

Criterion-3.4.5 6.3.4

ISSN-0970-843X

JODHPUR STUDIES IN ENGLISH

Vol. XIX, 2021

Board of Editors:

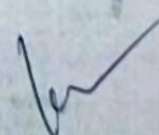
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Social and cultural constructs in Indian diaspora literature

-Kalpana Purohit

"The formation of a diaspora could be articulated as the quintessential journey into becoming; a process marked by incessant regroupings, recreations, and reiteration. Together these stressed actions strive to open up new spaces of discursive and performative postcolonial consciousness."

— Okwui Enwezor (a Nigerian curator, art critic and writer)

Postcolonial literature, a whole body of literature that emerged both as a 'resistance and reform' of ideologies, identities and experiences has garnered significant fresh concepts about race, colonialism, gender, culture, border, politics and language. Diaspora being one of the most widely acclaimed key concepts of postcolonial literature has a lot in its arena to explore and understand about the constantly evolving impacts of colonial rule and the aftermath. It is writers of diaspora not only aim to create a new genre of literature but also a literature that lays its roots in the past experiences, takes the nourishment from them and grows its branches in the present scenario that will bear the fruits of future. Indian diasporic movement/literature has produced works of wide social-cultural constructs in the wake of settlements beyond the national boundaries. The impact on plots and characters through the years is a subject of intrigue. In the age of globalization, the literature of diaspora is a platform to multiple voices that were silenced by dominant forces. The present paper is a modest attempt to delineate how alienation, displacement, rootlessness, nostalgia, gender and race form the centre to the periphery of *Quest for Identity*. It also aims at exploring the disintegration of cultures, identity crises and hybridity in the shadow of borders and spaces. An effort to comprehend these concepts will be made with references to some women writers from Indian Diaspora.

The process of globalization and the inevitable expansion of "markets, transportation, communication, capital and skills have challenged the geographic hegemony of national governments" and their borders (Centre for Development Enterprise, 1997: 17). Globalization transcends territory, location, distance or borders, and has been accompanied by rapid migration of people across borders, and has raised questions about identity, citizenship and nationalities (Sahoo and Maharaj 1)

"The massive movement of people across national borders around the globe due to globalization has led to the blurring of the definite borders between cultures and societies, creating newer cultural concepts. Postcolonial literature stands at the outset of the beginning of the age of globalization post 1950's and has produced works about race, colonialism, gender, politics, language and identity crises. These literary creations are crucial in forging new cultural identities and diaspora is one of the single most influential concepts that build the background to these cultural and social constructs."

A diaspora is a social construct founded on feeling, consciousness, memory, mythology, history, meaningful narratives, group identity, longings, dreams, allegorical and virtual elements all of which play an important role in establishing a diaspora reality. At a given moment in time, the sense of connection to a homeland must be strong enough to resist forgetting, assimilating or distancing (Shuval 43). Diasporic communities thus have a stronger emotional expression towards the ideas of identity, alienation, reformation and merger. However, scattered apart these diasporas may be, a common ethnic identity and relation to native homeland binds them together.

Diasporas are positioned somewhere between the nation-states and "traveling cultures" in that they involve dwelling in a nation-state in a physical sense, but travelling in a cultural or spiritual sense that falls outside the nation-states space/time zone. (Cohen 135-6). Diaspora is referred to a movement of population from its original homelands (Webster 22) thus signifies scattering, migration and dispersion of people. These migrated people, whatever their reason for migration be, financial, social, political, no matter whether they migrated for trade and commerce, as religious preachers, as laborers, convicts, soldiers, as expatriates or refugees, exiles (forced or voluntary), or as guest workers in search of better life have shared some common things as well as differences. It is observed regarding this migrated population;

A majority of them are international migrants who are potential immigrants in countries of their destination and who often converge into diasporic communities. These international migrants not only take their skills and expertise but also their culture and lifestyles with them. (Sahoo and Maharaj 3). This displacement and settlement procure deep socio-cultural experiences which can be understood under the umbrella of "diaspora" that has undergone a significant and diverse evolution in the field of social sciences. Associated displacement and migration the

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the term 'diaspora' has outgrown its key concepts beyond human migration and mobility in the recent decades.

In the initial phases mostly, the migrants suffer from the pain of being far off from their homes, the memories of their motherland, the anguish of leaving behind everything familiar agonizes the minds of migrants. Settlement in foreign land makes them experience dislocation which in turn results into a break with the old identity. They experience the sense of loneliness in an alien land feel as they face non-acceptance by the host society and also experience ethnic discrimination. The immigrants attempt to assimilate, adapt and amalgamate with the society of their host country. Their attempts of adaptation and adjustment are not without their concern to maintain their original culture and identity. It is an attempt of the marginal groups to protect themselves against the dominant host group. The most prominent means used for insulation is the continuation of their cultural practices and social traditions.

It is also observed that, going back to the original land is a natural desire of many diasporans, and this natural desire may well become a perpetual and utopian longing. On the other hand, since alliance with co-ethnic members in the hostland may lead these people to turn their backs on the reality of the country in which they are now living. Contradictory feelings such as loss and pride, frustration and hope or joy and sorrow lie at the core of the diasporic position. To these matters even more complicated, the members of a specific diasporic community may greatly differ in terms of gender, race, class and ethnicity (Sahoo and Maharaj 7).

The ethnicity forms the cultural identity of diasporic communities and is based on a constant struggle within the community with other ethnic communities and with the state, thus it is an ever-changing and ever-reforming complex process. The literature created around past one century is largely dominated by diasporic writings as it has witnessed the end of colonial empire and the dawn of globalization thus creating a platform for reform, research and revive the lost identities and wake up to the new independent existence on the global scenario. In the words of Peter Barry, 'the three stages (Adopt, Adapt and Adept)' provide a way of seeing postcolonial literature' (Barry 190). Wherein the first phase implies acceptance of the colonial authority and is observed as the 'Adopt' phase; the subsequent phase of 'Adapt' focusses on adapting the colonial forms into native subject matters, thus allowing a partial intervention and finally 'the 'Adept' phase, since its characteristic is the assumption that

the colonial writer is an independent 'adept' in the form, not a humble apprentice, as in the first phase, or a mere licensee, as in the second. (189) There is a declaration of cultural independence in the final phase.

Originally used for Jewish dispersion from their homeland, the term 'diaspora' is now applied as a 'metaphoric designation' for immigrants, exiles and refugees who have shuttled due to multiple reasons across the globe. Africa, the Middle East, and the Indian subcontinent form the breeding grounds for diasporic literatures and thus provide the most extensive works that create and explore the key concepts of postcolonial studies. South Asia which reflects the nations of Indian subcontinent, however the concept of South Asia has been a subject of confusion in regard to its sociological identity, since 'It encompasses differently different categories of people who trace their origins either directly to the Indian subcontinent' (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh). It also indirectly through their ancestors who migrated to East and the South Africa, Fiji, East and South-East Asia, the Caribbean and elsewhere. Being South Asian refers not so much to individual personal qualities as to social characteristics that have been constructed and reconstituted in historical and ongoing social relations in specific social, economic and political context (Sahoo and Maharaj 13).

As mentioned earlier migration is a subject to various reasons, but Diaspora migration differs from other types of migration in that in many cases it is based on claims to a "natural right" to return to an historic homeland. In this type of migration an ascriptive, ethnic or religious criterion is used to claim the right to return and entitlement to specific benefits... It is incorrectly assumed that diasporas are always a result of exile. Indeed, they are often initiated by processes of uprooting, pogroms, political, religious or racial oppression... In many- perhaps most cases migrants seek to become parts of the host society and culture and many relegate their previous cultural baggage to their past (33). Wherein such diasporic movements are not that make them different from migrations based on other grounds but it is observed that the continuous and reawakened attachment and loyalty to their earlier culture of the native land they left. The sense of diaspora is associated with its three appropriate references: the diasporic community itself, the host society and the homeland.

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Diasporic writings unfold these experiences of unsettlement and dislocation, at some or the other

belonging to a more warm, rewarding and welcoming social entity amidst the context of exclusion, limited opportunities and social-political discriminations in the host countries. Hence a diasporic text can be observed in the light of location, dislocation and relocation. The intense feelings about changing designation of home and accompanying nervousness about homelessness and unfeasibility of going back are certain and most relevant in diasporic literature. The close connection of the diaspora writings with such socio-cultural constructs often poses a need to understand culture with its characteristics, history and influences on civilisations. Though not similar to diasporic culture but a parallel subject of culture studies has also developed in past two decades. Stuart Hall pioneered the subject in his various lectures.

Cultural studies emerged as an interdisciplinary field of research that explores the ways in which "culture" creates and transforms individual experiences, everyday life, social relations and power. After the Second World War, England was no longer the centre of Western industrial society. America, became the harbinger for what was to come due to the rise of media and free markets. In a land where riggs-to-riches mobility is—or so we tend to imagine—just one hop away, culture is about what you want to project into the world, whether you are fronting as a member of the elite or as an everyman.

Combining the strengths of the social sciences and the humanities, cultural studies draws on methods and theories from literary studies, sociology, communications studies, history, culture anthropology, and economics. By working across the boundaries among these fields, cultural studies exposes new questions and problems of today's world. Rather than seeking answers that will hold for all time, cultural studies develops flexible tools that adapt to this rapidly changing world. Stuart Hall a British sociologist propounded culture studies as a separate discipline in the year 1983 and 'Culture, he argued, does not consist of what the educated elites happen to fancy such as classical music or the fine arts. It is, simply, "experience lived, experience interpreted, experience defined." And it can tell us things about the world, he believed, that more traditional studies of politics or economics alone could not.'

