

INTERNATIONAL **J**OURNAL OF **R**ESearch **C**ULTURE **S**Ociety

ISSN (O) : 2456-6683

Monthly Peer-Reviewed, Refereed, Indexed Research Journal

Internationally approved Scientific Journal

Impact Factor: 9.241 UGC Journal No: 64291



5th International Conference On Global Trends in English Language, Literature and Linguistics

Date: 14 - 16 February, 2025

DOIs:10.2017/IJRCS/ICGTELLL-2025

Conference Special Issue - 39

February - 2025

Organized & Supported by:

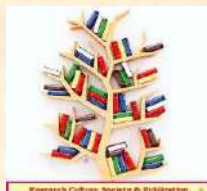
International Languages Council
P.G. Department of English, Panchayat College, Bargarh,
(Affiliated to Sambalpur University, Odisha, India)
Research Culture Society
English Literature Club

RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY & PUBLICATION

Email: editorijrcs@gmail.com

Web Email: editor@ijrcs.org

WWW.IJRCS.ORG



5TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GLOBAL TRENDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS

(ICGTELLL – 2025)

Date: 14 - 16 February, 2025

Conference Special Issue - 39

The Managing Editor:

Dr. C. M. Patel

(Research Culture Society & Publication)



Organized & Supported by :

International Languages Council
P.G. Department of English, Panchayat College, Bargarh,
Affiliated to Sambalpur University, Odisha, India
Research Culture Society
English Literature Club

Published by:

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY

ISSN(O): 2456-6683

UGC Journal No: 64291

Research Culture Society and Publication

WWW.IJRCS.ORG

(M)+91 9033767725





International Scientific Research Organization

Organize
Conference, Seminar, Symposium
 in association / collaboration with
Research Culture Society

Support in Administration and ICT system
 Free promotion on websites and social media
 Certificates for publications
 Special issue in ISSN Journals and Proceedings with ISBN Books
 Concession in publication charge
 Digital Object Identification



Conference Dignitaries Desk

www.researchculturesociety.org
 Email: director@researchculturesociety.org



RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY
 International Scientific Research Organization
 (Reg. Asia - India, Canada, USA, Europe)



Join us - Invitation for Membership and MoU

Professional Membership:	Member of Organization
Honorary Membership :	Country Head, State Head, Chapter Head, Conference Manager, Conference Coordinator, International / National / State Coordinator, Country Ambassador and Promoter.
Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) / Collaboration (MoC) With official registered :	Institutions, Universities, Colleges, Schools, Industries, Companies and Firms. For Academic - Educational - Industrial Events, Exchange Programs, Knowledge Partner, Co-operation, Networking with Scholarly Academicians, Researchers, Scientists and Delegates. Academic weightage in Institutional Evaluation Grades. Benefit in Special Issues - Proceedings Publications with ISSN / ISBN.
Programs Appointment :	Expert Trainer, Resource Person, Keynote Speaker, Guest Speaker, Anchor person, Moderator, Committee Member, Sponsor, Co-Sponsor, Co-organizer.
Editorial Board Membership: (All Subject Fields)	Reviewer, Associate Editor, Special Issue Editor, Book Editor. Sciences, Healthcare Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Social Sciences, Agriculture, Commerce, Business, Management, Arts, Languages, Literature, Humanities, Education, Library Science, Designing, Tourism, Journalism, Environmental Technology, International Economy. Teaching and Research Exposure: Minimum 5 years with 15 Publications. Research Papers, Articles and Books Publication as per Publication House Norms.

Interested candidates can contact OR send inquiry at :

director@researchculturesociety.org
www.researchculturesociety.org



5th International Conference on Global Trends in English Language, Literature and Linguistics

Date: 14 - 16 February, 2025 Conference Proceedings

Copyright: © The research work, information compiled as a theory with other contents are subject to copyright taken by author(s) / editor(s) / contributors of this book. The author(s) / editor(s) / contributors has/have transferred rights to publish book(s) to 'Research Culture Society' / Research Culture Society and Publication' .

Disclaimer: The author/authors/contributors are solely responsible for the content, images, theory, datasets of the papers compiled in this conference special issue. The opinions expressed in our published works are those of the author(s)/contributors and does not reflect of our publication house, editors and the publisher do not take responsibility for any copyright claim and/or damage of property and/or any third parties claim in any matter. The publication house and/or publisher is not responsible for any kind of typo-error, errors, omissions, or claims for damages, including exemplary damages, arising out of use, inability to use, or with regard to the accuracy or sufficiency of the information in the published work. The publisher or editor does not take any responsibility for the same in any manner. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Online / Imprint: Any product name, brand name or other such mark name in this book are subjected to trademark or brand, or patent protection or registered trademark of their respective holder. The use of product name, brand name, trademark name, common name and product details and distractions etc., even without a particular marking in this work is no way to be constructed to mean that such names may be regarded as unrestricted in respect of trademark and brand protection legislation and could thus be used by anyone.

