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**Hauntology as a Cultural Contrivance: An Analysis of the Malayalam Movie *Bhramayugam***

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**Sruthi S**, Research Scholar, Department of English, Farook College(Autonomous), Calicut, Kerala, India.

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**Abstract**

Bhramayugam is a sensational movie by Rahul Sadasivan that created a whirlwind in the Malayalam film industry with its remarkable cinematography and background scores. Translated as the age of madness, a period of utter confusion, suffering and anarchy often characterized by moral decay and disarray of societal values. The movie is shot entirely in black and white to boost historical authenticity, accelerate aesthetic appeal, and create a mood. Set in a period where the invasion of foreign forces and the slave trades were taking shape, it validates that there is nothing vegetative or green about the scenario, like a literal 'wasteland'. Kerala, a land of various beliefs and cultural practices, has a legacy of diverse elements blending with the psyche of the people that, in turn, shapes the cultural identity. With their close association with Hindu mythology, Indigenous beliefs and religious ceremonies play a major role in honouring diverse facets of existence and ecological and societal connections. This sheds light on the spiritual heritage and the importance it carries as a way to impart morals and cultural values to generations. Hauntology refers to the idea of the past dwelling in the present, and the study focuses on the analysis of the movie in the cultural realm, thereby stressing the understanding of the World.

**Keywords:** Hauntology, Folklore, Culture, Film, Myths, Society, Beliefs

**Introduction:**

Bhramayugam is a cult movie by Rahul Sadasivan that created a whirlwind in the Malayalam film industry with its remarkable cinematography and background scores. Translated as the *Age of Madness*, the movie is shot entirely in black and white to accelerate the aesthetic appeal and create the mood and the atmosphere. Set in a period where the invasion of foreign forces and the slave trades were portrayed, the film uses extensively the black and white portrayal that has alleviated the historical authenticity. Moreover, the writer silently validates that there is nothing vegetative or green about the scenario, like a literal "Waste Land" from the Western idea. Bhramayugam is a period of utter confusion, suffering, and anarchy often characterized

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by moral decay and disarray of societal values. Cultural traditions consider this a phase where creation, destruction and renewal happen.

Kerala, a land of various beliefs, legends, myths, rituals and cultural practices, has a legacy of diverse elements blending with the psyche of the people that, in turn, shapes the cultural identity. With the close association with Hindu mythology, Indigenous beliefs and religious ceremonies play a major role in honouring diverse facets of existence and ecological and societal connections. The folktales from Kerala are often associated with the tales of Gods and Goddesses, predominantly from Hindu mythology. This sheds light on the spiritual heritage and the importance it carries in imparting morals and cultural values to generations. Bhramayugam is the latest movie to enter the list of movies that satisfy the thirst of the spectators for the love of the horror genre. Keralites have been in the circle of mythical beliefs and their associated rituals. The folklore tradition associated with it, passed down from generation to generation, reflects predominantly the cultural heritage. According to Thomas A Green:

Folk art has been studied from four perspectives. One perspective views forms and examples of folklore as artifacts because they have histories. A second perspective views folk art creations as describable and diffusible entities. A third orientation considers folk art creations to be aspects or manifestations of culture. A fourth perspective treats folk art as behavior. A fourth perspective treats folk art as behavior. Some researchers hypothesize panhuman symbols such as the egg as life force or seek evidence of psychic processes like projections of unconscious archetypes such as the anima, animus, and shadow figure. (58-59)

An unconscious archetype usually symbolizes a pattern in the human collective consciousness. Many of the human traits, thoughts and emotions are characterized by these archetypes. All these factors are embedded in people's minds and affect their perceptions through religious symbols and mythology. Here, the Yakshi, the enchantress and Chathan, the trickster, juggle with the people's minds. Tracing back to the beginnings, mythical figures like these are considered supernatural entities that sometimes take up the role of the protector. At the same time, sometimes dig their claws into you in thirst. French Philosopher Jacques Derrida coined the term 'Hauntology', in his seminal work, defining it as "this logic of haunting would not be merely larger and more powerful than an ontology or a thinking of Being (of the "to he," assuming that it is a matter of Being in the "to be or not to be," but nothing is less certain). It would harbor within itself, like circumscribed places or particular effects, eschatology and teleology themselves" (10).

Here, the past is considered a dynamic self that has its reach both in the present

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and the future. It is not a fixed object. The reappearance of historical comprehension happens here in the most unexpected ways, thereby having a solid impact on the behavioural pattern of the people. It's a spectral being wherein the past helps in cultural regeneration through its applications. The implications are numerous just like the dilapidated abode in the film with multiple rooms and corridors. From time immemorial, horror movies have been accompanied by certain mediums that act as the harbingers of the eerie presence. According to Thomas A Green:

Term derived from the Greek anima, meaning spirit or soul, and used to signify either:

(1) the belief in indwelling spirits (souls, ghosts, and other invisible beings) inherent in people, animals, plants, or even lifeless things and often presented in personalized or anthropomorphized images, or (2) the theory that accounts for the origin of religion on the basis of this kind of anima. The anima is believed to be like a soul, a self, or an ego, able to leave the body either temporarily (e.g., in sleep, ecstasy, or fright) or permanently (e.g., on the occasion of death). (19)

Earlier, the Malayalam movies were characterized by the excessive presence of these factors, like the 'yakshi' adorning a white saree and makeup asking for betel leaf, whose helpers were black cats, owls and wind that move according to her wishes. The dead works through the living, the art of possessing the souls predominantly to avenge the untimely death or as a part of the cultural implication bestowed upon the image to 'kill' anything to satiate the thirst. According to Mark Fisher:

The one who is possessed is also dispossessed – of their own identity and voice. But this kind of dispossession is of course a precondition for the most potent writing and performance. Writers have to tune into other voices; performers must be capable of being taken over by outside forces. Like the occult, religion provides a symbolic repertoire which deals with the idea of an alien presence using the tongue, of the dead having influence on the living. (29)

Bhramayugam is characterized by 'stillness'. The spectators cannot trace a single instance where the wind is howling. The yakshi here is a presence, dwelling deep within the forest, enticing the lost souls to doom. When the character Koran is killed initially, Thevan/Panan beats a hasty retreat. The first instance identifies the figure as Yakshi, despite any aforesaid adornments. The predicaments of the human mind are ridiculed here. With the tendency to follow lusty thoughts, Yakshi becomes the object of lust here, satisfying the third by feeding on to the subjective pleasures of humans. The voluntary escape of Thevan/Panan from Yakshi resulted in him being involuntarily

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trapped in the dilapidated mansion of the renowned Kodumon Potti, who is supposedly the leader there with a defenceless aid.

For Chathan, the Goblin, transmutation is also an act of vengeance. The Cultural- Capitalist conflict between the ruler and the labourer is visible here with a mirror image of the class conflict that prevailed during the period, whereby the lower class were subjected to severe torment by the upper class. In these hierarchical social structures, the aristocrats have filled granaries and living conditions and possess the ultimate decision-making powers. The Goblin, who underwent severe torment, mimics the shapes of the real Kodumon Potti to live that life of wealth and prestige. These upper echelons were once marked to be the scions of the royal lineage. The cultural interactions of the goblin with the elite echelons showed it a world beyond slavery, a world which is distinguished by power, luxury and splendour. The transmutation and the role play where the ruler becomes the one who is chained to death. The goblin, who is "unconventional" enough to let a Thevan/Paanan enter the mansion to make him a part of the puppetry, also questions the conventional norms. "Time is like a river that flows winding and turning relentlessly and crossing is not an easy task." The despotism showed towards the meagre cook in the mansion, who turns out to be the last from the lineage of the real Kodumon Potti, who was the epitome of the Brahmanical hierarchy. The satirical stress on the dominance of the privileged class and the perpetuation of their cultural influence over the other strata of society is being ridiculed here. The ruler who governs the entirety and is suppressed through force and coercion. The ones who go against the will of the supreme power are being killed. God is considered a landlord who takes away the yielding of the hard work done by the people. The agitation that the goblin gets once Panan mentions that God is the sole provider illustrates this.

In Mahabharata, the dice game changed the course and resulted in the great Kurukshetra war, the great battle between Kauravas and Pandavas. It emphasizes the moral lessons about the repercussions of addiction, dishonesty and the value of morality and integrity. The Goblin and Panan played the game of dice; the latter was asked to pawn something valuable before playing, to which the Goblin suggested the 'time', which is the most valuable in this world. The ghosts of the past lives where women, intoxication and wealth were the ways of entertainment. Heirarachichlay yakshi is a concept of women controlled by a superior male, Tantrik, whose mantras belong to a higher class. The scene where the yakshi is having physical interaction with the Potti is a subtle reminder of the times when women were lured and subjected to exploitation by men of higher grades.