Cultural life is not only concerned with symbolic communication, it is also the domain in which we set collective tasks for ourselves and begin to grapple with them as changing communities. Cultural studies is devoted to understanding the processes through which societies and

culture. Cultural themes, expressions and constructs also remain integral to diasporic literature and have been widely explored in the context of Indian diaspora. There is so much of cultural thinking in the postcolonial era that it has given birth to 'hybrid culture'. Graham Huggan asserts that the present era is the era of hybridization. Culture is a derivative of past and present, individual and collective, regional and alien experiences that influence and formulate the identity of a society. Culture is both individual and social construct; "Culture as social, as a way of life whereby it expresses the structure of feeling of social group... meaning and values of ordinary behaviour and social institution as well as in terms of their place in art and learning" (Smith 23).

India is a country with unmatchable variation and abundance in regard to cultures, religions, folklore, languages, regions, societies, arts, casts, food and such socio-cultural elements that form the extensive and intricate cultural and social fabric of India. Acknowledging this fact it is quite acceptable to find vast networks based on language and region, religion and caste among the Indian diaspora. Research has been carried out in the recent years to study this variability in Indian diaspora; they include the production of diasporic identities in Mauritius, Panji Hindus in Malaysia and the ethnicity over the generations of Indian Jains in the United States etc.

The modern Indian Diaspora is one of the most demographic diasporas emerged with the multiplicity of histories, variety of culture, tradition and a deep instinct of survival" (Baubock and Faist 9). This includes the different phases of evolution in diaspora that are migration, hybridity and quest for identity. Thus, a contemporary writer whether in India or abroad, writes from different perspectives. Regarding this Salman Rushdie one of the most prominent creators of Indian Diaspora Writing has rightly observed in one of his articles, "We are Hindus who have crossed black water, we are Muslims who eat pork... as my use of the Christian notion of the Fall indicates... we are now partly of the West. Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times that we fall between two stools..." (The Indian Writer in England 11)".

The postcolonial condition entails this experience of loss and the ability to inhabit multiple spaces simultaneously. Edward Said also observed identity in the light of mixed notions of belonging and longing as he goes on to write "The culture and imperialism, "between domains, between forms, between homes and between language (65)." W

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"--- one physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of redeeming precisely the thing that was lost, that will, in short, create fictions not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indians of mind." (Salman Rushdie)

The literature of the Indian diaspora constitutes an important part of the burgeoning field of anglophone postcolonial literature. Some of the better-known authors in this archive include V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, Bharati Mukherjee, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Desai, M.G. Vassanji, Shyam Selvadurai, and Kiran Desai. While the first-generation immigrants from India constantly nurse their grievances against the homeland, the second and third generations look at India without prejudices and take pride in India's accomplishments. For them, India is a brand name, which they can use for their own advancement and they become true assets for the country. This feeling of elation at India's exalted status is present in the writings of young people.

Generally, diasporic literature deals with a tension, displacement, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, quest of identity. It also focusses on the issues related to amalgamation, disintegration of cultures. It reflects the immigrant experience that comes out of the immigrant settlement. Indian diaspora remains a major platform to these continuously evolving themes, the issue of globalization. Uma Parameswaran has captured it in a series of phases;

The first is one of nostalgia for the homeland left behind mingled with fear in a strange land. The second is a phase in which one is busy adjusting to the new environment that there is little creative output. The third phase is the shaping of diaspora existence by involving themselves in ethnocultural issues. The fourth is when they have 'arrived' 42 and start participating in the larger world of politics and national issues. (Parameswaran, 165)

As the expatriate writer experiences cultural, geographical and emotional displacement, there emerges a diasporic sensibility that mirrors the plural identity of the writer. Their writing is characterized by a pluralistic vision. There is a constant shifting between two worlds, voyaging back and forth between two locales. Expatriate writing is the outcome of the existential, political and metaphysical unsettlement. The safety of the members often provides an illusion of home and shelter from an alien and hostile society. Caught within the system of binary oppositions the label them as an outsider and the others, they tend to highlight differences and assume

Harrichand Itwaru in *The Invention of Canada: Literary Text and the immigrant imagination*, stated;

"The immigrant writer is not merely the author who speaks about the immigrant experience, but one who has lived it, one whose response is an irruption of words, images, metaphors, one who is familiar with some of the inner as well as the outer workings of these particular contexts." (245)

The expatriate novelist's works investigate the cultural displacement and its impact. The uprooted immigrants face varied situations. Problems of rejection and acceptance. If accepted, the problem would be an adjustment, coping with the anxiety, monotony, disappointment, isolation and finally they face failure and rejection. Rejection: The works of expatriate writers depict the effect of cultural uprootedness and the never-ending experiences of which social rejection is central. Social rejection is when a group of people decides, to reject one or more persons from participation in their group.

Class and gender also play an important role in the shaping of not just the diaspora but also diaspora's interface with cultures. A major theme in diasporic writing is their occupation of liminal space. This writing remains an outsider looking in at the new culture, but it is also an insider to the homeland, looking in at a part of space that has altered in their absence. Another significant theme is dual identity, the conflict between a person's ethnic inheritance and individual identity. This issue develops a tension between a desire for assimilation and the need for ethnic identity. This is at the base of the conflict between generations, between mothers and fathers who wish to preserve cultural ethnicity, and children want liberty to maintain their individuality. As Esman relates in the study of Diasporas,

these peoples all of whom share the same homeland, in order to preserve their customs and culture and to recreate the familiar sort of surrounds much associated with their idea of their homeland formed communities through to which they can hold on to their roots. Such diasporas then extend and expand including not only the original immigrants... but also their progeny, the second generation "as long as they choose to or are forced to remain a separate entity. It is possible though, that in the next generations to come and through the generational process of assimilation, some diasporas melt into the mainstream culture and gradually disappear as a distinct community through time, this process however, is a very long-lasting and slow-moving

one and the first and even the second generation of immigrants, those who around Lahiri's fiction in general, often have to face up to problems and to be afflicted with scars and traumas of their national, ethnic, culture and gender identities. What needs to be taken into account here is that the notion of identity in general and diasporic identity in particular is not a set, fixed and essential whole but is rather "constructed, fluid and multiple" (Brubaker, 1)

Stuart Hall, also in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" indicates that we conceive of identity "as a production", which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (222). In the diasporic experience then, "boundaries of self" are as fluid as ever and this is when the postcolonial concepts of hybridity and liminality come to the foreground. On the other hand, Homi K. Bhabha in his *The Location of Culture* (1994) subverts the long held binary way of thinking about cultural identity in terms of yawning gaps between self/other. He presents an inter-crossed version of identity according to which the self is present in the other and vice-versa. The literature of the Indian diaspora constitutes an important part of the burgeoning field of anglophone postcolonial literature. Some of the better-known authors in this archive include V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, Bharati Mukherjee, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Desai, G. Vassanji, Shyam Selvadurai, and Kiran Desai.

The impressions such as hybridity, migration and identity are explored extensively in several works of prominent women writers of Indian diaspora --- Bharati Mukherjee's 'Wife' Jhumpa Lahiri's "The Namesake" and Kiran Desai's *Inheritance of Loss*.

Bharati Mukherjee's second novel *Wife* (1975) is a story about the predicament of cross-cultural dichotomy and its negative effect on the self of Dimple, the protagonist which leaves her undecided knowing how to react. The story builds up on how being caught between the cultures of the east and the west, the past and the present, the life in America with its immigrant problems create chaos and disorder in the relationship between a husband and wife. The novel also exposes how a woman's immigrant experiences and her encounter with new culture bound to be different from that of a man; a woman needs love, care and time from her husband and the lack of this compels a woman to think herself doubly marginalized: as a woman and an immigrant.

Mukherjee's works reveal her movement from Canada to U.S.A. and the consequent aloofness of expatriation to the exuberance of immigration. Her beginning works can be classified under the stage of expatriation revealing her dark days of alienation, love and betrayal and racial discrimination she suffered in Canada and portrayed through her protagonists. The Tiger's Daughters (1971), *Wife* (1975) and *The Canadian Stories of Darkness* (1985). Abha Panday in *Indian Diasporic Literature* writes,

"Bharati Mukherjee has shown dual cultural shock. This migration or cultural transplant lends to a crisis of identity and final reconciliation to the problem of a displaced person in America as well as India... In all fiction of Bharati Mukherjee covering many moods of expatriations, nostalgia and frustration. (Pandey 125) and to quote Mukherjee herself admits, "The finding of a new identity... the painful or exhilarating process of pulling yourself out of the culture that you were born... then repatriating yourself in another culture."

Concerning the themes of cultural displacement and search for identity, Bharati Mukherjee's *Wife* (1975) explores the challenges of the protagonist Dimple who is a traditionally raised Indian woman who finds herself sinking into cross-cultural conflict in New York City. Dimple is aware about her marginal position in the conventional society which has little regard for women. To make matters worse her marriage to Amit Bas who himself struggles for a decent living in America, further brings psychological conflicts of selfhood, love and emotions in Dimple's life. As an Indian, Dimple never wants to be a part of American society and feels a constant nostalgia about her candid life in Calcutta. She tries to settle in the American culture but fails to assimilate into it. To quote from the text;

"She is scared of self-service elevators of policemen, of gadgets and appliances. She does not want to lose her identity, but feels isolated, trapped, alienated, marginalized" (Wife 112). It seems utterly difficult for her to settle amongst the people who know nothing about Durga puja. "How could she live in a country... where every other woman was a stranger, where she felt different, ignored, exposed to ridicule in the elevator" (112). She accepts her inconvenience and situations as she says, "I am sorry, Dimple whispered. There are some things I can't do. Wearing pants is one of them... I just don't want to start all this. If I wear a sari in the winter, who knows what I'll be wearing to eat at the Dairy Queen." (112)

succeeds in displaying the sole shattering identity crises faced by her protagonist amidst the culture divide.