Published By:

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY

ISSN(O): 2456-6683 UGC Journal No:- 64291

Research Culture Society and Publication.

(Reg. International ISBN Books and ISSN Journals Publisher)

Email: editor@ijrcs.org / editorijrcs@gmail.com

WWW.IJRCS.ORG



Research Culture Society and Publication

(Reg. International ISBN Books and ISSN Journals Publisher)

Email: RCSPBOOKS@gmail.com / editor@ijrcs.org

WWW.RESEARCHCULTURESOCIETY.ORG / WWW.IJRCS.ORG

Conference, Seminar, Symposium organization in association/collaboration with different Institutions.

Conference, Seminar, Symposium Publication with ISSN Journals and ISBN Books (Print / Online).

CALL FOR PAPERS



International Peer-Reviewed Refereed Indexed ISSN Approved High Impact Factor Journals with Quality Publication

Research Culture Society Journals
IJIRMF, IJRCS, JSHE, IJEDI, Shikshan Sanshodhan

Research Study Fields



Research Publication in all subjects / topics of the following study fields :
Science, Engineering, Healthcare Sciences, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Medicine, Nursing Commerce, Management, Social Sciences, Law, Humanities, Education, Life Skills
Free e-Certificates
Digital Object Identification
Nominal Processing Fee

Submit papers to
editor@ijrcs.org
 Or
editor@ijirmf.com

<http://jshe.researchculturesociety.org/>
<http://shikshansanshodhan.researchculturesociety.org/>
<http://ijedi.researchculturesociety.org/>

WWW.IJRCS.ORG
WWW.IJIRMF.COM

Conference Publications

International Journals and Books Publisher

Publish your Conference, Seminar, Congress, Symposium with a trusted International Publisher



ISSN Journals



ISBN Books

SPECIAL ISSUE

PROCEEDINGS

ABSTRACT BOOK

DOIs - Indexing

Nominal Processing Charge

- ✓ Print and Online Publication in Multiple Languages
- ✓ Promotions
- ✓ Setup Service
- ✓ Standard Pattern
- ✓ Certificate
- ✓ Collaboration

Research Culture Society and Publication

www.ijrcs.org / editor@ijrcs.org
www.ijirmf.com / editor@ijirmf.com

About the Organizing and Supporting Institutions:

International Languages Council is an esteemed association working on to provide language studies, understanding language issues, multilingual aspects, languages development. Council organizing events to improve languages, languages learning, conceptual understanding of languages and literature, also coordinate with other research organizations for the collaborative services. **The International Languages Council** is working to promote Languages and Literatures at different national and international levels, and also coordinate with other institutions and organizations for the educational and community development. It also offer to provide literature, ELT, linguistics research services, educational studies and organizing activities.

Panchayat College, Bargarh: Panchayat College, Bargarh, established in 1960, is a prominent institution in Odisha, offering quality higher education in arts, science, and commerce streams. Known for its academic excellence and extracurricular activities, the college has nurtured generations of students. It is affiliated with Sambalpur University and continues to be a hub of learning and innovation. Further, the P.G. Department of English, Bargarh, is a distinguished center for advanced studies in English literature and language. It offers a comprehensive curriculum aimed at fostering critical thinking, creativity, and research skills among students. With a dedicated faculty, the department contributes significantly to academic and cultural development through seminar, workshops, and other academic activities.

‘Research Culture Society’ is a Government Registered Scientific Research organization. Society is working for the research community at National and International level to impart quality and non-profitable services. Society has successfully organized 165+ conferences, seminars, symposiums and other educational programmes at national and international level in association with different educational institutions. Educational institutions, colleges, universities are welcome for Memorandum of Understanding (MoU – free to sign without any charge) for Academic Exchange, Knowledge sharing and collaboration to organize events with us. We are promoting and sponsoring educational events as well as publishing research work in collaboration. We also invite sponsorship from the industries, corporates, institutions and government bodies for our educational programs.

English Literature Club: This club is as a group on WhatsApp and Telegram apps includes literature researchers and academicians. For sharing Literature, Linguistics and English language related information and knowledge.