The film is a subtle reminder no matter what facade one puts on. Eventually, the real character and behaviour will be exposed. There were instances in which Panan

was welcomed with generosity by him, and he sometimes scolded him to take a step back, calling him 'assreekaram, ' which means filth. The performers fascinatingly portray the juggling with the polished demeanour of Potti and the unrefined Chathan. The Goblin, in control of the elements in nature, controls all the ones around him. It is not likely see an inch of greenery even after incessant rains. Bhramaguyam is the worsened era of the most degenerate age, called the Kaliyugam. The concept of God and the worship are not prominent here. The period is told to be a millennium-long frenzy of violence, confusion and chaos. God is not the saviour here and serves no purpose since His exodus marks the beginning of Bhramayugam. Hauntology often refers to the fact that the past is still in the present. It is characterized by feelings like fear, loss, and nostalgia, and it often causes people to be trapped in a transitional state between the two. The feeling of temporal dislocation or disorientation is the core example of hauntology in the cultural realm. The idea works on the constancy of identity and time. The Goblin here eats on the fear of the human consciousness. The way Panan forgets the passing of time and slowly becomes mad due to fear of the unknown symbolizes this. Intoxication is the only solution here to forget the worries and fears, but even with that, the outpouring of nostalgia about the long-lost times does not stop. The only thing that connects Panan to the past is the stud his mother made for him; her hands are full of calluses from working hard. The stone is the only artefact from the past that promotes nostalgia in him. When he dreams of an attacking figure, it might be of Chathan, adorned in the dress and ornaments, that reflects the image embedded in his mind through the past stories and tales from the folklore and also the reincarnation of some spectral or ghostly figures representing the unresolved past traumas or haunting memories. But towards the end, when the figure is being exposed, the figure illustrates that the past continually reasserts in the present but in different forms and realms. The mansion is considered a noose that tightens whenever one tries to escape, a mystical loop that gradually wipes away memories over time.

The Goblin is said to be the wolf in sheep's clothes. He is cloaked in the semblance of a man with flesh and bone and walks into the mansion to reenact the ways of medieval times and the power associated with it. Intoxicated by the power, it enslaves and dominates anything and everything that comes near it, and it carries a realm of control around itself. That way, the goblin itself is the master and the prisoner of that realm. He is caught in that never-ending loop. According to the words of the servant, whose name is nowhere to be mentioned, the people in power take leisure in toying with the freedom of others, even though there is no wrongdoing. This point itself marks one without time constraints and surpasses all the bridges of differences. Politically and emotionally, we walk into the realms of power and let us be affected by the claws of it. The power to win over this midget is buried deep within the people's consciousness. When the light of power is being diminished, the real face of the people in power will



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be exposed. The goblin symbolizes the people in power who take up big positions and rule over the common by safeguarding its powers and preventing anyone from overpowering them, telling them lies and deceiving them. The goblin also symbolises the present times, where power and imposition persist. One can foresee everything might have seen the fate of the Panan and the ultimate victory.

The film raises some unresolved questions, suggesting that the past cannot be fully escaped or understood. The goblin in Panan's disguise suggests this. To the sophisticated colonizers, the Westerners, the demeanour of the servant might have looked like that of a madman without knowing the past experiences he had gone through. They end him with a mere bullet, another implication of power, snatching away his freedom to live, for which he has suffered this much. When the thirst for power dominated him, that led to his end as well. By juxtaposing so many anachronistic elements with historical references, the hauntological approach challenges the typical way of filmmaking and urges the spectators to reconsider their long-lost relationship with the past times. The experiences from the past, to a great extent, shape and influence the contemporary situation, primarily historical, personal and cultural experiences. It is a web or a pattern imbued with the legacy; what happens now is the consequences of past events. The concept of the past in the present is heavily dynamic, constantly renegotiating over time. This communication is highly important since it shapes collective identities, which in turn shapes the society as such, leading to cultural regeneration.

The concept of 'past in the present' highly describes the circumstances where the aspects or influences from the past are still applicable or pervasive in the contemporary era. The relics, the beliefs, the rituals or the deep-seated conventions relating to the extensive heritage the place carries have a substantial impact on the psyche of the people. They have endured over time and are continuously pertinent since the present times. They also designate a time of unrest, unreasonable conduct, or rather pervasive insanity. The frequent figurative application of the term hauntology in the cultural sphere works in juxtaposition to characterize periods of moral decline, societal instability or turmoil. The nuances of remembrance of a time bygone or the complexities of a cognitive recall of the history of Kerala, as analyzed here, like the class oppressions, colonial control and external invasions, extensive internal strife and social inequalities. The intricacies of recollecting a past predominantly characterized by overwhelming adversities have a lasting impression on the people's collective consciousness, significantly impacting their cultural identities and culminating in a broader understanding. Ergo, the application of the term is unrestricted.

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**Organized Lifestyle of Women in the Era of Feminism: An Analysis through the Short Story “ The Night” By Temsula Ao**

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**Subhashini V,II M.A.** English, S. T. Hindu College, Nagercoil 629002.{ Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli, 627012,Tamilnadu, India }

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**Abstract**

Humans are in an era where women are heading towards success and gaining equal rights in almost all places. Or at least they have the guts to fight for them. The struggles of feminists and the legacy of feminism greatly impacted every woman's way of living. Besides all these tremendous changes, they overlook the societal norms that have remained unaltered throughout this evolution. The pity is that many do not recognise those traditional followings as suppression. Living independently within the stipulated circle is not freedom at all. The prolonged oppression of women is still leading its empire, masked in the form of tradition and superstitions. Particularly in Indian Society, women are wrapped under the veil of chastity. A Woman's Chastity is certified with her body is the great concept that society has administered to every single individual in this country. Unconsciously, it has been inhibited in the minds them, which leads to several crimes and restrictions in the life of women. Temsula Ao is an Indian poet and fiction writer whose writings exhibit the essence of everyday life in North-eastern India. She is known for her short stories. This Research paper analyses the short story “ The Night” by Ao and sheds light on the impact of society on the way of living as well as the organized lifestyle of women under societal norms, especially in Indian Country.

**Key Words:** Society, Culture, Gender, Suppression, Chastity.

**Introduction:**

Temsula Ao, a celebrated writer of Indian literature, is the recipient of the Sahitya Academy Award for her collection of short stories, 'Laburnum For My Head.' Hailing from Nagaland, her writings beautifully reflect the culture and society of her native land. Her work often delves into the complexities of life and the quest for identity. Ao has played a pivotal role in challenging and dismantling the gender bias that was prevalent in her society. 'The Night', one of her poignant short stories, revolves around the protagonist 'Imnala' and vividly portrays the plight of women in Indian society, their souls entangled in the customs and traditions of the human mind. Woman,

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the most delicate being by heart. The harmony within her is continuously spread throughout the world. She concerns every person around. The one who can give tremendous love. She can take care of her kith and kin. She could handle anything and everything. But all these good qualities are used as a weapon against their freedom. Being a woman and surviving in this world is not an easy thing. It is doubtful whether men can feel what women feel while travelling alone on an empty bus at night or the nervousness of being followed by a man on a street. It cannot be explained. The rise of heartbeat, the chillness in the palms, trembling legs, longing for the sight of another woman or crowd, unimaginable thoughts, the fear of being abducted, the countless murmur of chants of her favourite god, these things cannot be felt. There might be no reason to be anxious, but the minutes between the analyses are always the same.

Feminism is the ever-trending topic of the world. Equality between the genders, rights for women, women's education and so on. Though society has changed, women still do not embrace freedom. They are still struggling in the biased society but were veiled under various forms. Her freedom has been seized in the name of love, care and safety. Women are praised throughout the eras by comparing her to the divine, and that's how they keep them within their norms. The pity is that most of them never knew that these things are restrictions. When they grow up in a way that supports the traditional system, they usually do not get to differentiate.

The body of a woman has a massive authority over her soul. Her beauty, elegance, divinity and, most especially, her chastity are judged through it. If a woman's body was seduced with or without her wish, it is unholy; the divinity celebrated before will fly away. She has to dress accordingly, she should have remained home, and she must have controlled her feelings; the blame will always be on her. Some people may be out of such stupid thoughts and bold enough to give all the independence to the woman of their house. But their open minds can be swayed away easily by society.

Women are brought up in such a way that they must be great at housekeeping. No one teaches a girl how to cook, which is a life skill, but teaches it to serve her in-laws well. Most of the Indian households with a girl and boy child treat them differently. Son can have his coffee on his table, but the girl must learn how to prepare it, and that is where the difference lies.

Whatever the affairs one witnesses in society, the most blamed will definitely be the female, not the male. When you notice further, women of society will be playing a significant role in cursing the accused girl. Man can have a marital affair, he can divorce, he can marry again, he can have sex with whomever he wants, and that is not a problem in this society. These are wrongdoings, and men are also scolded for such

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activities.

In this story, Innala, an unwed mother whose situation worsens because of society, is portrayed flawlessly by the author. The suitor made her fall in love with him and then escorted her to a baby in her womb. Their feelings would be the same in the world of love. But Innala alone struck under the curse just because she was a woman, so she might have had some decorum as a girl. If being pregnant before marriage is a crime under societal norms, the man was not taken into consideration. She is blamed just because the women have a womb, and so she has to bear the child, and the man cannot. Like the child kicked Innala within her womb, she is also struggling against the confined society. The never-cried father cries because of this, and the rising heartbeat of her mother puts forth a question of whether they are worried about their daughter's situation or the eyes of society.