Yet another celebrated women diaspora writer is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jhumpa Lahiri who is known for her depiction of immigrant and Indian-American life, the universal themes of longing, loneliness, the lost-self and barriers of communication also remain at the centre of her stories. A common thread running through Lahiri's writings is the experience of being "foreign". The Namesake (2003), Lahiri's first novel, was wisely received for her deft portrayal of the immigrant experience and her characters again deal with complex issues of cultural and generational gaps. The story travels between Calcutta, Boston and New York city, examining the nuances involved with being caught between two conflicting cultures with highly distinct religious, social and ideological differences. The story builds around the struggles of Ashok and Ashima a Bengali couple, who leave Calcutta and settle in Central square in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Gogol Ganguli, the novel's protagonist, son of Ashok and Ashima, is a young man negotiating the divide between his parents' traditional Indian roots and his own American identity. Thus, setting the socio-cultural construct between generations, identity and boundaries. To quote from the text;

"With at a single grandparent or parent or uncle or aunt at her side, the baby's birth, like most every thing else in America, feels somehow haphazard, only half true. As she strokes and suckles and studies her son, she can't help but pity him. She has never known of a person entering the world so alone, so deprived." (Lahiri, 24) a portrayal of nostalgia, loss and misery in these thoughts of Ashima are weaved with extraordinary sensitivity.

"In so many ways, his family's life feels like a string of accidents, unforeseen, unintended, one incident begetting another... They were things for which it was impossible to prepare but which one spent a lifetime looking back at, trying to accept, interpret, comprehend. Things that should never have happened, that seemed out of place and wrong, these were what prevailed, which endured, in the end." (286)

Saloni Prasad while praising Lahiri opines rightly about Gogol's separation from his parents and his cultural displacement: Lahiri, as a second generation immigrant seems to have a delicate understanding and empathy of her characters. Gogol, moving away from his parents, in seeking a life separate from theirs might be interpreted as an exercise in cultural displacement [...] She

shows great skill in her exploration of human psyche, their inner turmoil and growth, the reaction of changes in culture and the powerful effect that our heritage can have on us. The search for identity with culture in the background is dealt prolifically by Lahiri and everything including gender, homeland, geography, occupation and role within the community can be a decisive factor in the growth of her characters.

Kiran Desai's Booker winning novel *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) stands as one of the finest works of Indian Diaspora Literature staging multiple diasporic inner experiences of the people away from their motherland. Set in the New York city and in Kalimpong a small town in India in the North-eastern Himalayas of 1980's, it is the story of Sai who lives in Kalimpong and Liju an illegal immigrant in New York. Sai is the orphaned grand-daughter of an old retired judge, Jemubhai Patel who lives with his cook and dog, Mutt. Sai joins the judge in the decrepit mansion. The three lead a tightly knit solitary life with occasional distraction in form Sai's Anglophile sisters down the road and Gopinath the tutor. Sai's arrival reminds the judge of his journey to England as a young lad, he recalls: "He envied the English. He loathed Indians. He worked at being English with the passion of hatred and for what he would become, he would be despised by absolutely everyone, English and Indians, both," Desai writes. Nevertheless he strikes up a tentative attachment to his grand-daughter perhaps because she is a lot like him, a westernized Indian, an "estranged Indian living in India"

Arguably the most charming portions of the novel are the nuggets Desai paints of the cook's son Liju who shuttles between jobs struggling with low wages. Describing one of the Indian restaurants Bijju works in Desai writes, "In the Gandhi café, the lights were kept low the better to hide the stains. It was a long journey from here to the fusion trend, the goat cheese and basil pizzas, the mango margarita. This was the real thing, generic Indian, and it could be ordered complete one stop on the subway line or even on the phone; gilt and rad chairs, plastic roses on the table with synthetic dewdrops." The imagery and observation of the surrounding, makes the story lifelike.

Immigration has been viewed from different angles and Desai in this work proposes it as a act of cowardice, "He knew what his father thought: that immigration, so often presented as a heroic act, could just as easily be the opposite; that it was cowardice that led many to America, fear marked the journey, not bravery; a cockroachy desire to scuttle to where they never saw the light and not really, never had to suffer a tug to your conscience; where you never heard the bells of America, servants, beggars, bankrupt relatives, and where your generosity would be rewarded by a slap, where by merely looking after your wife-child-dog-yard you could feel virtuous. Experience the

relief of being an unknown transplant to the locals and hide the perspective granted by journey (Desai 329) The diasporic cultural conflict that poses the concepts of sub-nationalism, identity crises and subaltern experiences have been extensively weaved in this masterpiece by Kiran Desai.

Thus, it can be opined that multiculturalism is that parcel of civilization which has continued to ignite varied human emotions, creativity and societies reforming and resisting the orders of life. Diaspora is all about the creation of new identities, spaces for growth, boundaries to limit and explore, resolution of conflicts and a new culture, either composite or plural. That is to say Diasporic writings are constructed not on the principles of harmony but on the principles of simultaneity. Mahatma Gandhi said in Young India,

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any"

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The Third Gender: Challenging Stereotypes

-Madhuri Chawla

Gender is a multifaceted construct, viewed differently in different societies. Traditional views of gender enforce either a female or a male role. In the Indian society, there exists an institutionalized third gender role which is, as Serenu Nanda says, "neither male nor female, containing elements of both" called hijra, distinctly different from the Western concept of transgender. The hijra identity challenges Western ideas of sex and gender as it has no exact match in the modern Western classification of gender on sexual orientation.

The word hijra is derived from the Arabic root "hjr" meaning 'leaving one's tribe'. It has traditionally been translated into English as "eunuch" or "hermaphrodite", defined by "the irregularity of the male genitalia", that is, those having been born with intersex variations.

Traditionally, the hijras in India have an active and celebrated lifestyle. They are unique because they have an active social organization that is both traditional and ritualistic (Freilich, 150). They live in well-defined and organized all-hijra communities, led by a guru, which have sustained themselves over generations by "adopting" young boys who are rejected by, or flee, their family of origin. (Vinay Lal, 199) Though the hijras themselves distinguish between those who are born hijras - (that is, born with ambiguous genitals) and those who undergo natural or artificial sex change later, the term nevertheless is generally used to describe all cross dressers, intersex people and transgender people, who are recognised as the country's 'third gender' today.

Hijras exist all over India, and have a recorded history in the Indian subcontinent since times immemorial. Mention of a third sex, 'tritiya prakriti' can be found in the famous work 'Kama Sutra', compiled in the 2nd Century. The hijras were not only recognized throughout Hindu history, they have also been recorded as honourable and dependable servants (eunuchs), hired to specifically serve the women of the noble classes of Islamic societies.

The popularity of hijras has been backed by many inherent stereotypes, myths giving the hijra community a supernatural status. The construction of the hijra identity draws its inheritance

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Editorial

During these unprecedented times of pandemic, where doors were shut to human touch and physical communication became difficult, then the world of letters opened its numerous windows that helped us to sustain in life. "They say that nothing can substitute books".

We are indebted to the contributors who fought their complacency and continued to kindle their fire of curiosity and creativity during the times of adversity.

Once again, we felt overwhelmed with the response that reiterates that,

"We should not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive, where we started,

And know the place for the first time"

- T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets

As a connoisseur of expressions and a colossal amphora of variegated emotions and experiences are brought together in addition to vistas of thoughts in the collection of articles presented hereby in this issue of **Jodhpur studies in English: Vol. : XIX, 2021**.

embodies, every word we believe in, what we aspire for; that is of maintaining **high order of excellence**.

We are sure that this may appeal the readership and offers an everlasting treat of perfumeries – in the Kaleidoscope of human experiences - panorama of reflective themes, goods that are intricately sowed in the garden of ideas by the Contributors to the delight of all those who embark on the literary voyage.

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Dynamics Of Poetry

The Said and The Unsaid

Edited By

Dr. JERNAIL SINGH ANAND

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EARTH VISION PUBLICATIONS

H-23/16, DLF Phase - I, Gurugram-122002

Ph. : +91 124-4054392, 090340-06808

e-mail: earthvisionpublications@gmail.com

Website: ymgggp.com

Professor & Head

August 2020

Dynamics of Poetry- The Said And The Unsaid

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Edited by: Dr. Jernail Singh Anand, Dr. Parneet Jaggi

ISBN : 978-81-944858-7-2

Paper Back

Price: ₹ 670.00

US Dollar: \$ 40

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Published by:

Earth Vision Publications

H-23/16, DLF Phase-I,
Gurugram - 122 002 (Haryana), India
Phone: 0124-4054392, 098118-42292

Email: earthvisionpublications@gmail.com,
mgwebguru@gmail.com

Website: www.ymgggp.com, www.amazon.com, www.amazon.in,
www.flipkart.com

Typeset by : www.ymgggp.com

Branch Office:

Yayati Madan G Gandhi Group of Publication
24-25, 2nd Floor, Lajpat Rai Market, Opp. Elite Cinema,
Railway Road, Hisar (Haryana) India

Distributor:

PRINTOGRAPHIC

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Humanistic Insights in the Mystic Musings of Tagore

KALPANA PUROHIT

I know not how thou singest, my master!
I ever listen in silent amazement.
The light of thy music illumines the world.
The life breath of thy music runs from sky to sky.
The holy stream of thy music breaks through all stony obstacles
and rushes on [Tagore: Gitanjali 7].

While contemplating on this exuberant expression of the mellifluous beauty of His benevolence resounding in the infinite universe, the present paper seeks to unveil the eternal bond of man and nature — all enveloped by the blissful benediction of the Supreme Almighty — cohesively drawn and developed in the mystic musings of the eminent Rabindranath Tagore.

This Bengali Maestro of the Indo-Anglican fraternity has therefore painted the canvas of mesmerizing creativity with the essentials of human dignity and creative individuality. Alongside this, the essentials of his humanistic insights are all the more drawn and decorated with the mystic shades of his Supreme entity. In the afore-mentioned state of aesthetic amazement, the Bard has strung the delicate notes of human sensitivity in the milieu of the divine contemplation and aesthetic enjoyment — leading towards a sense of fertile accomplishment; truly euphonised as:

In that shoreless ocean, at thy silently listening smile my songs would swell in melodies,
free as waves, free from all bondage of words [Ibid.].