Objectives of the International conference: Identifying the trends of literature, linguistics and Teaching languages. Identifying various knowledge forms of literature and linguistics. Analyzing the trends of literature, linguistics and Teaching languages

About the Conference:

English Language Literature and Linguistics Conference aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results on all aspects of English Language, Literature and Linguistics Conference. It also provides a premier interdisciplinary platform for researchers, practitioners, and educators to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and concerns as well as practical challenges encountered and solutions adopted in the fields of English Literature and Linguistics Conference.

Conference Committee

Organizers – Conference Chair Members :

Prof. J. Adrina, Founder Member, International Languages Council, Europe

Dr. Nakul Seth, Principal, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India.

Dr. C. M. Patel, Director, Research Culture Society.

Keynote Speakers :

Dr. Sedighe Zamani Roodsari, Academic Coordinator/TESOL Instructor, Auburn Global/Curriculum & Teaching, Auburn University, Alabama, U.S.A.

Dr. J.A.H. Khatri, Assistant Professor, School of Liberal Studies & Education, Navrachana University, Vadodara, Gujarat, India.

Dr. Nakul Seth, Principal, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India

Dr. Rukminingsih, International Languages Council, Member – Indonesia.

English Language Education Department, PGRI Jombang University, Indonesia

Rajashree Bhanja, Assistant Professor - English, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India

International Advisory Members :

Dr. Farah Hijazi, International Languages Council, Chapter - Syria.

Dr. S. Chitra, Faculty & Head, Yonphula Centenary College, Royal University of Bhutan, Bhutan.

Convener :

Dr. Umesh Chandra Mahapatra, HOD, English, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India.

Session Chairs – Speakers :

Dr. M. Nagalakshmi, Professor, Department of English, VISTAS, Chennai, India

Dr. Umesh Chandra Mahapatra, HOD, English, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India.

Dr. Tripti Tyagi., Assistant Professor, Department of English, School of Media Studies and Humanities, Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, India

Dr. J.A.H. Khatri, Assistant Professor, School of Liberal Studies & Education, Navrachana University, Vadodara, Gujarat, India

Dr. Mahesh Chandra Dash, Asst.Prof - English, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India

Dr. N Suman Shelly; Asst Prof, English (Guest Faculty), Panchayat College, Bargarh, India

Valedictory Speaker:

Prof. Dr. Kalidas Misra, Former Professor, English Sambalpur University.

Prof. Dr. Sabita Tripathy, (Retd Prof, Sambalpur University) Senate member, NIT, Rourkela., India

Dr. M. Nagalakshmi, Professor, Department of English, VISTAS, Chennai, India

Dr. Umesh Chandra Mahapatra, HOD, English, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India.

Committee Members :

Dr. Seda ALTINER, School of Foreign Languages, Izmir Institute of Technology, İzmir, Turkey.

Dr. Sirikarn Thongmak , Graduate Studies Faculty of Humanities, Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, Thailand. Member International Languages Council, Thailand.

Prof. (Dr.) Dipa Chakrabarti , Professor of French and Head, School of Languages at Amity University, Rajasthan, Jaipur, India

Manabhanjan Panigrahi (Asst Prof, English)

Anjali Sahoo (Asst Prof, English)

Shibashish Mahapatra (Asst Prof, English, Guest Faculty)

Swapnil Panda (Guest Faculty, English)

Reviewers:

Dr. N Suman Shelly; Asst Prof, English (Guest Faculty), Panchayat College, Bargarh, India

Dr. Bhoomi Vamja, Assistant Professor, Department of English Bhavan's Sheth R.A. College of Arts and Commerce, Gujarat University, Gujarat, India.

Mashal Shahid, Chapter Coordinator - Islamabad, Research Culture Society.

Anchoring (Moderator) :

Dr. N Suman Shelly; Asst Prof, English (Guest Faculty), Panchayat College, Bargarh.

Mashal Shahid, Chapter Coordinator - Islamabad, Research Culture Society



Prof. J. Adrina
ICGTELLL-2025 Conference Chair
Founder Member
International Languages Council, Europe
School of Languages, Literature and Linguistics, EU

Dear Colleagues !

I am delighted that our organization is jointly conducting the "**5th International Conference on Global Trends in English Language, Literature and Linguistics**" with the theme of literature and languages, in association with 'Research Culture Society' between 14 - 16 February, 2025.