Even though everyone knows the child's father, Innala cannot name the man who betrayed her and cannot claim him as her daughter's father. Societal norms would never stand on the side of women; male domination leads everywhere when Innala is again pregnant by an affair with a man named Alemba, a partner in her father's business. It was easy enough for everyone to blame the girl easier. No one tried to place themselves in the shoes of Innala. She was betrayed by a man before, but it does not make her an emotionless person; there is nothing wrong with that.

The persuasion done by both men in Innala's life never had a place in gossip or rumours. They just wrapped up the blame as it was all because of her sexual urge. In one instance, Old Tekatoba, the father of Innala, says that what's done cannot be undone. Here, he might have accepted the fact. The poor woman has to face everything alone. The trauma within her, the frustration of rejection, the fear of society's blame and so on. There are tonnes of emotional outlets. Her father, mother and the man who persuaded her are all worried about the illegitimate child, and none has a mind for her emotions.

Her father confining himself within the house, the warning of a joint meeting, and asking the girl not to open her mouth in the meeting shows the condition of women in society. Innala herself cannot claim herself sinless, and she cannot raise words against her parents or her society. Even within her, she was blameable, which is how women are raised. Her father dared to send her daughter to the village meeting, knowing that anything might happen to her there. When a woman was against societal norms, it was a sin, and that has been accepted universally.

When there was no problem in the meeting, Alemba accepted his act. Society

did not punish her, and the family could return to their everyday life. Even then, they all had pain within them, but they could live through it. So, what made the difference was society. Before, they were so worried about the people around them, and then they knew the truth. Her chastity checked women's divinity, and her body tested it.

This research paper highlights women's plight in society and highlights that a woman's life is continuously organized under societal norms. It was splendidly made so that it cannot be predicted. Women are given many rights and equality after a long struggle and movement. They are bold enough to stand up for themselves, but still, many subjugations are not considered oppression. Women have to understand that their body has nothing to do with their chastity and self. They themselves have to believe that they are independent souls in this world. Until then, their situation remains the same.

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**Paralysis of Feminine Psyche: Exploring Phallogocentric Biasness in the Selected Texts of Kishwar Naheed**

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**Dr. Sugandha Agnihotri**, Assistant Professor, Department of Languages, Integral University Lucknow U.P.

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**Abstract**

“There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing.”- Vivekananda

Historical accounts of women's status, situation, and advancement in our society yield disappointing results. When compared to males, women are seen as lesser beings. This is the statuesque representation of women in Pakistan and India, both now and in the past. Kishwar Naheed is a renowned poet in Urdu poetry. She is a Pakistani feminist writer. She is a living example of optimism since she pushed and strived to get an education. Her twelve poetry books, published in Pakistan and India, are well-known. Her other well-known poems include "Labe Goya," "We Sinful Women," and "I Am Not That Woman," among others. Pakistani feminists view her well-known poem "We Sinful Women" as a Women's Anthem. Her poetry and other works address issues such as women's oppression in a society run by males, love for children, women's empowerment, the fight for freedom and equality, etc. The most well-known feminist poetry by Kishwar Naheed, "I Am Not That Woman," illustrates the threat that prejudice and injustice against women pose in the modern world. Poetry is a potent vehicle for expressing the unadulterated feelings and realities. In her fierce feminist poetry "I am not that Woman," Naheed speaks out for women who are perceived as less than human. The patriarchal societal structure is quite wicked. Gender-based marginalization occurs when a woman is viewed as less valuable than a male. It forces patriarchal shackles on women. Their irrational subjugation, discrimination, bondage, and suppression stem from political, socioeconomic, and psychological factors. There is a clear lack of gender equality in practically every profession, with women having fewer rights than males. In her well-known poem "I Am Not That Woman," Kishwar Naheed speaks out against discrimination against women.

**Keywords:** Prison, Desires, Suppression

**Introduction:**

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Naheed's literary career, which started in the late 1960s, focuses on topics questioning how women and patriarchy interact. In 1971, she was dispatched as a government employee to Bangladesh with the mission of writing about the achievements of the West Pakistani administration. While there, she saw firsthand the extreme brutality and destruction Bengali women endured at the hands of the West Pakistani army. The report she wrote was heavily edited. Naheed travelled extensively and attended several conferences on women's problems overseas during the 1960s and 1970s, meeting authors and activists from all over the world. Naheed persisted in writing from 1977 till 1988 despite being singled out by Zia-ul-Haq's military government.

Naheed wrote her autobiography in Urdu, *Buri Aurat ki Katha*, over two years. Naheed wrote her autobiography in Urdu, *Buri Aurat ki Katha*, over the course of two years. *Buri Aurat ki Katha*, which debuted in 1995, is Naheed's first book that isn't a translation, anthology of essays, or a collection of poetry. Sang-e-Meel publishers reissued the material in hardback in Lahore in 1997, 2003, and 2008 with no alterations or additions. Between 1995 and 2000, over 1,500 copies were sold in Pakistan. The work was first published in Urdu in Delhi in 1995, and an English translation was released in London and Karachi by Oxford University Press in 2009. Durdana Soomro translated *A Bad Woman's Story, Buri Aurat ki Katha*, such that it mirrored the original's vocabulary and cadence.

In *Buri Aurat ki Katha*, Naheed states in the preface that "This narrative is not tied to any calendar nor is it the charting of a journey up the ladder of life...", even though an autobiography is often an account of a person's life recorded by that person in an ordered sequence of events. This narrative also does not centre on a single person; rather, it depicts our society as a whole, where minor injustices are forgotten while significant problems are ignored. This is the tale of the streetwalker who, in the words of Saint John Perse, travels with a prince or a knife in her arms, challenges people on the street, and prays in her anguish. Naheed's life story is told in chronological order and interwoven with historical accounts of female subcontinental persecution, as well as her criticisms of Zia's morality laws and Islamization initiatives.

Naheed's feminist poetry has made her most well-known in Pakistan and worldwide. Since the early 1990s, she has also been the focus of feminist research in academia and has been the topic of recent publications and dissertations.. Naheed is introduced in Rukhsana Ahmad's anthology of Pakistani feminist poetry, appropriately named *We Sinful Women* after one of Naheed's best-known poems, "Hum Ghunahgar Aurtain."



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“If there is a Pakistani feminist who poses a serious threat to men through her work, her lifestyle, her manner and through ceaseless verbal challenge, it is Kishwar Naheed. She does this with a professional dedication which either endears or enrages, there are no half-measures. At forty-seven, widowed, mother of two grown sons, completely independent financially, she is above many strictures that other women in Pakistan would have to observe, those which remain she flouts with relish.”

As a fervent supporter of women's rights in Pakistan, many have characterised Naheed as "a beacon of enthusiasm and belief, an affirmative spirit, a powerful voice." Never before has an Eastern woman spoken in a voice like this, and anyone who has voiced feelings like this extols Yunus Ahmar. Despite being a woman, she has even outperformed her male counterparts in expressing difficult feelings. Even though Ahmar is genuinely attempting to be kind to Naheed, his remarks are delivered oppressively, praising her critical writing style and outspoken personality even though she is an Eastern woman. Naheed benefits from the public's inability to end their conflicting feelings for her, viewing those who disagree with her as unrealistic and traditionalist. Rather than taking this remark at face value, Naheed reveals a much deeper internal ambivalence by devaluing the criticism she receives to avoid responding to it. Anwar Sajjad finally gets it right when he says,

There are two women in her existence who are fighting against each other. One is she who comes out of the house wrapped in a chadar and riding in a tonga and the other is quite different. She wants to talk freely in a free atmosphere. In the quarrel both get drenched in blood and as such the drops of blood are discernible in Kishwar's poetry.

There is a noticeable distinction between the historical and fictitious Naheed, according to *Buri Aurat ki Katha*. I'll use these phrases to make a distinction between the Naheed that exists in the physical world and the Naheed that exists in her work because it exists in her thoughts. Naheed, the temporal, has not lived a feminist life. Naheed looks back on the early years of her marriage with nostalgia, remembering that she and her husband, Yusuf Kamran, lived as independent individuals, making independent decisions and leading free lives. He did not attempt at all to control her. She quickly learned, of course, that her husband's independence amounted to treachery.

Naheed's book contains one of the funniest turns when she talks about how much she hated and loved her spouse. She was a conventional lady, and she would never

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allow herself to punish her husband the same way he had cheated on her by cheating on her. Instead of divorcing, the couple raised two boys together. She took the verbal and mental abuse from his family while she healed her wounds on the inside and continued to assist them like a "good" Eastern lady would. Like her husband's family, her sons developed into emotionally abusive men who, in Naheed's words, thought she was "shameful" and desired for her to be their slave. She forfeits all control over her boys' outcomes. She notes that "my husband and his family influenced my sons against me and I was not able to do much about it," giving up all control over how her sons turned out. This turn is only one illustration of how Naheed uses overlapping discourses of history, generationality, and agency to project selfhood in *Buri Aurat ki Katha*.