Penetrated with this charismatic beauty of the divine self in harmony with his abounding fecundity, the poet sings of the fullness of life on earth and also aspires to meet the destination of greater liberty and freedom in the cocoon of His profundity. He relishes the pleasure of human birth on earth and thereon sings of his desire to offer his deep sense of gratitude and reverence to this Universal Being for bestowing his charm and the magnificent colours of exotic shades on human society. In lieu of this thought process he

profusely incorporates and decorates his poetic valleys with enigmatic serenity; duly versified as follows:

Ever in my life have I sought thee with my songs.
It was they who led me from door to door, and with them have
I felt about me, searching and touching my world.
It was my songs that taught me all the lessons
I ever learnt; they showed me secret paths,
they brought before my sight
many a star on the horizon of my heart [Tagore: Gitanjali 105].

However, with this gesture of paying reverence to the Almighty – the poet emerges as an iconic figure who is eminently known for his immense contributions to the ever widening vistas of greater humanity – invariably recognised and duly realised as the significant need of the present day hour of rising ideologies.

Meanwhile the perusal of his ideology and faith could be better understood when the study relishes the pleasure of the humming melodies; lyricised as:

Thou hast made me known to my friends whom I knew not
Thou hast given me seats in homes not my own
Thou hast brought the distant near and
Made a brother of the stranger [Ibid.167].

And in this journey of self-enhancement, the Bengali Bard is known to have imbibed the lessons of love and brotherhood in the canopy of His Beneficence.

Further, while seeking to draw a sense of connectivity and harmony with the surrounding environs, the study observes that the poet in kind has travelled a lot and has always given due significance to the healthy interaction to be healthily exercised and channelized with the world around – irrespective of the man-made restraints and boundaries entrapping the advances of a human sobriety. The copious creation of his reflects that he wished hard to restore the faith of human kindness and thereon to surpass all the limitations and restrictions which were there to belittle the coherent sensation of the human self.

Meanwhile the poet is also observed to have doted on the intrinsic of the ebb and flow of life, furthermore paving the way for the better understanding of this paradoxical measure of human life which all the more is known to have strengthened the persona within and

has thereby led to the development of human understanding in this world of greater complexities.

Thus the radiance of this distinct personality is all the more spread and celebrated in the world of intellectuals – when the study incorporates the words of the critics who encapsulated the legendary artist as:

“The highest ideal which Tagore envisages for human beings is – to find fulfilment in creativity and in the dedication of one’s life to the service of others, to be loved by a God who does not distinguish between his children and not to be chained to a particular caste and its accompanying discrimination. . . .” [Tagore: Gitanjali, Preface 288].

Hence Tagore’s God is limitless and infinite – a sensation all the more portrayed and painted as the holy colours investing and bestowing its charm on the incessant streams of life. Whereby, the poet sings of this beautiful enchantment with a verse intoned as:

The stream of joy is coursing through the universe
Day and night, so much of sweet ambrosia
Overflows the infinite sky.
The sun and the moon drink of it with folded palms,
The imperishable light glows eternally.
The universe is eternally overflowing with life and shining light
[Chakrabarti and Chakraborty 92].

With this enthralling impression of human enlightenment, the Bengali Thakur further expresses his spontaneity of poetic wisdom and charismatic vision furrowing magnanimously the cascades of his Humanism with the notes singing:

Blind Kanai sits among all the coming and going
Seeking alms in lieu of the songs he will sing !
While the local children laugh happily and shout
As all day at water’s edge they splash about
[Chakravarti: Haat-hahaj Path 18].

Contemplating on these rustic shades duly captured and enlivened by the multifarious artist, the thought process is further enriched with a vision to greater simplicity and human sensitivity. Moreover, this picturesque image of his native soils accommodates the world outside with a better understanding of our true selves whereby the value of human

serenity is all the more complemented and enriched with the playfulness of the children on the shore.

The charisma of a child's fantasy, innocence and purity adds to the beauty of human soul — for "The child is father of the Man" [701] as encapsulated by Wordsworth in his *Intimations of Immortality* and thereby, the approach ascertains that if a man is reminded of this primitive beauty of his self, he will be redeemed to greater possibilities and will be able to understand his potentialities. With this prime objective to reach up to the realisation of the omnipotent God in one's own self, Tagore is verily observed to have comprehended the philosophy of life with a reference to the intrinsic of child psychology; where the ultimate idea of freedom and happiness is sought with the expression of:

On the seashore of endless worlds children meet. The infinite sky is motionless overhead and the restless water is boisterous. On the seashore of endless worlds the children meet with shouts and dances [Gitanjali 64].

Thence with this idea of relishing the celestial joy and fulfilment on the grounds of endless variations, the study meets with the idea of absolute wholeness as a composite feature duly fostered and celebrated by Tagore — in the concourse of his abundant creativity.

Besides, his ideal of Humanism is understood with the nuances of a liberated soul, inquisitive spirit, belief in good taste and a strong faith in human race — indelibly marked and nurtured by the cultural soils — to which he was born and bred. In concordance to these revelations, it has also been noted that the cultural imprints of his tradition are verily celebrated in his poetic compositions with the captivating reflections as of *Ishopanishad*; duly conjectured as:

"Isha wasyam sarwam jagat yat kinch jagatyam jagat
" [Ekadashopanishad 5].

...the English translation of which implies God lives in each and every particle of this universe.

Perhaps this notion of the Supreme Power invested in each and every speck of life on earth could also be identified with the *Jivan Devata* of Tagore as rejoiced and relished with his versification of:

O Mother, Thou hast captured the heart of the world,
Thou art father and mother — the pure sun-bathed earth.

The waters of blue seas washes
Thy feet, Thy green apron flutters in the breeze.
The Himalayas, kissing the sky, is Thy forehead,
Its snow capped summit is Thy crown.
The sun arose first over Thy sky, the sacred hymns of Vedas were
First heard in Thy forest hermitages...
Thou art ever benevolent, Thou art glorious,
Thou art the giver of food for all....
[Chakrabarti and Chakraborty 171].

While singing the glory of the infinite cosmos, the poet seems to have rendered a charisma of a divine rapport drawn between man and nature as a whole and has also acknowledged the presence of some unseen power implicit in the diversity of life on earth. The meadows of his fecundity, also reflects substantially the cognitive presence of his nativity and cultural beauty — magnanimously celebrated in his aesthetic sensibility as a whole. In lieu of which it has also been comprehended that,

“Literature has a soul, which reveals itself in a totality of impression, the details being important only in so far as they contribute to this and take their legitimate place in the integrated whole” [Bhattacharjee 122].

In accordance with the vision of seeking the coherent wholeness in this vast universe, the thought process is all the more strengthened or rather rejuvenated and reconsolidated with the idea of absolute Harmony to be realised in the present day world of incomprehensible complexities.

Thereafter, pre-occupied with this genuine concern to restore the faith of human kindness in the orbit of natural profundity, Tagore invariably composes the humanistic tunes of the world, singing:

When the heart is hard and parched up,
Come upon me with a shower of mercy.
When grace is lost from life, come with a burst of song.
When tumultuous work raises its din on all sides
Shutting me out from beyond, come to me,
My lord of silence, with thy peace and rest [Gitanjali 39].

Hereby, the poet longs for the essentials of peace and harmony to be substantially accommodated and sufficed in the arms of His benevolence; to be fulfilled and satiated profusely away from the world of human worries and harsh realism.

Therewith all in this long sojourn of self realisation, the study strives to conclude with a prolific deliberation – duly exchanged from a Grandfather to the Bard of serenity; asserting:

“Humanity is not a flotsam and jetsam to drift along with the water, following the path of least resistance. Humanity is like a rock in the midst of swirling waters holding aloft its greater heritage over the flux” [Kripalani 61].

To this gesture of profound thoughtfulness, Tagore – the myriad minded man reflected that,

“Man must realise the wholeness of his existence, his place in the infinite; he must know that hard as he may strive he can never create his honey within the cells of his hive, for the perennial supply of his life food is outside their walls” [Tagore: Sadhna 102].

Thus this constituted to be the deep set philosophy of life –and thereon imprinted an inevitable impression of greater universality on the creative impulses of the artist within and thereby portrayed him as a multi faceted personality of immense possibilities – contributing copiously to the extensive avenues of the world literature – all anew. Therefore in the kaleidoscopic frame of these revelations and comprehensive recognition of the Man within , the study conjectures that it would be worthwhile to sum up the entire thought process with the beautiful words of Anna Akhmatova – who defines the grandeur personality as,

“...that mighty flow of poetry which takes its strength from Hinduism as from the Ganges, and is called Rabindranath Tagore” [Sen 90].

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Kalpang

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(Poems & Articles)

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*Professor & Head
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Edited by: Dr. Jernail Singh Anand, Dr. Parneet Jaggi
(English)

ISBN : 978-81-944858-4-1

Paper Back

Price: ₹ 670.00

US Dollar: \$ 40

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Published by:

Earth Vision Publications

H-23/16, DLF Phase-I,
Gurugram - 122 002 (Haryana), India
Phone: 0124-4054392, 098118-42292

Email: earthvisionpublications@gmail.com,
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Website: www.ymgggp.com, www.amazon.com, www.amazon.in,
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Typeset by : www.ymgggp.com

Branch Office:

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Distributor :

PRINTOGRAPHIC

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Professor & Head
English

Kalpana Purohit

Unspoken – Unheard

Something is there that is common between us
You don't speak, neither do I
The silence enjoys
The music inside
The thread is invisible to waking eyes
But the sound of heart is produced
The distance deepens the feelings mute
When your face is before mine
My eyes blaze and begin to shine
Ecstatic joy brings in me a bird
That sings unending rhymes in its herd
These rhymes have no earthy sound
Two worlds with extreme depth pull me around
A moment's frequency and then unwanted gap
I search minutely in nature's lap
Unspoken remains Unheard this time too
Gloomy joy smiles and bids adieu...