This conference series forum aims to observe the overviews and concept of languages, literature and Religions in the 21st century. Identifying the trends of literature, linguistics and Teaching languages. Identifying various knowledge forms of literature and linguistics.

I honestly hope that this conference will provides a premier interdisciplinary platform for researchers, practitioners, and educators to present and discuss the most recent trends in literature, languages, culture, religions and its concern related to writing and study of the literature and religion materials.

May hearty wishes and regards for the great success of this important international conference.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Adrina', is positioned above the typed name.

Prof. J. Adrina
ICGTELLL-2025, Conference Chair
Founder Member
International Languages Council, Europe.

Message from the Principal Desk

It is an honor to contribute this message to the proceedings of the *International Conference on Global Trends in English Language, Literature, and Linguistics*. This esteemed gathering provides a critical platform for scholars, educators, and researchers to engage in meaningful discussions on the dynamic evolution of language, literature, and linguistics in the 21st century.



The study of language, literature, and linguistics has always been central to human communication and cultural expression. In the contemporary era, however, these disciplines are undergoing significant transformations, shaped by globalization, digital advancements, and interdisciplinary approaches. The first objective of this conference—to observe the overviews and concepts of languages, literature, and linguistics in the 21st century—recognizes the shifting paradigms within these fields. Today, linguistic diversity and multilingualism have become more relevant than ever, influencing education, cultural exchange, and social integration. The emergence of digital communication, artificial intelligence, and computational linguistics is redefining how we perceive language acquisition, structure, and evolution. Similarly, literature is increasingly engaging with new media, challenging traditional forms while offering fresh perspectives on identity, power, and social justice.

Another significant focus of this conference is the identification of various knowledge forms in literature and linguistics. Literature, in all its forms, reflects human experiences, emotions, and histories. From oral traditions to hypertexts, from classical narratives to postmodern deconstructions, literature continues to be a powerful medium for examining societal changes. The diversification of literary studies—through feminist, postcolonial, ecocritical, and digital humanities lenses—has broadened our understanding of texts and their contexts. Similarly, linguistics, with its numerous branches including sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and computational linguistics, provides invaluable insights into human cognition, communication patterns, and cultural expressions. Understanding these knowledge forms enables scholars to appreciate the intricate relationship between language, thought, and social structures.

A particularly pertinent area of discussion is the analysis of trends in teaching literature, linguistics, and languages. In the wake of technological advancements and pedagogical innovations, the teaching of these disciplines must evolve to meet the needs of contemporary learners. Blended learning, interactive digital tools, and artificial intelligence-based language learning platforms are reshaping classroom dynamics. Moreover, the incorporation of critical theory and interdisciplinary methodologies fosters a more comprehensive and engaged learning experience. Language teaching, in particular, benefits from immersive and communicative approaches that acknowledge linguistic diversity and cultural plurality. Literature teaching, too, thrives when it embraces multiple perspectives, enabling students to critically engage with texts and relate them to global and local contexts.

This conference serves as a vital forum for exchanging ideas, exploring emerging research, and fostering academic collaboration. The collective insights shared here will undoubtedly contribute to the progressive development of English language studies, literary scholarship, and linguistic research. I extend my sincere appreciation to the organizers, presenters, and participants who have contributed to this intellectual endeavor. May this conference inspire innovative research, thoughtful discourse, and transformative pedagogies in the years to come.



Dr. Nakul Seth

Principal, Panchayat College, Bargarh, India.

Message

With priorities undergoing a radical change about a quarter-century back when I retired from academia, I have kept myself away from a discipline that had kept me engrossed as a teacher for thirty eight years. I do not now consider myself competent to pronounce upon a global deliberation tackling a large subject relating to contemporary engagement on literary, linguistic and cultural studies in English. Moreover, health reasons contribute an impediment. And yet, I had to give in to Rajashree's understandable eagerness that her teacher should at least convey his good wishes for the programme. I do so from the core of my heart. This is a brave venture: to go forward without any government support at a place like Bargarh is no mean enterprise. The intent is commendable and the spirit is admirable. Success, therefore, is inevitable.



I hope it turns out to be a productive intellectual interaction not merely for the learned participants but also for the students who might be looking forward to it with eager anticipation.