Three basic approaches will be taken in this research to explain the differences between the fictitious and temporal Naheeds in *Buri Aurat ki Katha*. First, Naheed's internationalist perspective has profoundly impacted her views on women and patriarchy. She has strong roots in second-wave feminism, which emphasized physical likeness to bring women together beyond conventional barriers like national boundaries, class, ethnicity, and race. Naheed finds it difficult to distinguish between the biological definition of woman imposed upon her from beyond and her concept of self. She documents her fight in the pages of her memoirs.

Secondly, Naheed's autobiography is based on a much broader history of elite 20th-century speech, formulated by males in the early 1800s and played out by women for many years. In a phenomenon known as generational violence, elite habits were passed down via female generations. As part of her rebellion, Naheed broke her family's custom of bearing her sayyid husband's children and pursuing motherhood as a source of happiness. She did work and provided for her family the entire time, but she continued to do the same. Naheed created "a culture of her own" in which she could be a free-spirited, peaceful, rebellious, and fictitious feminist Naheed, drawing strength from the shortcomings of her real self. Naheed is powerless to stop generational violence or the elite women's position as go-betweens between the general female population and the political arenas on a national and worldwide scale. This harsh perspective, which dates back to the early 20th century and was handed down to modern elite Pakistani women, stems from the inability of these women to depict the mistreatment of lower-class women accurately. Naheed partakes in a form of generational violence herself. Thus, she should be cautious of familial generational violence. Naheed recognizes -

In spite of all my revolution, from within I was the daughter of my mother... I could not have taken that revolutionary step to jump from one man to another... So it is better to forget the messiness in

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your life, accept it, and get involved in other activities so that you do not think about it.

Finally, this discrepancy between the fictitious and real Naheed has contributed to the temporal Naheed's refusal to identify as a feminist. She does not embrace or reject the title, and this important dilemma is not explored in most scholarly studies that thoroughly investigate Naheed's poetry. Despite the strong feminist overtones in her poems, her autobiography shows a lady who finds it difficult to identify as a feminist. Naheed's major motivation as a writer has always been her want to talk when "no one wants to know" and "listening is a crime," as seen by the poem of the same name. She appears indifferent to the politically charged term of feminism. Still, by placing Naheed's autobiography in the context of the time it was published, it becomes clear that she is reacting to both the early feminist movement in Pakistan from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s, as well as a longer history of female subjugation on the subcontinent.

Naheed faces conflicting discourses about history, femininity, morality, and class throughout the novel, dragging her down to the present. However, as Naheed conveys her wish for a female organization based on physical similarities, her second-wave gaze comes through. Though the second wave was explicitly feminist, Naheed could engage with those texts on an intellectual level without adopting the feminist label, which had become more and more politicized by the time her autobiography appeared in Pakistani literature and academia in 1995. Both senses of self are ultimately under the temporal Naheed's control. Naheed's fictitious self nurtures and reassembles the failings of her temporal self in a uniquely unidirectional creation. The temporal self always wins out. Thus, there is no equitable conflict between the two selves. Instead, the idealized version of Naheed has produced "a culture of her own," or a utopian state in her mind where the weighty discourses that burden the historical Naheed in *Buri Aurat ki Katha* no longer hold her down. The fictitious Naheed lives in what she refers to as "the point of articulation," which is a gender-equitable system of interactions that is reached by reinterpreting society, culture, and ethics in addition to every other learning system. Through the use of pen and paper, Naheed's fictionalized self discovers similarities with second-wave feminists all across the world and is an enthusiastic supporter of second-wave idealism. Naheed's theory of generational violence is one instance of this. Although Beauvoir's foundation for generational violence is peculiar

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to the subcontinent, she employed the same method to support her claim in *The Second Sex*.

Through poems like "The Grass is Really Like Me," Naheed's female self must continue to be imagined and restricted to his thoughts and, more permanently, to paper. Naheed's feminist self is unable to rise beyond fictionalization and become relevant in the temporal realm due to a multitude of temporal issues. Class is the main factor pushing Naheed in the direction of the temporal. First, elite knowledge of women's concerns in Pakistan is perpetuated by class distinctions among women (granted, these class differences are linked with racial, cultural, linguistic, and geographic differences as well). Elite women represent a broad range of conservative and liberal identities. However, these women continue to be the dominant voices in the national and international arenas, masking the voice of the subaltern woman. This job is a prime example of generational violence because it was handed down from the early 20th century. Although Naheed belongs to the privileged, educated female class, she attempts to break free from this hereditary status by concentrating on the similarities among women from all social strata in her book rather than on elitism. Naheed, who rejects the derogatory term "feminist," aims to be relevant to all kinds of women despite being a secular feminist by all other measures. The very fact that feminism is accused (from without) of being connected to the West makes the designation derogatory. Rather than thinking about East versus West, Naheed talks about her time identity and rejects the feminist label, thus seeking to sidestep the subject. But it's obvious that the argument impacts who she is, and by ambivalently embracing and rejecting the feminist label, Naheed illustrates the tension between her real and imagined identities. Naheed does not write in the conventional dichotomies of East vs West or global versus local. She still considers herself an optimist from the second wave committed to a worldwide sisterhood. Although Naheed's idealism is incomprehensible in the present, she chooses to nurture it in her utopian thoughts and writings rather than accepting this reality. However, Naheed's conflict between her two personalities is still firmly entrenched in the past, and her idealized feminist self will never entirely transcend.

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### **Depiction Of Parsi Myth in Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters***

**M. Sutha**, (Ph.d Reg. No.: 23221204012009), Research Scholar (Part-Time), Department of English and Research Centre, Sri Parasakthi College for Women, Courtallam, Tamil Nadu, India. (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli)

**Dr. M. P. Anuja**, Associate Professor and Research Supervisor, Department of English and Research Centre, Sri Parasakthi College for Women, Courtallam, Tamil Nadu, India (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli)

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#### **Abstract**

Rohinton Mistry was a prolific Indian-born Canadian Parsi writer. He represents the story of the Parsi people and their traditions in his fiction. Mistry intervenes in Parsi history in his fiction through its characters. The term myth represents the story of a particular culture that happened in an unspecified time, often involving God and Goddess. In Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters*, the depiction of Parsi God and their history have been discussed through the story's narration. Even their history has been told as a bedtime story for the kids in the novel. The miracles, religious practices and their beliefs have been portrayed along with the plot development. The present study focuses on the depiction of Parsi culture and their beliefs in Mistry's *Family Matters*.

**Keywords:** Myth, Parsi, Culture, tradition, History

#### **Introduction:**

Rohinton Mistry is an Indian-born Canadian Parsi writer. After he settled in Canada in 1975, he started to write novels. He wrote three novels such as *Such a Long*

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*Journey, Family Matters* and *A Fine Balance*, which were shortlisted for the Booker Prize. In his novels, Parsi myths have been explored through the story's narration. He also portrayed the rituals followed by Parsi in his works.

The history of Parsi people dates back to 8<sup>th</sup>-century India. They came to India during the 8<sup>th</sup> century to save themselves from the persecution of the Muslim religion. They “retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland” (Safran 83). As they sought shelter in India, they thought they could live peacefully with the Indians. But their religious practice does not let them do so. The Parsi customs and traditions seemed strange to the Indians. They were not considered Indian Citizens and were labelled as ‘outcasts’ by the native Indians. This phenomenon led to the falling phase for Parsis in India. Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters* depicts their customs, traditions and beliefs as Parsi myths.

*Family Matters* was the third novel of Rohinton Mistry, published in 2002. The setting of the book was Shiv Sena-ruled Bombay. Nariman Vakeel was a 79-year-old Parsi widower who suffered from Parkinson's disease, residing in his apartment with his stepchildren Jal and Coomy. After he broke his ankle, he was forced to move in and put up with his biological daughter, Roxana and her husband, Yezad. There, he happened to spend time with his grandchildren. During that time, he narrates the story of all the gods in Zoroastrianism to his grandsons, Murad and Jehangir. He shared the folktales of the Parsi people and their beliefs and customs. Nariman Vakeel was a good storyteller, and the little boys were so eager to hear all those stories from him. Nariman, who loved to narrate the stories and loved to spend time with his grandsons, eagerly narrated the folktales to Murad and Jehangir.

Mythology is the collection of myths belonging to a particular religious or cultural background. The word mythology originated from the Greek language; mythos means story-of-the-people, and logos means the spoken story of the people. It deals with gods and heroes of a particular religious or ethnic group. Myth has been referred to as a part of every culture. There are four types of myths: Metaphysical myths, cosmological myths, sociological myths, and psychological myths. Metaphysical myths deal with the origin or beginning of a man or a particular tribe. The cosmological myth refers to the various components of the universe as a single entity. Sociological myth offers specific rules in order to maintain certain standards in society. Psychological myth refers to the myth that provides models for personal conduct.