Dr. Kalpana Purohit is Professor & Head, Department of English at Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan-India. She is a Critic, Poet and Translator. She has been Director of Centre for Women's Studies. She is an active researcher who has prolifically published articles & has seven books to her credit. An extensively travelled erudite, she has presented copiously at national and international rendezvous of seminars and conferences at home and abroad.

Jan-2021

A WORLD LITERATURE INDIA PUBLICATION

THE CREATIVE VISION

OF

Dr JERNAIL SINGH ANAND

The Poet Whom The Muse Loved

A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES AND
ESSAYS ON DR J S ANAND

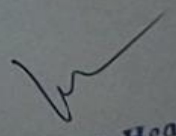
Edited by

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Earth Vision Publications

Gurugram - 122 002 (Haryana)
98118-42292, 90340-06808


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THE CREATIVE VISION OF DR JERNAIL SINGH ANAND

First Edition: January 2021

Copyright © 2021 Dr Manminder S. Anand (Editor)

Genre: Articles

Language: English

ISBN: 978-93-90670-00-0

Paperback

Price: ₹ 490.00

US Dollar: \$ 30

Kindle: \$5

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Published by:

EARTH VISION PUBLICATIONS

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Book Available at : www.amazon.in, www.flipkart.com,
www.amazon.com

Branch Office : **Yayati Madan G Gandhi Group of Publications**
24-25, Second Floor, Lajpat Rai Market, Railway Road,
Hisar-125001 (Haryana) M: 98118-42292

Printer & Distributor : **Printographic**
24-25, First Floor, Lajpat Rai Market, Railway Road,
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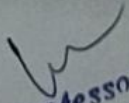
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INDRAPUR

Dr Jernail Singh Anand's *No Man's Land*: A Quintessential Celebration of Emotions

Prof. Kalpana Purohit
Head, Department of English,
Jai Narain Vyas University,
Jodhpur (Rajasthan) India

*"We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time."*

-T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*

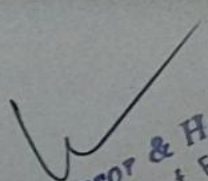


As a connoisseur of poetic expression and a colossal amphora of variegated emotions, Dr J. S. Anand has brought together his vistas of thoughts in this collection of poems; as a distinguished and everlasting treat of perfumeries. T. S. Eliot relatively observes in the lines above, how to sustain the freshness in the kaleidoscope of experiences and the motif of our explorative instincts and this remains at the centre of this poetic

journey of Dr Anand. A treat of subtle and intense feelings out poured from the heart; these poems express the versatile journey of the writer on the wagon of life across the paths of worldly encounters and spiritual enlightenment.

As wide is the span of human experiences in the poems; so is the title of the book '*No Man's Land*' which is suggestive of the panorama of self-reflective themes that are free of any proposed inhibitions or borders of definitive notions. The poems wander freely in the most intricately sowed garden of ideas of the writer and thus appeal a varied readership. As Gustave Flaubert puts it, "There is not a particle of life which does

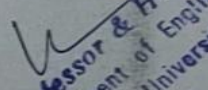
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not bear poetry within it", Dr Anand succeeds in drawing a multitude of motifs from his spiritual, materialistic, intellectual and social proficiencies. Look Before You Leap is the first poem of this poetic troupe which sets the didactic mood of this literary voyage and in a very appealing layout remarks "If you want to make this world beautiful... All that you have more than you need /Belongs to somebody; /share a bit of it; be a giver. /You will see how the water of the sea changes its colour over a time." --such candid is the composition of poetry that it flawlessly stirs the intellect of the reader and inspires him to carve the best in oneself.

Like a clarion call to save the humanity, Dr Anand's poems further diverge into a multitude of inspiring poetic hues. Giving voice to the silent suffering of women in our social scenario, The Lovers and A Mother's Cry are the poems of delicate feminist appeal. The subtle sense of unknown truths and wondrous imagination has been verily refined in the poems like Innocent Folly of Man, Non-living and Dreams. These poems serve as an example of the skill of the poet to showcase the individual at the centre maintaining the universality on the periphery. In expressing, "Poetry is nothing but an emotion, added to a normal phase" Dr Anand harmoniously draws the difference between a poet and a layman. The book serves as an excellent corrective to human follies by presenting a mirror to the vagaries of human behaviour. What could be a better realization of one's participation in the world around us than a swift and striking expression that lays down a variety of past and present scenarios resulted out of human endeavours.

One of the major themes trodden at varied paces in the book is how in a world marked by fissiparous tendencies and irrational hostility, the human race can generate a powerful philosophy of love and compassion as Tagore imagined it in Geetanjali. "We want a world beyond war, a world of peace, culture and love" these concluding lines from the poem 'On World Peace' sum up Dr Anand's approach on the poems that highlight the indomitable spirit of creating a better tomorrow amidst the acceptance of our habit of destroying the world gifted by the almighty. As difficult it is to justify one's internal graffiti of stirring impacts and life experiences, all the more is to express it through the medium of poetry that gathers a universal appeal. The poetic potpourri further develops with a visible expertise on the above thought as the


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poems like Plunder, Turn back, Airy Nothings and Fate reveal a construction of self with an aesthetic sense.

"Some of you say, "Joy is greater than sorrow," and others say, "Nay, sorrow is the greater." But I say unto you, they are inseparable. Together they come, and when one sits alone with you at your board, remember that the other is asleep upon your bed."— the pearls of wisdom by Kahlil Gibran from his literary marvel 'The Prophet' unite with Dr Anand's soulful voyage which oscillates from the agony of pain to the realms of bliss through this poetic endeavour. Disowned and March on Burning Coal with Blessed Conduct and Of Soft Talk progress with a clear conscience and fecund creativity, where we experience both delight and grief, resulting from life, intellect and destiny. 'Nature bestows so many benedictions upon us, Making us rich, Making us unique...' the love for the bounties of nature is also cherished along the book and is significant of its impact on the growth of human race.

While some poems are evident of a longing and meditative search others seem a scribble at leisure in pensive mood capturing "Spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions..." reaching the sublime perception of reality treating beauty at par: fusion of Truth and Beauty — as Keats concludes his Ode on a Grecian Urn; "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know." As a fuel to the divine energy, the poems bridge the mortal human experiences to the immortal God and thus synchronize the parallels between the uncertain life and the pious soul. My God Your God is a powerful satire on the heights of religious hatred which has bottled the supreme aura of the omnipotent God who now - ...hides himself in the vaults of the temples and does not come out for fear; he would be recognized and done to death..." the poem also condemns religious disparities regarding offerings, women and kids. Such poems are the call of the hour when religion stands on the tip of a fire-match always flammable on the slightest spark of ambiguous information.

A Prayer to the Lost Souls laments the fate of humanity in the contemporary scenario as Dr Anand pierces the heart in a touching expression of human cruelty in Syria, as he sees through his literary vision the helpless God scattered in the orphans left behind and scared of the men in power. It makes the book not just a literary treat but an eye-opener to the disillusioned human race. The emotions further dive

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deep in the ocean of encounters with humanity. Calling life, a confused absurd play, the poems reach out to Orwell's Animal Farm as a touchstone to tear apart the outcomes of power, politics, violence and capitalist forces which is a recent threat staring humanity right through its eyes. The Invisible Waiter, Mirror! Mirror! and The Beauty of Flesh develop a rather complex expression that keeps the reader hooked in exploring the soul of the poem beyond the amalgamated structures.

Peeling out life day by day and minute by minute, Dr Anand touches the universal fear of the existence of an individual and the despair after death. Beginning with a common fatal emotion, he ends on a well-knit clarity in approach. The commitment towards laying out a unified sensibility and reaching an eternal motive is suggestive in God! Save Your Soul, Of Heroes and Villains, Few who ride the Wings and Rose. Discovering the whole cosmos as the part of a balancing act in 'Out of Balance' the poet humbly pens down the extraordinary virtue of liberation in the power to create and power to dismantle the thoughts, grievances, joy and spirituality in the poems ahead.

...To curse and condemn, Lost the white wings, For him, no sky, no flight, no flair. Man you turn into a symbol of despair. --as brutal is the conviction on humanity for destroying this Garden of Eden as optimistic is the search of a human race on the wings of harmony, enlightened consciousness and salvation. This emphatic variety of pursuits of literary expedition in the realms of life, humanity and world could also be distilled in the wisdom of Wordsworth in Ode on Intimations of Immortality;

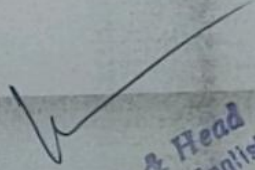
*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.*

The language of the poems is neither loaded with a complicated vocabulary nor is deficit of striking words; there is a perfect balance of simple statements and a comprehensive and rich vocabulary. As Wordsworth used a language of the masses to be the language of poetry, so also, Dr Anand focuses on portraying a panorama of his soulful

encounters with thoughts and events maintaining a subtlety in language to leave a lasting impact. However the readers will be delighted to experience a distinguished lens of references, figures of speech and striking resemblances in these poems. The voices soaked in religion..., bullets of divine non-sense, Chaunticleer, Wife of Bath, silenced symphony and a man turned a stomach ---these are a few strands of references, symbolism, ironies, metaphorical experiences and rich imagery widely weaved in the fabric of poetry by Dr Anand.

Thus, this collection of poems is a quintessential celebration of emotions and a harbinger of life, humanity- its virtues- vices and a mirror to the world; this poetic voyage salutes the wisdom of the poet and presents to its readers a bouquet of the finest poems enlightening their spirits and enriching their life in this mortal world and beyond.