Today we are condemned to live in a fake world of soulless publicity. Search for the right, healthful perspective on language, literature and culture is of therefore paramount importance. Apart from certain shared values that have to be nurtured in an increasingly interconnected, complex world order, special national foci have also to be creatively explored. English language and literature naturally carry a European ethos that has in many ways helped us both to grow into modernity and to revitalize our past. But as is well known, that has also been a disruptive, deracinating against associated with colonization still persists the level of our thinking and living. It is not as if East-West cultural interaction is entirely a post-Renaissance phenomenon. No nation had an entirely insulated identity earlier. But interaction is different from superimposition-overt and covert. And even where cultural assimilation is voluntary the stakes can be pretty high. T.S.Eliot can serve as a cautionary voice in that context. Having been deeply influenced by the Indic tradition, he declared in a broadcast how he drew back for fear that to be an authentic assimilator, he was to surrender his American ways of "thinking and feeling" which he was unwilling to do for both 'practical' and 'sentimental' reasons.

I would, in conclusion, wish we continued reminding ourselves that the civilization English Language and culture represent has always been predominantly human-and particularly European-centric. Sanskrit (which means 'perfect language') and its cultural roots are instructively different. Dharma ('Law of Life') derives from and functions in harmony with rtm (cosmic law that is eternal). Contrary to a wrong popular notion, the world to the Indian mind has never been untrue-in it is only virtual (asat). What is real is sat (that which is unchanging). Avidya (mundane knowledge including that of vedic rituals distinguished from Vidya (intuitive wisdom relating to Brahman which is both immanent and transcendent). No doubt much of our ethics has undergone reworking with time, no doubt we have not shrunk from toying with the Lokayata philosophy of materialism and skepticism, or from owning of protestant religions but the roots remain, the vision abides- the vision of universal interconnectedness and unity of life. Interestingly enough, modern science in its own language vindicates that ancient vision.

And so, Subham Bhavatu.

Madhusudan Pati
62

- Madhusudan Pati

Former Professor of English at Sambalpur University,

Dr.C. M. Patel

Director, RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY

Web: www.researchculturesociety.org

Email : director@researchculturesociety.org



Message

Dear Professional Colleagues,

It is gratifying to note that 'International Languages Council; and Panchayat College, Bargarh, India in collaboration with 'Research Culture Society' (Government Registered Scientific Research organization) are organizing - '5th International Conference on Global Trends in English Language, Literature and Linguistics' during 14 - 16 February, 2025.

This international conference will allow the participants and academicians to reveal their endeavors, extend academic professional networks and jointly ascertain the existing and upcoming research instructions guidelines and presented thoughts at international level. I believe that all the presentations in this academic research conference will bring interesting topics with fruitful discussions.

I believe, this International Conference will help in redefining the strong connection between students and academicians from different institutions. An additional goal of this international conference is to combine interests and research related to English Language, Literature and Linguistics field of academia, researchers and students.

My best wishes to the committee members, speakers and participants of this world conference.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr. C. M. Patel', is positioned above the printed name.

Dr.C. M. Patel

Director, Research Culture Society.
(International Scientific Research Institute)

INDEX

Sr.No	Table of Contents	Page No.
a)	About the organizing Institutions: Objectives of the International Conference : About the Conference:	5
b)	Conference Committee	6-7
c)	Message from Founder Member, International Languages Council	8
d)	Message from Principal, Panchayat College	9
e)	Message from Madhusudan Pati	10
f)	Message from Director, Research Culture Society	11
g)	Table of Contents	12-13
Paper ID	Title & Author(s) Name	-
ICGTELLL-2025/A01	Contemporary Trend of Life Writings in India: A New Horizon of Indian Disability Studies -- Shampa Bhul	14-18
ICGTELLL-2025/A02	The Evolution and Impact of Children's Literature -- Md.Sabir Alam	19-25
ICGTELLL-2025/A03	The Role of English Language Comprehension and Communication while Facing Competitive Examination: A Study -- Dr. Abhijeet Nanasahab Pawar	26-34
ICGTELLL-2025/A04	Quality-deficiency in English as Second Language Pedagogy of West Bengal School Boards -- Dr. Ghazala Nehal	35-40
ICGTELLL-2025/A05	Integrating Critical Theory in English Literature Teaching Modules in Maharashtra: A Student-Centered Approach -- Sehnaz Khushrow Irani, Dr. Rani Sarode	41-43
ICGTELLL-2025/A06	Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace: Colonial Shadows and Post-colonial Realities -- Santosh Kumar Sahu	44-46
ICGTELLL-2025/A07	Mulk Raj Anand: A Pioneer of Indo-Anglian Literature -- Thakur Asha Rani	47-51
ICGTELLL-2025/A08	Feminist Resistance to Patriarchy: Rukmini's Agency in Saiswaroopaa Iyer's Narrative -- Dipti Dinesh Patil	52-55
ICGTELLL-2025/A09	Manifestation Of Quest For Identity In The Contemporary Poetry From India's Northeast: A Study Of Select Poems -- Uttam Kumar Upadhyaya, Champa Chettri	56-61
ICGTELLL-2025/A10	Needed Introspection in Religious Faith [Water Pollution ' .' Idol Immersion] -- Dr Neelam Narayan	62-70