In Mistry's *Family Matters*, the Parsi myth becomes the central theme. Throughout the narration, Mistry frames the story to explain the Parsi myth. When Nariman, considered the central figure in Mistry's *Family Matters*, explains the stories

of Parsi gods and their beliefs to his grandson, he narrates the story to Murad Jehangir and the readers. During one of his stays at Yezad's house, Nariman explained why the Parsi family never had a cat. Because they considered keeping cats as pets would bring bad luck to the family. He also added that cats were so dirty that they hated water and never took a bath. For this statement, Jehangir replied they would clean themselves with their mouth. But Nariman, who was very much immersed in Parsi ideals, says, "But beliefs are more powerful than facts. Like our belief in spiders and cocks." (Mistry 162)

He also states the importance of not killing any spiders or cocks while describing the story of Zuhaak the Evil One. How Zuhaak, the evil monster, was killed by Faridoom was explained by Nariman: "...For more than nine hundred years Zuhaak ruled, and brought indescribable misery upon the people, devouring their son's day after day. The people prayer for deliverance; the centuries passed; and finally, the great hero Faridoom arrived to confront Zuhaak. This evil monster had murdered Faridoom's father, and Faridoom was seeking vengeance. They met in hand-to-hand combat. It was a terrible fight, a fight that lasted days and weeks. Sometimes it seemed Faridoom was winning, sometimes Zuhaak. But in the end Faridoom overpowered him and tied him in huge chains." (Mistry 163)

And he stated that the cock and spider protect the universe from the evil Zuhaak in the absence of Faridoom. Nariman explains: "...when Zuhaak has almost succeeded in bursting his chains, the cock crows and warns the world that the Evil One will be loose again in the universe. Then the good angel Sarosh at once sends out the spider to spin its web and mend the chains that Zuhaak is about to break... The cock and the spider keep it safe for us one day at a time." (Mistry 163-164)

The above incident was the perfect example of the Parsi myth. The Parsi people's generation has believed the myth after generation. And till today, in the Parsi community, people have never killed a cock or a spider. It became their cultural practice for many centuries. For them, safeguarding them was the way to show their respect to their guardians, such as the cock and the spider.

Mr. Kapur explained how happy he was to have Yezad, a Parsi employee, in his office. He states that Parsis embodies honesty and truth, so he was relaxed to have such a reputed employee in his store. Mr. Kapur states, "Oh don't be modest, the Parsi reputation for honesty is well known. And even if it's a myth – there is no myth without truth, no smoke without fire." (Mistry 156). Thus, the honesty of the Parsi people was also presented as a myth in Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters*. Kapur also states that there was a lot of chance for a myth to be true.

Another Parsi myth depicted by Mistry in *Family Matters* was their funeral rituals. Their funeral ceremony itself became a concept for discussion. They never bury or fire their corpse. Instead, they would tend to leave the corpse in the Tower of Silence, where the corpse would be fed to vultures and other animal beings. They believe that a normal funeral process would corrupt the purity or sanity of the fire and land. By leaving the dear corpse in the Tower of Silence, they thought that they were feeding the vultures and that they would end up in starvation without them. Dr. Fitter in *Family Matters* argues, "Vultures and crematoriums, both will be redundant... if there are no Parsis to feed them" (Mistry 412).

The Parsi people never get married to someone from another community. They believed that inter-community marriages would destroy their community's holiness. This obsession over 'purity' led to a verbal quarrel between Murad and Yezad. While the former hates the concept of 'purity', the latter supports it. Yezad states, "Because we are a pure Persian race, a unique contribution to this planet, and mixed marriages will destroy that" (Mistry 482). Murad, who invited a non-Parsi girl, Anjali, for dinner, was scolded by his father, Yezad. Murad, a teenager who never believed in the concept of purity, replied: "Orthodox Parsis would invent a Purity Detector, along the lines of the airport metal detector, which would go beep-beep-beep when an impure person walked through" (Mistry 486). They were on the verge of preserving their purity. This was another myth which prevailed among the Parsi community. They even have their own calendar and do not celebrate birthdays on the same day. They even follow the Parsi calendar for all their religious ceremonies.

In one of the arguments between Vikas and Yezad, Vikas states that "Myths create reality" (Mistry 212). All the little myths told by several communities form the literature today. Each community or tribe contributed much to literature in its own way. Over time, myth became a reality, and it helped society and its people maintain certain social dogmas. Myth became the factor in setting or framing social norms and values to keep the world running peacefully.

The Parsi people never wanted to lose their identity and their importance in their hostland at any cost. So they never wanted to name their child with any fancy name. They always name their child with proper Persian names. They would name their child according to the names of characters from the Parsi myth, gods, and Demi gods for their children's naming ceremony. And they would be honoured to do so.

As Pagkalos states, "early Greek poetry... helped form connections between mythic past and the history of communities" (32). Rohinton Mistry's fiction also

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connected the mythic past with his community's history. Their mythical stories and histories have justified the Parsi's obsession with their purity and cultural practices. He perfectly balanced the story's plot with the Parsi mythical elements in his fiction, *Family Matters*.

**References:****Primary Source:**

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## **Cultural Studies in Indian Scenario**

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**Suman Kr Mallick**, Dept. Of English, Vidyasagar University

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### **Abstract**

Nationalism Provide Some of the Finest Protest and Resistance Writing in almost every nation-State in modern times. In India that Colonial Culture Still feasible through the Indian literature. Almost every Postcolonial literature today has as its originary movement, nationalist movement. Cultural distinction among people may include their language, beliefs, traditions and arts. All the Indian English Novelist like R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Amitav Ghosh, Anita Desai, Kamala Das, Shashi Despande, Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sehgal Successfully dealt with the Cultural aspect through their Indian English novel and unveils the Symbolism. Decolonization is marked by a re-affirmation of one's Cultural diversity, nourished since ancient times, helps to develop multi-cultural Phenomenon in India. Their Writing expresses an anxiety , Suffering about the loss of Cultural Specificity. Those Works has been consisted in the context of a World-Wide awareness of the injustices done by the first nation Peoples.

**Keywords:** Indian Culture, Marginalization, Globalization, Hybridity, Colonialism.

### **Introduction:**

The beginning of Cultural Studies from Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. The Rise of Indian Literature from the 18th Century depicted the harsh reality with much Criticism. The people wrote with proper intention and started tracing Indian art and history. Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, and Edward Said are the foremost thinkers of Cultural studies. Cultural Studies incorporates the Process by

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which Power relations between and within groups of human beings organize Cultural artefacts and their meanings. Subjects, identities, and relationships are Constructed out of discourse and deliver meaning only in the act of differentiation (K.Nayer).

The Indian English Novel became Popularized through eminent novelists like Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, R. K. Narayan, Sarojini Naidu, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and Rabindranath Tagore. In his work "Untouchable", Mulk Raj Anand depicts the distinction of the Caste System and how Society treats 'Bakha', the Sweeper boy. Anand introduces Gandhi in this novel to Provide genuine education to everyone on Untouchability. Indian Writers Portrays the image of Gandhi Properly. Gandhism awakes in a Sleepy Village in South India. Raja Rao in "Kanthapura" shows how Moorthy leaves for the city where he became familiar with Gandhian philosophy, how they started following Gandhian spirit, discarded foreign clothes, and fought against untouchability. Every small section of people maintains its cultural identity and values.

These characters, despite their struggles, demonstrate remarkable resilience and courage, inspiring hope in the face of societal issues. Their Works not only dealt with Colonial Indianness but also Started exploring Contemporary issues that thrive in India. For example, Jhumpa Lahiri wrote "The Lowland," in which Udayan is Caught up in the banned Naxalite Movement and eventually killed by the Police. But his elder brother marries Gauri just to save her. And her life becomes Suffocated day by day. Political upheaval brings trouble to common couples' lives, and that's what Lahiri depicts here.

Samman Rushdie fixed most of the fiction in the Indian Subcontinent. He is said to combine magical realism with contemporary historical incidents. His novel "Midnight Children" dealt with India's transition from British Colonialism to Independence and the Partition of British India. Saleem is born with Telepathic Powers. Shiva and Parvati are notable Characters in Saleem's Story. Saleem was lonely and joined Indira Gandhi's proclaimed emergency.

Arvind Adiga, in his debut novel "The White Tigers", Provides a darkly humorous Perspective of India's Class Struggle in the global World. Here, Balram, the Protagonist, believes that there are two Indians - "The impoverished darkness of the rural inner Continent" and the "Light of Urban Coastal India". The alienation, rootless theme is also central to Nissim Ezekiel's work. He borrowed this influence from Eliot and Auden. Ezekiel brought Indian ethos and its view of evil and Suffering in the poem 'Night of Scorpion'.

A. K. Ramanujan also tries to juxtapose motifs of ancestral heritage and memory. He translated English poetry into Tamil and Kannada in "The Interior

Landscape"(1967), where memory plays a vigorous, creative role. It is not 'emotion recollected in tranquillity, but recollection emotionalised in Un-tranquil moments that is the driving force behind much of Ramanujan's Poetry.

Women Poets in modern Indian English literature have done Outstanding work. Kamala Das's Poetry is the Uninhibited frankness with which she talks about Sex, referring to 'the mask of sweat between the breasts' and 'even my pubis'. She used her personal experience as evidence, which derives from a traumatic frustration in love and marriage. She has Presented Women as an untiring seeker of the nature of the Psychological Processes behind both femininity and masculinity.