The Creative Vision of Dr Jernail Singh Anand | 55


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2013/14

Aug. 2021

A WORLD LITERATURE INDIA PUBLICATION

COSMIC POETRY

Vol.-1

AN ANTHOLOGY OF LIBERATING VERSES

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COSMIC POETRY VOL. 1

Copyright © 2021(Authors)
This Edition Published August 2021

Genre: Poetic Venture (English)

ISBN : 978-93-91091-23-1
Paperback
Price : ₹650; \$25
Kindle : \$ 4

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Publisher :

THE POETRY SOCIETY OF INDIA

H-23/16, DLF Phase-I,
GURUGRAM - 122 002 (Haryana) INDIA
☎ +91 70156 76289

Email: thepoetrysoindia@gmail.com,
mgwebguru@gmail.com

Website: www.amazon.com, www.amazon.in,
www.flipkart.com

Typeset by : www.ymgggp.com

Branch Office:

Yayati Madan G Gandhi Group of Publications
24-25, 2nd Floor, Lajpat Rai Market, Opp. Elite Cinema,
Railway Road, HISAR 125 001 (Haryana) INDIA
☎ +91 98118 42292

Printers & Distributor :

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FOREWORD

*"Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world,
and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar."*

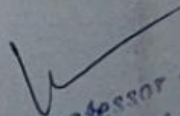
— Percy Bysshe Shelley

To be a poet is to be an explorer of the cosmos of ideas scattered around in this journey of life. It is this artistic endeavour that makes the poets what P.B. Shelley has rightly entitled 'the unacknowledged legislators of the world'. Where reason fails to quench the thirst of human intellect; poetry lights the passage and leads us to a bridge that connects the queries, anxieties, evaluations and feelings of our soul to the unnumerable possibilities of delight and insight. It's a spiritual rendezvous between a poet and a reader. Poetry is the universal language that travels beyond nations, time and cultures and lends a Cathartic effect.

A plethora of distinguished emotions and intense experiences, this bouquet of verse is like a bright sunny morning that seems to enlighten your insight and nourishes the pores with rejuvenating warmth. Abiding by the wisdom of P. B. Shelley, this collection of poesy manages to unveil a cosmos of expressions in the most subtle manner and has a striking impact. The emerging trends as well as the most classic themes find a place in this calligraphy of singing lyre.

The title 'Cosmic Poetry' appositely beholds the multitude of passionate sentiments displayed through poetic pieces and presents Kaleidoscope of experiences in galore. The poets are a fine potpourri of nourished spirits and polished talents. *'Life is a moment on the clock of eternity'* and *'The eyes fallen in love with the world'* the opening poems of the book sets in the subtle and sombre mood for an enlightening experience ahead. Hana Shishiny's *'The ocean of love'* is like a lamp on

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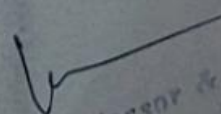
the dark pathway of contemporary challenges as she seamlessly observes "The homeless child...the buggers and refugees, The viruses of hatred, the revenges and more. Are hiding the sun... the light...".

The poetic hues are soaked with the radiance of love poems duet of Mohini Sharda and a call from the soul in Tekali's '*Scatter me through space*'. The poems ahead are not just an amalgamation of prodigious artistic endeavours but they also present a profound play of poetic techniques and uniqueness in each piece of this exquisite conundrum - '*Cosmic poetry*'. The varied vocabulary and soul-searching language, evoking images further employ our minds in a quest of spirituality in the poems followed. Hema Ravi in her genuine salute to an extraordinary act of simple humanity restores our faith in the thought of 'every act of kindness consistently over years of selfless service makes this world better every day', as in her words '*Such exemplary lives transmit the eternal message*'.

Venturing through the complexities of human mind one cogitates in a jazz of philosophy and spiritualism the collection proceeds in the poems - '*Insanity, It ain't me*', '*Swan song*' and '*On the other side of the mirror*'. The graffiti of stirring impulses on the canvas of life finds a display in Dr. Anand's '*The Cosmic Voice*' as he unites his '*self*' with the universe and pronounces - '*I am the withdrawn voice of the cosmos*'. The aesthetic expertise of cultural identity finds a new dimension in the profound wisdom of -Dr. Sarojadevi, Mr. Dominic and Ms. Sheik.

Keats in his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*; immortalized the bond of beauty and truth- *Beauty is truth, truth beauty, -that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.* "Poetry has nurtured this bond ever since humanity has trusted it with the most personal escapades. Exploring this bond of beauty and truth, the variety of themes in the poems extend from spiritual

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quests to contemporary scenarios, from universal truths to personal encounters and from questioning the reason to relying on the soul. It's a joy ride of mental juggling into the literary panorama.

Dr. Sharma '*seeking an anchor in emotions*' lays down a journey of ageing and perceptions through a blend of metaphors in his 'The Weekend Outing'. The clarion call of poetic sagacity echoes in the poems like '*Apothecary Rose*', '*The life goes spellbound*' and '*The redemption of sisyphus*'. Reading these ruminative poems is like experiencing divine on witnessing a shooting star in the sky at night that fills the heart with that cosmic energy. Navnoor Rana in the poignant and gratifying expression conveys a message to the mother who is as eternal as a heartbeat. *Nothing or Anything, The great wheel*- reminding of Shelley's *Ozymandias* and *God's Presence* further delves deep into the attributions of intellect and concord to the supreme presence. The voyage from here reminds of the genius of Kamla Das;

*Ask me why life is short, and love is shorter still,
Ask me what bliss is and what its price is.*

Poetry is spontaneous overflow of emotions that touches the very core of the hearts. The pensive poetry duet by Parneet Jaggi and the call of Punya Devi's heart in the vocable '*Now my love only for you, I have started the golden journey of poetry.*' keep up the grip of candid poetic charm. Rajbabu Gandham's '*Who am I*' runs on a parallel approach of Jairam Seshadri's '*It ain't me*' and evokes the existential question of 'I'.

*When some significant page,
Gets torn from book of life.
It leaves behind,
Half accomplished will to survive...*

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Commencing the poetic travel Rajni Chhabra in her poem 'From book of life' in a weave of metaphors, rhyme and personification touches a tone of melancholy. The motive of discovery in the unified concept of life and its search in the bounties of nature proceeds in the poetry of Dr. Ramabrahamam, Mr. Galimidi and Dr. Sandhya. *The importance of truthfulness* by N. Sampath mirrors the above-mentioned vision of Keats on truth. The poets further pen down a quest of soul in personal reminiscences in the poems 'An evening in Vizag' and 'Kathmandu Nights'. Ravi Ranganathan's intricately carved poems are an example of classic and fine machinery, as he explores the candid scenery around. His *Stay winter stay*, reminds of *Winter time* by R. L. Stevenson. Ranganathan serenely opens the poem –

*Stay winter, stay, the season of love and mild sun, stay winter,
stay, the season of love and mild sun,
There's subtle happiness in the cold wind that blows,
Birds flutter more, as they enjoy the night that grows...*

The emphatic pursuits of literary expedition by Mr. Tiganj, Shafia Afzal, Sherzod Artikov and Mr. Kibriah foster a canon of ideas travelling in, across borders. This odyssey sails in the vibrant verses 'Fallen Angel' and 'The beauty of eternity'. Ms. Rahimli establishes an astounding poetic exuberance in her poem 'They will recognize me with my love'. The symbolism is employed in the 'The twilight' escorts us to the feminist voice of Tejaswini Patil which is followed by the dream pedlar-Zainul Hussain.

To quote Gustave Flaubert, "Everything you invent is true: you can be sure of that. Poetry is a subject as precise as geometry." An edifice of sentiments engraved in rich vocabulary, literary devices and rhymes, this poetic endeavour is a celebration of life, virtues-vices, nature, spirit and the cosmos beyond. Dr. Anand not just brings forth some

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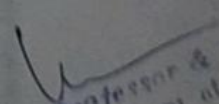
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of the finest poetic expressions in this zealous Canterbury enterprise but also exemplifies a devoted literary pursuit on the path of budding creativity and multitude of inspiring poetic hues. Imbued with enlightened spirit, my exuberant wishes go out to Dr. Anand and his diligent team for enriching the realms of this mortal world through this soulful and eternal endeavour.

Prof. Kalpana Purohit

Poet & Critic Head, Department of English;
Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan (India)

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Sept
2021

IACLSC Author's Workshop

Myth and the Indian Novel in English: A Critical Study (2021) by Jaya Prasad, PhD
05 September 2021, Bhubaneswar (Odisha State) INDIA

15.30 pm – 17.30 pm Virtual Mode

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Concept Note, Text and Author's Brief CV

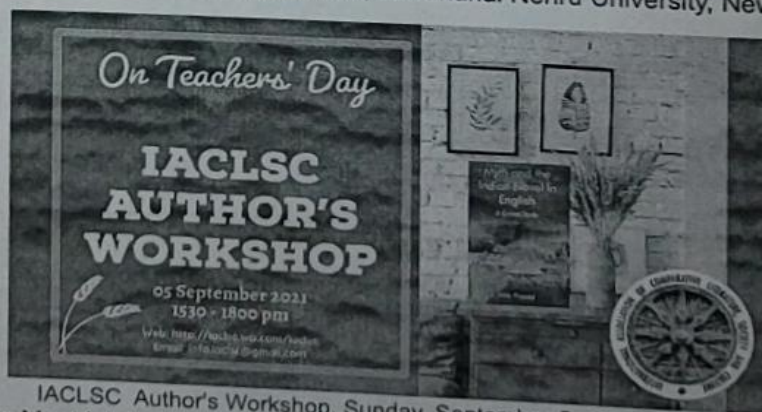
IACLSC Author's Workshop is based on the critical review of the text by its author whereas the experts and network members in the study area would examine the relevance of the 'text' and 'politics of writing' from the post-colonial viewpoints which would engage its contribution to the existing canon and practice, and further research scope in the study area.

Myth and the Indian Novel in English: A Critical Study published by the Prestige Books International, New Delhi (2021) is authored by JAYA PRASAD, PhD. The text has seminal examination of the state of the 'Myth' specific in the fictional narrative written in English in colonial and post-colonial India. The book has critical assessment of the fictional narratives of Lal Bihari Day's *Bengal Peasant Life* (1874), Mulk Raj Anand's *The Big Heart* (1945), Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), and Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992). The text of the *Myth and the Indian Novel in English* has theoretical aspect of the Western theory of the Myth with its genesis of the comparative and historical methods on the study of the inter-textuality. The text has multi-disciplinary take on the sociological, cultural, and political engagements of the 'Myth' specific in the selected authorship.