ICGTELLL-2025/A11	Rhetoric: The Attractive Artistry of Language -- Dr Neelam Narayan	71-79
ICGTELLL-2025/A12	Using ICT to Teach English Listening and Speaking Skills to Marathi Medium Students -- Sehnaz Khushrow Irani, Dr. Rani Sarode	80-82
ICGTELLL-2025/A13	Linguistic challenges in Amitav Ghosh's the nutmeg's curse: Parables for a planet in crisis -- V. Kavitha	83-85
ICGTELLL-2025/A14	Coloniality and Environment: Subaltern Ecologies in Contemporary North-Eastern Literature. -- Ritesh Kumar Tewary	86-92
ICGTELLL-2025/A15	The Arrow of Justice: Unraveling Adivasi Struggles in Chotti Munda and His Arrow -- Dr. Devyani Singh, Baneshwar Gorain	93-98
ICGTELLL-2025/A16	Reimagining Indianness: Echoes of Bhagavad Gita in Milton's Paradise Lost -- Soyam Prabha Sahoo	99-103
ICGTELLL-2025/A17	Exploring Caste and Narrative Perspective in Premchand's Deliverance: A Critique of Social Inequality -- Dr. Kulbhushan Sharma, Anupama Sharma	104-108
ICGTELLL-2025/A18	Memory, Intergenerational Conflict, and Silent Resistance: The Study of Colonial Trauma and Nation-Building in Tsitsi Dangarembga's "Nervous Conditions" -- Ms. Sudipta Chaki	109-114
ICGTELLL-2025/A19	Voices of Resistance: Gender Identity and Power Dynamics in The Testaments by Margaret Atwood -- Dr. Paramita Bhaduli	115-121
ICGTELLL-2025/A20	To Hail Humanity Rectification Of Religious Customs (Sati Pratha & Johar) -- Dr Neelam Narayan	122-130
ICGTELLL-2025/A21	Congruence of Greek and Indian Myths Unfolded through Epic Study -- Dr. R. Vidyavathi	131-133
ICGTELLL-2025/A22	Mothers, Daughters, and the Sea: A Feminist Reading of Karuthamma and Chakki in Chemmeen -- M Lakshmi Narasimha, P Chitti Babu	134-137
ICGTELLL-2025/A23	Corpus linguistics and its applications in English language teaching. -- Dr. Sheeba Sardar Ali	138-141
ICGTELLL-2025/A24	Sita's Uncharted Odyssey: Echoes of Independence in "The Forest of Enchantments" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni -- Rashmi Verma, Dr. Geeta Sharma	142-146

Contemporary Trend of Life Writings in India: A New Horizon of Indian Disability Studies

Shampa Bhul

Research Scholar, Department of English, Presidency University, Kolkata, India.

Email - bhulshampa@gmail.com

Abstract: Human diversity is a reality of human society since its creation. And human disability is one aspect of this diversity. Literature, as a mirror of society, records this social as well as human reality in its pages. Since ancient time disability is represented in literature in different ways, sometimes it is literal, sometimes figurative, sometimes real, again sometimes symbolical or metaphorical. The repository of Indian literature is also no exception in this regard. Different genres, categories or types of literature depicts and presents disability in different ways. Life writings is one of such categories of Indian literature, which has recently come into vogue in context to disability depiction. Different stakeholders of disability community are breaking the silence around disability experience particularly in Indian society, by recording the reality of human disability in this socio-cultural milieu, through their personal experiences and subjective viewpoints. This project plans to search the category of life writings from the repository of Indian English literature of contemporary time and try to find out the contribution of these literary works in Indian disability studies as well as the significance of these works in enriching the Indian literature in general, and also try to look for any drawbacks or challenges if available, in this context.

Key Words: Life Writings, Indian Literature, Disability Studies.