Post-independence Indian English fiction retains the momentum the novel had gathered from the Gandhian age. However, Indo-Anglia writing began when F.R. Levis published "The Great Tradition" (1948). Then V.S.Naipaul Wrote 'an Indian writer Writing in English for an English audience about Non-English Characters who talk their sort of English'. His novel "A House for Me. Biswas" (1961). It portrays the tension of a man caught between his desire for independence and his struggle to build a Hindu family Structure. The most crucial aspect of Naipaul's novel in that contemporary time was the portrayal of the diversity of Indian life enacted outside India.

A notable development in the school of woman novelists among the leading figures are Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Kamala Das, Bhabani, Bhattacharya, Nayantara Sehgal, Kamla Markandaya, and Anita Desai. She believes that art must teach and interpret the meaning of life. Bhattacharya's first novel, *So Many Hungers*, was Published within a few months of Independence. She depicts exploitation in Political, economic, and social fields. The title urges for Political freedom.

Anita Desai, the youngest of the major Indian English women novelists, is also interested in political and social aspects of life. She discovered the underlying truth ferociously. Her protagonist is the person 'for whom aloneness alone' is 'The Sole natural condition, aloneness alone the treasure worth treasuring. Her female characters are introverts, but all of them are fragile, trapped within a Situation. In "Cry, the Peacock" (1963), there is Some astrological culture during that time; Maya killed her husband by falling into this trap. Her creativity is tightly Structured.

Cultural identity is all about a Person's self-concept and Self-Perception, which is related to Nationality, Ethnicity, Caste, Religion, etc. Kiran Desai's novel *The Inheritance of Loss* addresses multicultural concerns, such as diversity, identity, and marginalisation in the post-colonial period. The novel also has a historical backdrop, 'The Gorkhaland Movement'.

Criticism of literature in the Indian languages has also developed considerably, and most Indian languages are represented. Among Such Studies are Mohan Singh's "A History of Punjabi Literature" (1927), P. Sen's "Western Influence in Bengali Literature" (1947) and modern Oriya literature (1947), and P.T. Raju's Telegue Literature. Bhopal Singh's 'A Survey of Anglo- Indian Fiction'(1934) mixed British writers on Indian Subjects with Indian English Writers. These Writers may Conveniently be Practitioners of religious, mystical, philosophical, and reflective verse. Mahesh Dattani Probes religious bigotry by examining the attitudes of three generations of a middle-class family through his Phenomenal Play "Final Solutions" (1993). This Play is based on Hindu - Muslim Problems. The Play Presents the Partition to the Present-day communal rights. Haridika Suffered from her father's murder during the Partition and was betrayed by a Muslim friend, Zarine.

Nayantara Sehgal's fiction deals with India's elite responding to the crises engendered by political change. She is a member of the Nehru-Gandhi family. Her novel "Rich Like Us" (1985) has a historical and Political aspect. It focuses on how the Contemporary Political Unheaval affects the lives of two female Protagonists, Rose and Sonali.

Indian English Prose of the Pre-Independence Period was inevitably Political in Character. Here, Nirad C. Chaudhuri was the outstanding writer of Prose during that period. His first literary work, 'Defense of India or Nationalisation of Indian Army', illustrates the Study of military organisation in British India. This brief monograph closely argued with questions such as the Spirit, the Colonial Indian Army, and comprehensive interests. He finds Hindu Social life gregarious, noisy, lacking in Privacy and leisure and destructive of 'Civilized Mental Communication'.

Cultural Studies argues that Culture is about the meaning Society generates. For this purpose, Certain forms of art and their meanings are treated as inferior. Cultural Studies say that the objects and artefacts used to make sense by the masses must be taken seriously. Such art forms as Comic Strips Or detective novels are made by the People for themselves, as Raymond Williams Pointed Out (1983). Cultural Studies believes that We cannot 'read' Cultural artefacts only within the aesthetic realm. A novel must be read within its generic conventions and the history of the novel and explore the publishing industry and its profits, the academic field of Literary Criticism, and the politics behind the novel. Cultural studies explore the languages in and through which meanings are made in a particular culture, questioning the power struggle within that culture and explaining how specific meanings are privileged. Cultural Studies believes that the processes of meaning production are connected to the structures of power in

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society: Certain meanings get power because of their Sources.

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## **Unveiling Mythic and Cultural Elements: An Exploration of Amish Tripathi's Trilogy**

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**U. Thangamurugeswari**, Assistant Professor of English, V.O.Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi.

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### **Abstract**

Amish Tripathi an Indian author known for his work in the fantasy genre, particularly for his critically acclaimed Shiva Trilogy. Born on October 18, 1974 in Mumbai, India. Tripathi had a successful corporate career before turning to writing.

His debut beginning novel of the Shiva Trilogy, *The Immortals of Meluha*, was published in 2010 and became a bestseller. The series continued with *The Secret of the Nagas* and concluded with *The Oath of the Vayuputras*. The trilogy reimagines the mythological figure of lord Shiva as a mortal man and explores his journey to becoming a deity.

Tripathi's works blend mythology, history, and philosophy, offering readers a fresh perspective on ancient Indian culture and spirituality. He popularised mythological based fiction in contemporary Indian literature.

The trilogy is set in ancient India and explores themes such as dharma, karma, destiny, and the eternal battle between good and evil. The novel explores Shiva's journey from being an ordinary man to becoming a revered god while also incorporating themes of duty, honour, love, and sacrifice.

**Keywords:** Trilogy, deity, immortal, cultural elements, contemporary.

**Introduction:**

In modern times, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the greatest re-teller of Indian epics is Amish Tripathi. Amish Tripathi was born on 18 October 1974 in Mumbai. He is an author, former diplomat and broadcaster from India. He is an IIM (Kolkata) educated banker turned award-winning author. The success of his debut book, *The Immortals of Meluha*, encouraged him to give up a 14-year-old career in financial services to focus on writing. He is passionate about history, mythology, and philosophy, finding beauty and meaning in all religions. His books have been translated into 19 Indian & international languages. His Shiva Trilogy is the fastest-selling book series in Indian publishing history, while his Ram Chandra series is the second fastest-selling book series in Indian publishing history. He got so many awards and recognition of books.

Amish Tripathi is a rising star in the field of English Indian writing. He is the author of three best-selling novel series: 1) *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010), 2) *The Secrets of Nags* (2011), 3) *The Oath of Vayup utras* (2013). The Shiva trilogy of Amish is ancient India's religious and mythological heritage. The myth played an important role in this trilogy.

*“God bless Bhadra! At least he takes some responsibility.”* (*The Immortals of Meluha*)

Indian culture is incredibly diverse and rich, encompassing various customs, traditions, languages, religions, and artistic expressions. It is characterized by its long history, with influences from ancient civilizations, such as the Indus Valley Civilization and Vedic culture, and interactions with numerous other cultures over millennia. It is dynamic and constantly evolving, influenced by historical events, geographical factors, technological advancements, and interactions with other cultures. Culture provides a framework for social cohesion, providing individuals with a sense of belonging and shared identity within a community. Indian culture is a vibrant mosaic of traditions, beliefs, and practices that have evolved over thousands of years.

Tripathi had initially decided to write a book on the philosophy of evil. Still, his family members dissuaded him from doing so, so he wrote a book on Shiva, one of the Hindu deities. He decided to base his story on the radical idea that all gods were once human beings whose actions in human life made them as famous as the gods. The “Shiva Trilogy” draws heavily from Hindu culture and mythology. Here’s a quote from the trilogy that reflects the cultural elements it:

*“In this world, fear has two meanings. Forget Everything And Run, or Face Everything And Rise. The choice is yours.”* - *“The Immortals of Meluha”*

This quote encapsulates the interviewing of ancient wisdom and contemporary relevance throughout the trilogy, reflecting the cultural ethos of courage, determination, and self-realization drawn from Hindu mythology.

Mythology refers to a collection of myths, stories, and beliefs typically passed down orally from generation to generation within a culture. These myths often involve gods, heroes, supernatural beings, and legendary events. They serve various purposes, such as explaining natural phenomena, teaching moral lessons, and providing cultural identity and cohesion. Myth can be found in virtually every culture worldwide, each with unique stories and characters.

The “Shiva Trilogy” is a captivating series that reimagines the story of the Hindu god Shiva, blending mythology with fiction to create a rich narrative filled with adventure, intrigue, and philosophical themes. The Trilogy consists of “*The Immortals of Meluha*,” “*The Secret of Nagas*,” and “*The Oath of Vayuputras*.”

As a mythical fantasy, the Siva trilogy is based on the assumption of the mythical gods Brahma, Vishnu, and mainly Shiva, Sati, Ganesh, Kartikeya, Nandi, Kali, Bhirgu, Bhagirathi, etc., in a human form. The author recreated many characters who strictly follow their Dharma. This envelope is full of excitement and adventure for all mythological characters and describes the difference between Dharmas & Karmas.

### **1) The Immortals of Meluha**

*The Immortals of Meluha* is a tale set in the ancient land of Meluha, a prosperous empire ruled by Lord Ram, where people live by strict rules and principles. The story follows the journey of Shiva, a Tibetan tribal leader who is drawn into the conflicts and mysteries of Meluha. Shiva is invited to Meluha along with his tribe, the Gunas, by the chief of the Meluhans, Daksha. Upon arriving in Meluha, Shiva learns that the empire is facing threats from the Chandravanshis, a neighbouring tribe, and the Nagas, a group of mysterious beings believed to be evil.