Jaya Prasad (b. 1974), PhD is an Assistant Professor of English at B.S. College, Danapur (Patliputra University, Patna). She taught at Nilamber Pitamber University, Palamau, Central University of Jharkhand, Ranchi, and Patna University, Patna. She has contributed in multi-disciplinary research journals in the area of the arts, culture and humanities. Currently, Jaya Prasad, PhD is the member of the Editorial Board of the IACLSC Journal of Comparative Literature, and member of the Governing Body of Research, IACLSC Trust, Bhubaneswar (Odisha).

Agenda

- 15.30 – 15.35 : *Guru Vandana* by Parismita Sarma, PhD, Gauhati University, Guwahati
- 15.35 – 15.45 : Relevance of IACLSC Author's Workshop in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research
Professor Siva Prasad Rambhatla, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Advisor, IACLSC
- 15.45 – 15.55 : Welcome of Author, Chair, Co-Chair, Experts, Delegates, **AGENDA**
Alimpa Bhuyan, Assam University, Diphu, General Secretary, IACLSC
- 15.55 – 16.05 : Chair's Address, Professor Lata Dubey, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
- 16.05 – 16.50 : Author's Review of the Text, **JAYA PRASAD**, PhD, Patliputra University, Patna
- ✓ 16.50 – 17.00 : Co-Chair's Analysis, Professor Kalpana Purohit, Jai Narayan Vyas University, Jodhpur
- 17.00 – 17.10 : Expert's Analysis, Professor Nigamananda Das, Nagaland University, Kohima
- 17.10 – 17.20 : Mythical Creatures in Spanish Folklore.
Professor Maria Pilar Viviente Solé, Universitas Miguel Hernánde, Alicante, SPAIN
- 17.20 – 17.30 : The "Evening Star" by Mihai Eminescu: Indo-European Myth to Romantic *Mythopoeia*
Angelica Marinescu, PhD, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, ROMANIA
- 17.30 – 17.40 : The Village in Indo-Anglian Fiction.
Professor Anil Kumar Prasad, Al-Mergheb University, Al-khooms, LIBYA
- 17.40 – 17.50 : Chair's Findings, Proceedings, Professor Lata Dubey
- 17.50 – 17.55 : Note of Thanks by Tanwishree Patra, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi



IACLSC Author's Workshop, Sunday, September 5 : 3:30 – 6:00pm
Google Meet joining Info Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ery-nfio-urb>

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The editors and the Board of Secondary education, Rajasthan, Ajmer express their appreciation and sincere gratitude to the authors who have made invaluable contributions to this endeavour.

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Online ISSN 2394-6075 / Print ISSN 2250-3366

CLRI Quarterly Edition

CLRI August 2020: Vol. 7, No 3.

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Feminist Thought in Poetics of Kamala Das: A Perspective

Dr Rakhi Vyas

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan.

Abstract

The paper attempts an analytical study of the poetics of Kamala Das through the specific prism of the feminist ideology. Das, with her novel spectrum of poetry, announced the arrival of a fresh and indomitable female voice on the Indian English literary scene. Debunking the artifice of patriarchy and its oppressive function, she set out to live her life on her own terms. Her writings speak volumes about her extremely free and courageous outlook on life. We barely meet any inhibitions or ambiguities in her. Her verse verily reflects what she felt, thought and actually lived out. She is India's answer to the American coterie of confessional poets as she limns a brutally honest portrait of her deeply felt angst, pain and bewilderment against the male-dominated superstructure in our society, in the most striking of confessional tones. A perusal of her ballistic verse opens floodgates to the understanding of the plight and predicament of the females' section entrenched against the particular backdrop of the stereotypical Indian set up. Her anger and exasperation become her panacea. The fire that she sets on the paper through her verse becomes a torch lighting up the

pathway to a more dignified, humanistic and cohesive status for the female folk.

Keywords: Self, emotions, feminist, patriarchal, exploration, unconventional.

The very quintessence of literature is humanism. It is an artistic plea for the amelioration of an ailing society. Literature penned across the world not just represents an unequivocal picture of the society – entailing its variegated topography – but also makes a subtle yet strong entreaty for upholding the ideals of equality and wholeness for all irrespective of any man-made barrier.

In the territory of post-modern Indian English poetry, Kamala Das occupies a conspicuous position as that of an indefatigable and pioneering woman poet who has ferociously stood against the marginalization of the female folk in Indian society by carving out a poetics of protest and rebellion. The poetics of Kamala Das laid bare not only her close subjective feminine experience in a male-dominated set up but also gave significant expression to the cumulative experience of the female section at large. Employing her volatile and unalloyed poetic thought, she has amply succeeded in critiquing and holding a true mirror to the hypocritical and insensitive Indian social framework. She created for herself an astonishing niche with her strong feminist themes and a surpassingly bold handling of the same. As K. R. Srinivas Iyengar rightly identifies, she stood apart as "...aggressively individualistic of the new poets..." (Indian Writing in English 2009) She is aptly celebrated for her uninhibited adoption of a fierce poetic metaphor for reflecting her personal sense of an anguished inadequacy. The art form became for her a room of her own whereby she sought to vent out her deep existential feminist predicament. Her poetic works like *Summer in Calcutta*, *The Descendants*, *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems*, announced the arrival of a female poetic stance that was absolutely unabashed, critical and perturbing with its originality and conviction.

Jodhpur studies in English
Vol. XIX, 2021

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Printed by: DTP POINT, 27-B, Mahaveer Colony, Ratanada, Jodhpur Rajasthan (India)

This is my prayer to thee, my lord -

strike, strike at the root of penury in my heart,

Give me the strength lightly

to bear my joys and sorrows.

Give me the strength

to make my love fruitful in service.

Give me the strength

never to disown the poor

or bend my knees before insolent might.

Give me the strength to raise my mind

high above daily trifles.

And give me the strength

to surrender my strength

to Hathy will with love.

Professor & Hathy will with love.

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25/2/21

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Damn Pigeons

-Meher Pestonji

She hated herself for hating pigeons. She had never hated anything living or dead before. But this pain crossed all limits. Helplessness fed frustration.

Frustration. A new word. Just a few months old. A dot in a lifetime of sixty-three. And to be frustration free for sixty-two years is to have had a good life. So she told herself day after day.

But the immediate impinges stronger than the past. Not the seven-month-immediate but the two-week-immediate. More specifically the last two days that slammed her prison walls shut.

Damn pigeons.

The first day they flew in she had smiled, made welcoming sounds. They grew embolden. Flew from windowsill to bookshelf, to couch, to the top of the cupboard as if the house belonged to them. While she flailed arms from her bed.

Helplessness. An alien experience. Medically imposed. Inescapable.

After the third day a fetid stench started pervading her room. Ruby had to clean up pigeon droppings each evening. Her poor sister, the pampered baby of the family who rarely entered the kitchen, was forced into domestic labour. Soup, food, fruit left on the bedside table. The daily newspaper, Library books. Day after day returning from office - to cook.

She had been the athlete in the family while her sister was the studious one. She won inter-school races, was the college cross-country champion two years in a row. Now confined to her four poster bed, lying a mahogany cupboard with a full-length mirror. Staring immobility back into her face.

Between bed and window was a book-shelf. Utility books. Dictionary, Atlas, a 2007 railway timetable, a 'Time' and Talents cook-book, Readers Digest. A shelf above held equally staid window, Cupid with arrow, ballerina, a gold-edged plate embossed with Buckingham Palace. A

Illustration done with Sonny cars

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Decoding the Myth of Law and Conflict in the Anthropomorphic Approach to the Animal Fables of Orwell's Animal Farm and Kipling's Jungle Book

-Richa Bohra

"Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished forever" [Orwell 4].

Penetrating with this outrageous cry towards the indifferent and imperial human society, the study seeks to foster, restore and explore the binding forces of Animality and Humanity in the kaleidoscopic frame of finite dexterity. For the vision fabricates that humanity evolves out of animality. Though superficially Animality corresponds to the idea of wilderness of the life on earth but the curtain rises and duly advances with a view that the heights of complexity and barbarous bestiality finally subsides in the golden realm of divine harmony and ultimately touches to the state of calmness and much needed solidarity. The study advances with the faith of Pythagoras; who conjectured that:

"No long as men will slaughter animals, they will kill one another. He who seeds murder and pain cannot harvest joy and love" [Gautillaume 23].

Further pertaining to the better understanding of this critical acumen, the study alludes the thoughtful vision of Cary Wolfe who prolifically asserts that:

"It is crucial to pay critical attention to the discourse of animality quite irrespective of the issue of how non human animals are treated....because the discourse of animality has historically served as a crucial strategy in the oppression of humans by other humans – a strategy whose legitimacy and force depend, however, on the prior taking for granted of the traditional, ontological distinction, and consequent ethical divide, between human and non-human animals...Even though the discourse of animality and species difference may theoretically be applied to an other of whatever type, the consequences of that discourse, in institutional terms, fall overwhelmingly on nonhuman animals" [Nath: Zootologies, 2003:xx].

THE GHOST EFFECT- A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE WORK OF SHAKESPEARE AND COETZEE

DR. VINU GEORGE

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ABSTRACT

Since times immemorial we have been asking about the existence of 'Ghost' and how can we use this term in the right way. Literature and movies have been quite a lot of help in these matters of late. One of the prime examples of this is shakespeare's Hamlet, we see the ghost of the former king not just returning to the land of the living but his return sets the ball of intrigues moving in the court of Denmark. We see the young prince taking up the charge to avenge the death of his father in the right way and the confusions that lead to the death of his beloved Ophelia and fight with best friend at the end. To live like a ghost is a scary thing but some do it in their own ways, Michael K the character made up by Coetzee is an example of how a man can live on his own terms like a ghost.