INTRODUCTION:

Literature is an umbrella term. Different genres can be found under this discipline, like- prose, poetry, drama. More elaborately, novel, short story, epic, lyric, autobiography, essay and so on. Besides having different form, length, diction and style, each genre of literature is supposed to incorporate and express separate issues as subject matter or theme. For instance, fiction explores the realistic world through imaginative lens. Poetry expresses condensed subjective emotions. Drama presents socio-cultural or imaginative events and incidents through performance. Memoirs and autobiographies record personal histories through individual's socio-cultural, political and economic background. Essay offers analytical and reflective discourse of a particular concern, and so on. Life writings is comparatively a newer field of literature which has come into trend in modern time. "In the 1980s, Donald Winslow and Marlene Kadar argued in favour of using the term 'life writing' to accommodate a broader scope of texts." (Keay, Bigot, Zagmi, & Bazin1). This category of literature encompasses genres like, autobiography, memoir, personal essay, letter, journal or diary entry, autofiction etc. These different genres under life writings offer powerful insights into the lived experiences of an individual, invariably that of the author. These pieces of literature also provide the different aspects of the author's relation with his society and his various social identities. So, a reader can get a variegated and enriching picture of an individual's life and living in a given society from the perspective of that individual himself. Some exemplary and historically valuable instances of such life writings, in global context, are the autobiographical works of St. Augustine in Fourth century AD, and that of Margery Kempe in early Fifteenth century, *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler, *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* by Mahatma Gandhi etc. in Twentieth century. These life stories are not only contributing in recording the psycho-social reality, or socio-political, cultural and ethno-cultural history through unique personal narratives of life events and experiences, but also enriching the literary arena by their exclusive

creative and artistic attributes. In this context of recording reality, one emerging discipline of contemporary academia is disability studies which is also bringing forth the hitherto unacknowledged realities and living experiences of one of the largest marginalized communities of human society, i.e. disability community. According to the World Health Organization, over 1.3 billion people worldwide experience significant disability including different types of human disability like sensory, cognitive, physical and psychological disabilities, which represent approximately 16% of the global population, (WHO). Life writings, when intersecting with this field of disability studies, become crucial tools for understanding the multifaceted realities of these disabled people. Generally, the life stories of the persons with disabilities, and their experiences have mostly narrated by the non-disabled authors in every society until recent time. So, most of the times these stories have projected the one sided or single stories of the disabled people. But since the disability discourses come into focus; the perspectives of these stories get expanded. And life writings as a literary category contribute significantly in this concern. Works like *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller, *If You Could See What I Hear* by Tom Sullivan, *I'll Scream Later* by Marlee Matlin, *Touching The Rock: An Experience of Blindness* by John M. Hull etc., are some instances of such notable and critically acclaimed works, which can be referred in this context. All these authors are some notable figures in different fields like politics, music, acting, adventure etc., they are also with one or more impairments which they have successfully overcome, and these are their stories of struggle and victory over adversities of life. Through alternative narratives of disability experiences and living realities, these literary creations are removing 'the danger of a single story', (Adichie 2009). This article, in particular, endeavours to explore the unique contributions of life writings to disability studies in the Indian context by examining how these subjective literary records of the different stake holders of this very community challenge dominant narratives, advocate for social change, and foster empathy and understanding.

Life writings with disability concern, the Indian context:

Last few decades have witnessed a considerable growth in notable life writings in India. Primarily those works get critical recognition and gain popularity, which present some in-depth observation, analysis and interpretation of the suppressed or untold psycho-social reality through the subjective narrative of author's life. Some noteworthy literary piece can be mentioned in this regard, like, *Amar Jiban* by Rassundari Devi, which is considered the first written autobiography by an Indian woman in modern times, (Tharu and Lalita 191-197). Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi's *Scrap Books* is a landmark in Indian self-writings, influenced by his western education, he records his thoughts and ideas about personal and social realities in this literary piece. Jawaharlal Nehru's *An Autobiography*, is an account of his quest to place himself in the country as well as among the larger human race. Nirad C. Chaudhuri in his *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, tells his anxiety of being in the clutches of two diverse cultures, the British and the Bengali. *Jibansmriti*, the renowned and well acclaimed personal account of Rabindranath Tagore presents in detail his growing up in a traditional, educated, cultural and well-known family in Bengal. Kamala Das's autobiographical work *My Story* reflects her bold assertion of her selfhood, body and sexuality.