*“We fight almost every month with the Pakratis just so that our village can exist next to the holy lake. They are getting stronger every year, forming new alliances with new tribes. We can beat the Pakratis, but not all the mountain tribes together! By moving to Meluha, we can escape this pointless violence and may be live a life of comfort. What could possibly be wrong with that? Why shouldn't we take this deal? It sounds so damn good!”*

Shiva's arrival coincides with a prophecy foretelling the coming of the Neelkanth, a saviour with a blue throat who will lead Meluha to victory over its



enemies. Due to his unique appearance, Shiva is revered by the Meluhans and is believed to be the Neelkanth. As Shiva settles into life in Meluha, he encounters various challenges and mysteries. He falls in love with Sati, the daughter of a Meluhan chief, but societal norms and political intrigues test their love.

*“When your lord will descend to Swadweep and destroy the evil of our kind”*

Shiva grapples with questions of destiny, identity, and morality throughout his journey. As the story unfolds, Shiva learns about the true nature of the Nagas and their role in Meluha's destiny. He faces battles, moral dilemmas, and loyalty tests as he seeks to fulfil his destiny and protect the people he cares about. The story's climax sees Shiva confronting the Chandravanshis and uncovering the truth about his own identity, setting the stage for the next chapters in his epic journey. This is the first book in a trilogy on Shiva, the simple man whose karma re-cast him as our Mahadev, the God of Gods.

### **2) The Secret of Nagas:**

“The Secret of the Nagas” is the second book in the Shiva Trilogy. It continues the story of Shiva, a Tibetan immigrant who becomes the legendary Hindu deity, as he embarks on a quest to uncover the truth behind the mysterious Nagas, a group of serpent-like beings. Along the way, Shiva confronts moral dilemmas, battles powerful enemies, and delves deeper into the secrets of his destiny.

*“Search for Good. And you shall find Evil as well. The greater the Good, the greater the Evil.”*

The story begins with Shiva and his companions embarking on a quest to find and destroy the evil Nagas, who are believed to be responsible for the recent attacks on Meluha. Along the way, Shiva encounters various challenges and enemies, including the ruthless Naga queen, and begins to question the true nature of the Nagas and their role in the conflict. As Shiva delves deeper into the secrets of the Nagas, he uncovers shocking truths about his past and the prophecies surrounding him. He learns that not everything is as it seems and that the lines between good and evil are often blurred.

Throughout the book, Shiva grapples with moral dilemmas and internal conflicts as he struggles to come to terms with his identity and the responsibilities that go with it. He also faces external threats from enemies who seek to destroy him and the fragile peace of the land. Ultimately, “The Secret of the Nagas” explores the themes of redemption, sacrifice, and the search for meaning in a world filled with uncertainty and deception. It challenges readers to question their assumptions and beliefs and consider human nature's complexities.

### **3) The Oath of Vayuputras:**

The story picks up where the previous book, “The Secret of the Nagas,” left off.

Shiva, the Neelkanth, has discovered the truth about the Nagas and their leader, Lord Brahma. He learns that the Nagas are not the evil beings he once believed them to be but rather a misunderstood and persecuted race. Shiva also uncovers the existence of the Vayuputras, a secretive group of people who have sworn to protect the land of Meluha. As Shiva prepares for the final battle against the Chandravanshis and their allies, he must first unite the people of Meluha and the Nagas against their common enemy. With the help of his allies, including his wife Sati, his trusted friend Veerbhadra, and the Naga princess Kali, Shiva sets out to rally support for his cause.

*“The distance between Evil and Good is a vast expanse in which many can exist without being either.”*

Meanwhile, the Chandravanshis, led by their king Daksha and their powerful ally Parvateshwar, continue to plot against Shiva and the Meluhans. They seek to destroy Shiva and his followers, fearing the prophecy of the Neelkanth and the end of their rule. Shiva faces numerous challenges and betrayals as the war between the Meluhans and the Chandravanshis escalates. He must confront his doubts and fears while staying true to his principles and beliefs. Along the way, he discovers the true extent of his powers and learns the importance of sacrifice and selflessness. In the climactic battle, Shiva and his allies face off against the Chandravanshis and their formidable army with the help of the Vayuputras and the Naga.

The Oath of the Vayuputras" is the final book in the Shiva Trilogy. It concludes the epic tale of Shiva, a tribal chief who becomes the legendary deity Mahadev, and his quest to save the land of Meluha from evil forces. In this book, Shiva battles against the sinister Nagas and the dark forces led by their mysterious leader to fulfil his destiny and bring balance to the world. It's a captivating blend of mythology, fantasy, and adventure, with themes of honour, sacrifice, and the eternal struggle between good and evil.

The trilogy unveils lesser-known aspects of Hindu mythology and philosophy, shedding light on the complex relationships between gods, mortals, and mythical beings. By weaving together elements from various Hindu texts and legends, Tripathi creates a rich tapestry of characters and plotlines that resonate with readers familiar with Indian culture while engaging those new to it. Beyond its cultural significance, the trilogy explores timeless themes such as love, duty, destiny, and the eternal struggle between good and evil.

Through the trials and tribulations Shiva and his companions face, readers are invited to contemplate the nature of heroism, sacrifice, and the pursuit of truth. Overall, the Shiva Trilogy is an entertaining adventure and a thought-provoking exploration of

Indian mythology and culture. Its success has sparked a renewed interest in Hindu mythology and inspired readers worldwide to delve deeper into the rich tapestry of stories and beliefs that have shaped Indian civilization for millennia.

The main theme throughout the Shiva Trilogy is the eternal between good and evil and the journey of self-discovery and transformation. Shiva's journey is guided by prophecies and destinies foretold by ancient scriptures. As he discovers his true heritage and the divine powers within him, he grapples with the implications of his newfound status. Shiva's quest for truth and enlightenment leads him on a spiritual journey filled with trials and tribulations. Through encounters with various characters and mystical experiences, he gains wisdom and understanding of the universe and his place within it.

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**Alienation and the Unsung Echoes in Khaled Hosseini's *And The Mountains Echoed***

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**Vaishnavi.P**, Ph.D, Research Scholar, Reg No: 19213014012012, Department of English, Annai Velankanni College, Tholayavattam. Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abhishekapatti, Thirunelveli.

**Dr.D.Joen Joselin** (research guide), Associate Professor & Head, Department of English, Annai Velankanni College, Tholayavattam. Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abhishekapatti, Thirunelveli.

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**Abstract**

Alienation is one of the litigious words that have as many definitions as possible. Many writers use alienation as a theme in their writing because it mainly signifies the lives of human beings. During this modern age, the theme of Alienation has not lost its significance, and it drew the attention of many researchers and writers to write about it. Alienation, identity crisis, and rootedness are the common characteristics of modern contemporary fiction. Dislocation and displacement also play a key role in bringing a sense of unhomeliness, and it leads to feelings of alienation and estrangement. The sense of alienation and separation is the feeling of an outsider who does not share his culture and language in a different nation. This paper attempts to explore this phenomenon in one of the novels of the Afghan-American writer Khaled Hosseini. The paper also reflects the notions of those people who feel alienated outside their homeland. This paper aims to demonstrate how the author Khaled Hosseini tries to reflect the feeling of alienation and separation through his novel *And The Mountains Echoed*.

**Keywords:** Alienation, Identity, Powerlessness, Isolation, Separation, Normlessness.

**Introduction:**

Khaled Hosseini is an Afghan-American writer who has been absent from his homeland for a long time. He left Afghanistan in 1976 when he was eleven years old. He moved to the U.S. in 1980 after spending four years in Paris. His long absence from his homeland makes him feel like an outsider. While writing about his homeland, he tries to rediscover himself. The author reflects on the feeling of separation through the impact of exile, which stems from immigration. Hosseini lived in several countries from Afghanistan, which understands how the unmet political promises can affect the people of a place. Such conceit interdicts the novel's characters; many enter into the narrative as purported saviours. When they fail to uphold their promises, such interactions of their actions echo throughout the other character's lives. In these stories, we can see repeated characters make a tremendous sacrifice, which affects directly.

The novel *And the Mountains Echoed* gives a vivid picture of the rootless. There is an ongoing struggle within the lives of the characters. This novel begins in Afghanistan, where the author's life begins. He portrays his experiences in Afghanistan, Paris, and the U.S.A. Hosseini tries to connect Afghanistan to a worldwide link, which constructs a multiplicity of thoughts from different nations through his works. The novel *And the Mountains Echoed* deals with the problems of identity crisis and alienation. It brings up the migrated characters' social, cultural and economic factors. Although they are displaced, there is something that connects them with their roots. The novel also presents the idea that to be alienated, leaving the homeland is unnecessary. Some characters do not feel secure even in their own country.