Key Words: Revenge, Prince, Evil, Dead, Christian Myth, Farm, uncanny.

Cole: I see dead people.

Crowe: In your dreams? While youre awake? Dead people like in graves? In coffins?

Cole: Walking around like regular people. They don't see each other. They only see what they want to see. They don't know they are dead.

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Rereading The Kite Runner through Aristotle's Poetics

Dr. Vinu George

Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur



Abstract

Khalid Hosseini is a well read novelist and his first novel *The Kite Runner* delves into not just turmoil that people and their lives were thrown into but also how an incident affected two boys on physical and psychological level. This paper analysis the character Amir and the story line from the perspective of what Aristotle spoke about plot and other elements in his *Poetics*. An attempt has also been made to see the psychological reasons for the characters behaviour towards different people and this behaviour is interpreted through Freud's *Psychoanalytic Criticism*. Many aspects like- guilt, shame, sin, religious bigotry, repentance and salvation are also talked upon with the behaviour of Amir as the eye of the storm.

Keywords : Guilt, Shame, Sin, Religious Bigotry, Repentance and Salvation, Aristotle, Poetics, Sigmund Freud, Psychology, Psychoanalysis.

"A boy who won't stand for him for himself becomes a man who can't stand up for anything" (Hosseini, 20)

When one reads *The Kite Runner* the reader comes across many lines and passages which end up like a mirror showing a reflection of the self the question which one asks himself asking turns out to be too self revealing and uncomfortable to answer no one likes to be cornered and no one in the least wants to encounter his past mistakes the guilt which haunts the night makes one and insomniac the opening lines of the novel are hard hitting taking the readers to the past of the central character Amir and his fretfulness and his present state of chaos I have become what I am today at the age of twelve. (Hosseini, 1) the guilt of what he had done in the past of fretted doing still case him and nearly thirty years after it happened, we find Amir peeking into the alley (Hosseini, 1) at his buried past which is clawing its way back into the present.

The kite runner has many autobiographical elements like Hosseini and his family seeking asylum in the U.S, Amir's favorite book is the Persian *Shahnama*, the description of Afghan people, Hazaras, the community at large and most importantly the kite flying festival but this is not an autobiographical novel in anyways though Amir was born in Kabul in Afghanistan later moved to the U.S and lived with his family just like the author. One can see with clarity the political background of the time lapse in Afghanistan and how the present day Afghanistan is the same as Amir and Khalid are finding it inhospitable and like a tourist in my own country, (Hosseini, 203)

Hosseini was an avid reader from his childhood like Amir and was influenced by many writer who's writing helped him to write better and become a novelist. The influence of great lighters like Salman Rushdie and jumpha Laheri is quite evident in the way that Hosseini creates and portrays each character in vivid detail. The novel was influenced by the news that the Taliban had banned kite flying in 1996 and

Shodhshree / April-June 2021

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"THE MAN WHO SUFFERS AND THE MIND WHICH CREATES": AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTER TOOPHAN AGHA IN THE KITE RUNNER.

DR. VINU GEORGE

Assistant Professor, Dept. of English,
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"Can a man scoop fire into his lap without clothes being burnt? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished."
(The Bible, Proverbs 6: 27-29)

Khaled Hosseini's first novel *The Kite Runner* was published in 2003 which has sold over three million copies and was the number one New York best seller. The story is about a boy Amir who witnessed a gruesome rape of his best friend Hassan and is haunted by the guilt of not standing by his friend and embracing cowardice. (Hosseini, 68) This story was inspired by the news that came in CNN that the Taliban has banned kite flying -which was a long tradition. The novel is seen from the eyes of the central character- Amir and Hosseini uses a lot of flashback techniques to keep the readers involved in the action which unravels with every flashback. The most appealing lines in the novel are the self monologues of Amir which gives us a peek into his psyche and inner tortured soul and when we see it through the eyes of a child it is gut wrenching.

This present paper is an attempt to understand the character of Amir's father or Baba or as referred by Rahim Khan Toophan Agha (11) who is without doubt one of the most important characters in the novel and only in the last movement of the novel, the readers came

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English Monthly

Annual Subscription Rs. 200

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No. 409

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Published, Printed and Owned by

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Third Concept,

LB - 39, Prakash Deep Building,

7, Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi-110 001.

Ph: 23711092, 23712249, Fax No: 23711092.

E-mail: third.concept@rediffmail.com

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Intersectional Feminism in Khalid Hossaini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

Dr. Vibha Bhoot*

[Interaction enhances our understanding of sexes. The perceptions are created and then these perceptions exert a powerful opinion about the sexes. Sometimes stronger and deeper gulfs develop to separate a man from a woman. When we are able to narrow down the gulf, we are feminists. So, patriarchy is everyday sexism and, it envelopes misogyny. It widens the aforesaid gulfs. Therefore, it produces gender inequality. Being a web of relationships and ideas, patriarchy has its own dynamism. Patriarchy with its exclusivity compels feminism. If there is an oppressive system then there are forces against it.]

Patriarchy contributes to gender equality as it defines roles for genders. Power is distributed in the hands of men. Public, business enterprises, all comprise of men who move the society according to a pattern and refuse to change. There is an array of Indian writers who have smashed patriarchy- Savitri Bai Phule, Amrita Pritam, Mahasweta Devi, Kamla Das etc. The discrimination is triggered on the basis of biological differences. It's a patriarchal bias that has been in continuation for centuries and the "weaker sex" has been imposed with a nomenclature!

Women are the subject of discrimination and women are blamed for the same too. The answer is complicated yet there is a problem within the framework of other problems. The question is that does a culture maketh man or a man maketh culture? When we talk of Harvard University, they took 237 years to allow or admit the first woman as their student. Cambridge and Oxford took a longer duration of time – more than 260 years! This is not an exhaustive watch list but an eye opener to the fact that how denied women were. How denied they are! Our thoughts navigate on the topic because one is compelled to think that – has patriarchy given birth to feminism? Yes, it has.

Nature creates diversity but has nature created hierarchy? Has nature created inequality? When it comes to resources, ideology and decision-making, men are an edge above. The idea of just being married becomes a life-time achievement for women. A process of normalization happened and the idea got seeped in the patriarchal system of the society. With no cure for the problem for centuries, women shouted out loud against anxieties, oppressions and fears and therein feminism was born. To change the political rhetoric prevailing in the society, to give women a breathing space, to provide equal opportunities and allow the women to create a world without discrimination on the basis of sex.

One can always say that I am a feminist. The question here is that do I hate men? No, I hate patriarchy. Patriarchy is compelling the societal system to go erstwhile. So, 50% of the humanity should hate patriarchy. One example of fighting out the rights for equal pay cheque can be stated here – The Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 at the US. Lily Ledbetter had to go to the court for equal pay as her male counterparts in the tyre company Goodyear. President Barack Obama signed the Act in 2009 whereas women were allowed equal pay for equal work just in 2009! How about years before that?

Yes, Oxford and Cambridge were not sailing in different boats! So, in literal way men ruled the world! It was right long back when physical power was needed for survival, yes men-ruled the world, but not now. Today we live in a vastly different world. Now more creative, intellectually superior and humane lead the world. We have evolved but not our ideas about the gender have evolved. A woman is just worthy and human as man. Gender issues need the anger to be dealt with. This anger is important to bring about a positive change.

To a larger extent, it depends on how we raise our sons. We play a gimmick on the poor boys in the shape that we put them in a cage of masculinity. We cripple their thinking faculties and they become unable to think out of the cage. We teach them to mask their truer self because we tell them that men can't be vulnerable. We stifle the humanity of boys. We teach them to be away from fear because the masochistic psychology doesn't allow that. Nature doesn't label us. We label ourselves the biggest hierarchy that is created in the world is man v/s woman.

Patriarchy is global and so the violence and inequality are global. For some patriarchy may be closely related to hetero normativity, cast, class etc. So, when patriarchy includes institutionalized sexism, we can say that kyriarchy envelops all types of inequality. If we consider the oppression of a woman by considering her sex, it would be injustice as she may either be oppressed or

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WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

Wake up! Wake up!
The worldly life calls you louder and louder
A long path to walk, miles and miles to cross
Not for quest of money
Not for quench of material thirst
Not for greed of honey of any form
But for peace of mind
Self-realisation
Self-expression
Self-exaltation
With a determined devotion
Adorned with petals of smile in virtuous action
To revitalize the worth of life
In service of fellow beings
Wake up! Wake up!
You have slept enough.

53 Dr. Hifendra Goyal

UNSPOKEN UNHEARD

Something is there that is common between us
You don't speak, neither do I
The Silence enjoys
The music inside
The thread is invisible to waking eyes
But the sound of heart is produced
The distance deepens the feelings mute
And when your face is before mine
My eyes begin to shine
Ecstatic Joy brings in me a bird
That sings unending rhymes in distant herd
But rhymes have no audible sound
Two worlds with extreme depth pull me around
A moment's frequency and then unwanted gap
I search minutely in nature's lap
Unspoken remains Unheard this time too
Gloomy joy smiles and bids adieu....

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प्रमाणित किया जाता है कि श्री/श्रीमती/सुश्री डॉ. हितेन्द्र जोशी ने राजस्थान संस्कृत अकादमी, जोधपुर तथा राजस्थान संगीत नाटक अकादमी, जोधपुर के संयुक्त तत्वावधान में जोधपुर में दिनांक 3.12.2021 से दिनांक 17.12.2021 तक आयोजित राष्ट्रीय नाट्यशास्त्र कार्यशाला में भाग लिया। कार्यशाला के समस्त कार्यक्रमों में इनकी सहभागिता सराहनीय रही।

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राष्ट्रीय नाट्यशास्त्र कार्यशाला, जोधपुर

JODHPUR STUDIES IN ENGLISH

Vol. XIX, 2021

Board of Editors:

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