The story begins with the love of Pari and Abdullah in the village of Shudbagh, Afghanistan. Abdullah does everything for Pari. She is the Protagonist in the novel. She was born in a united family and had the second birth order. Saboor is the father of two children, Pari and Abdullah. Once Abdullah searched for a job that day, he took Pari with him. Saboor left Abdullah to take care of his stepmother and stepbrother. Even at a very early age, Abdullah greatly loved his sister Pari. He cannot be alone without her, so he is usually with his sister. Abdullah greatly loved his sister Pari and could not be alone without her. Saboor tells Abdullah not to be so close to Pari by saying she belongs to another family. But Abdullah is so intimate with his sister because he feels the presence of his mother. When he is with Pari. When Saboor learned about his deed, he got angry and hit Abdullah's ears hard. From the small red wagon up a head, Pari cried out his name, her voice high, shaking with apprehension, "Abollah" (20).

Abdullah follows Saboor, and then he comes to know that his father, Saboor,

is going to Kabul, not searching for a job, but to leave Pari to a wealthy family for adoption. Their poor safe was the root cause of his decision. But Saboor, an impoverished man, loves his daughter very much. But the economic condition of his family doesn't allow him to have her in his home. He is unable to protect Pari from the upcoming brutal cold winter. He had already lost his one child to the lack of sufficient warm clothes. Pari always asked her father to narrate the story for her. Saboor was broken when he thought that she would soon leave, and to the richest family, he could not sleep overnight. Saboor, at last, narrates the story of a good monster to Pari and Abdullah on the way to Kabul. In the story, Saboor narrates that there was a superstitious belief among the community that a monster kills everyone he sees. Meanwhile, Baba Ayub likes his son Quias. Once, the monster took Baba's fourth son, Quias, and kept with him. He was shocked that the monster was given a good education and cared for his son Quias more than Baba. Baba left his child because of his bright future. Sometimes, people fulfill their needs by distancing themselves from their roots. "Your son does not remember you, the div continued. This is his life now, and you saw for yourself his happiness. He is provided here with the finest food and clothes, with friendship and affection. He receives tutoring in the arts and language and in the sciences, and in the ways of wisdom and charity. He wants for nothing. Somebody, when he is a man, he may choose to leave and he shall be free to do so. I suspect he will touch many lives with his kindness and bring happiness to those trapped in sorrow. (12-13)

Saboor knows Pari will leave the family for her future, so he decides to sell his daughter to the Whadatis family. The separation happened when she left Abdullah, her loving brother, for the rest of her life. He took good care of her from the childhood days after their mother's death. Mrs. Whadati came across many people and children but could not find anyone she deserved. She was desperately longing to adopt a child in their life. When she adopts Pari, there is a turning point, and a great change happens in their house. Happiness had spread among the family members. This adoption satisfied everyone, but a storm burst out in Abdullah's life because he loved Pari more than anyone else in his family. None in the village bothered to ask about Pari. "And there hadn't been any. No one in the village asked after Pari. No one even spoke her name. It astonished Abdullah how thoroughly she had vanished from their lives" (53). Like Quias, who vanished from Baba's family. Pari also vanished from their lives. Abdullah longed for his sister, and he had only the heap of feathers as a memory of his sister. The village people, including the family members, forget her.

Pari was aged four when she was separated. At first, She was very scared about her new life and new family members. She missed her brother always. She forced herself to change and adopt the new life. It was the toughest situation for her to uphold

all the memories of the past and her family, especially the memory that she had from her brother. But she had to change herself and adapt to the new life and new parents. She learned to be affectionate towards them and grow along with them. On the other side, Abdullah also desperately longed for his sister Pari. He always narrates about Pari to his daughter. He always feels happy explaining about her and their childhood memories. Abdullah used to take his sister to school, and they played on the ground there. The bond between them is revealed in his memories. It was a heart-melting incident for Abdullah. "The only good I took from that time was a measure of vindication about little Pari, who by now must grow into a young woman. It eased my conscience that she was safe, from all this killing" (138)

Pari's life was not so smooth. She grew up in a culture that was not hers. Her life in Kabul and then in Paris detached her from her roots. Although she lives a luxurious life, she always feels a sense of separation. She was confused about her appearance sometimes, she felt different. "Only that in my life something has been missing always. Something good. Something .... Ah, I don't know what to say. That is all".(358). She always feels this emotional vacuum, which is strongly confirmed when her mother, Nila Wehdati, tells her she does not know who she is. She tries to enquire about her origin in Afghanistan. Once Pari came to know her identity from a phone call from Marko, she got an idea of where she belonged. She gets familiar with her homeland, real parents, and loving brother Abdullah.

The author presents the conflict faced by an individual who lives in a different culture. Most of the characters' roots are in Afghanistan. However, in the novel, various characters must leave their roots for various reasons. Pari is given to a wealthy couple to give her a better life. Abdullah leaves Afghanistan because, after Pari's loss, he does not feel any connection. Home is a place which connects our emotions to our identity. When Pari is taken to the Wedhati family, Abdullah loses everything. "There was nothing left for him here. He had no home here."(49). In the novel's middle, one can see Abdulla go to the U.S., where he runs an Afghan restaurant. There is also a mystifying emptiness in Abdulla's life, and he feels it throughout his life. He named his daughter Pari to remember his sister.

Years passed, and Pari reached America to her brother; she did not have words to speak. By seeing her brother after many years, she could not control her emotions on him. She burst into tears. Even after the reunion, they lost all the years of togetherness. Pari was shocked that her brother was mentally affected; he did not remember anything about Pari. Knowing this, she was grief-stricken. He also had the feathers that Pari gave him at the time of the separation, but he completely forgot their childhood memories, which shook her.

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But something else to do at the age of it all, at the rim of her vision, and this is what draws her most elusive shadow. A figure, at once soft and hard. The soft hand is holding hers. The hardness of knees where she'd once rested her cheek. She searches for his face, but it evades her, slipping somewhere each time she turns it. Pari feels a whole opening up in her. There has been life, all her life, a great absence. From now she is always unknown. "Brother, she says, unaware she is speaking unaware she is weeping (271)."

Hosseini presents his character as once forfeited, never getting what they have lost. Many people leave their countries and move to other nations because of the devastating condition of Afghanistan. Jackson, one of the critics states about the situation in Afghanistan as follows:

The past three decades of war and disorder have had a divesting impact on the Afghan people. Millions have been killed, millions more have been forced to flee their homes and the country's infrastructure and forests have all but been destroyed. The social fabric of the country is fractured and state institutions are fragile and weak. (3)

Alienation is one of the most controversial concepts in our history of literature. Hosseini illustrates how the feeling of alienation would affect the characters' lives. His novel is mainly about separation, and it is the source of alienation of the characters. The separation of Abdullah and Pari is the heart and core of the separation, and it influences most of the other characters in a way. Their experience of alienation results in changing their behaviour and their lives forever. To feel alienated is not always required to be exiled, but to find a meaningful connection with our home or surroundings.

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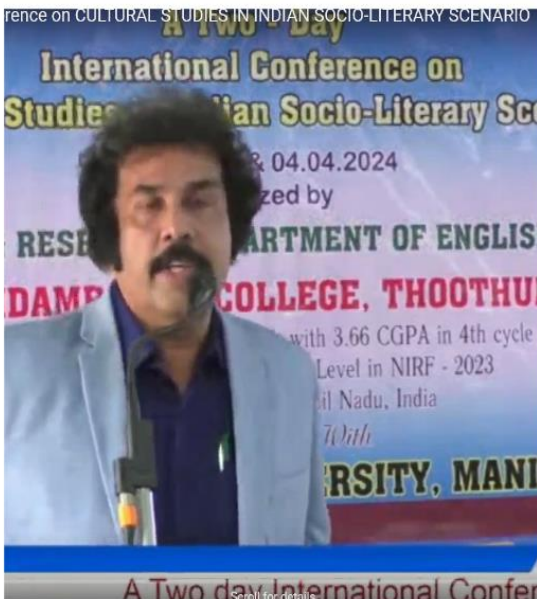
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**भारतीय सामाजिक-साहित्यिक परिदृश्य (हाइब्रिड मोड) में सांस्कृतिक अध्ययन पर दो दिवसीय अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सम्मेलन का आयोजन किया गया.**

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



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



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

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



தூத்துக்குடி வஉசி., கல்லூரியில் சமூக இலக்கிய சூழ்நிலையில் கலாசார ஆய்வுகள் என்ற தலைப்பில் சர்வதேச மாநாடு நடந்தது. அசோகியேட் புரோகிராம் பயிற்றுவிப்பாளரும், அமெரிக்காவின் தெற்கு இல்லினாய்ஸ் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் கல்விப் பள்ளியின் தலைமைப்பயிற்றுவிப்பாளருமான பிரான்சு கெனயூட்சன், நவீன கலாச்சாரத்தில் ஏஜு இன் படைபெயடுப்பு குறித்து பேசினார். ஜார்க்கண்ட் மத்திய பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் நாட்டுப்புறவியல் உதவிப் பேராசிரியர் ராமகிருஷ்ணன், கேரள மத்தியப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் மொழியியல் இணைப் பேராசிரியர் ஸ்ரீகுமார், ஸ்ரீநாராயண குருதிறந்த நிலைப்பல்கலைக்கழக மொழிப்பள்ளியின் தலை

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



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