More interestingly, some texts from this literary category of Indian life writings are even more unique and enriching in their contributions, as they represent the intricacies of various intersectional identities of the authors, who are simultaneously carrying more than one marginal identities. For instance, B. R. Ambedkar's *Wait for a Visa*, which is a collection of personal anecdotes of his experiences with untouchability. *Joothan* by Om Prakash Valmiki, that describes his life as an untouchable, and encapsulates the pain, humiliation, and poverty inflicted upon an individual belonging to the bottom of India's social pyramid. Urmila Pauer's *The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memoirs*, and Shantabai Kamble's *Majya Jalmachi Chittarkatha*, translated into English as *The Kaleidoscope Story of My Life*, are noteworthy and valuable documents in this context as these works set down in writing the poignant story of Dalit women's struggles in India. *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi* by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, presents the exclusive journey of the author from young boy to a woman and hijra, it is an intimate account of author's struggles and triumphs.

Like the flourishing of these valuable literary accounts of individuals with intersectional identities, a steady rise can also be seen in expressing, recording and presenting subjective and personal experiences with, around and about disability in contemporary Indian life writings. Different stakeholders of disability community like, disabled individuals, caregivers, healthcare professionals, social volunteers etc. are coming forward in breaking the silence around disability question. By voicing their suppressed emotions, desires, expectations, disappointments, doubts, and painful or happy experiences, these disabled individuals are pioneering in building a valuable archive of personal life narratives and creating a unique category of literature and enriching the literary repository of India. Some works, in this regard, have got wide recognition in Indian framework. For instance, the autobiography of Ved Mehta, namely *Face to Face*, is an internationally acknowledged work where he records his journey with blindness, the crisis and struggle that he has under gone due to the lack of socio-administrative infrastructure and prevalent cultural misconception. Malini Chib's *One Little Finger* is also an inspiring story of the heroic battle against adversity, prejudice, stigmas and stereotypes, of a woman with Cerebral palsy in Indian backdrop, as well as her satisfaction to enjoy life fully in western countries. Shivani Gupta's *No Looking Back: A True Story* is another such deeply moving and inspiring narrative about the multilayered pain and challenges of an Indian woman with spinal cord injury. *The Other Senses: An Inspiring True Story* by Preeti Monga likewise motivates its readers with the story of a Visually Impaired woman and her journey from rejection, trauma, and discrimination to asserting her rights and becoming a successful entrepreneur.

Unique contribution:

Such life writings, as discussed above, are challenging dominant disability narratives of India. Even in modern time, in India as well as in many parts of the world, disability is often viewed through a medical lens. Which focuses on individual impairments, one's physical, psychological and sensory limitations as the cause of one's disabling condition. Ancient, medieval or premodern era were even more intolerant towards and harboured degrading and unsignifying opinion towards human disability. It was considered the punishment for former sin or bad Karma of the person in concern. The disabled people were regarded as subject to pity and charity, "Eunuchs and outcasts, (persons) born blind or deaf, the insane, idiots and the dumb, as well as those deficient in any organ (of action or sensation), receive no share. But it is just that (a man) who knows (the law) should give even to all of them food and raiment without stint, according to his ability; he who gives it not will become all outcast." (Manusmriti. The Laws of Manu.pp.201-202). In recent time, life writings, however, are offering a powerful counter-narrative to these prevalent attitudes that were projected in former literature. Concentrating on the voices of disabled people themselves, these narratives are challenging the dominant discourses around disability, and highlighting the social and cultural factors which chiefly causing disability experiences in human society. They are also revealing the complex interplay of individual agencies, social structures, and cultural attitudes that shape the lived experiences of disabled people in India. Through the comparison of his experience with blindness in India and America, Ved Mehta attests to this fact in his autobiography *Face to Face*, "I had come to love America almost as deeply as home, and I owed more to her than I did to India, because she had given me education, freedom of movement, a complete sense of self-reliance, and a glimpse into what a full life could be in the persons of Syl and Mary. All these things my own country had not been able to do, because I was blind." (Mehta379). Thus, replacing the single story, these life writings are providing multifaceted and multivocal narratives of human disability. These multidimensional personal narratives can prove a significant instrument to invoke and foster empathy and understanding among people towards persons with disability. These autobiographers have recorded their own realizations and views regarding their disabling conditions and disability experiences in some specific ethnocultural area. Mehta reviews his perception regarding his disability through these words, "To be blind is an uphill struggle. You've got to sell yourself to every seeing man. You've got to show him that you can do things that he thinks you can't possibly do." (Mehta 267). Monga also pours her heart out when she writes in her autobiography, "You blind girl, be thankful for our sympathy; do not attempt to walk our paths, and if you don't desist, we'll stop you in your tracks by one means or another." 'This was as much my world as theirs,' I would think, 'then why was I not being

allowed to do what I was doing? I was not snatching anything from anyone, I meant no harm, and only wished to live with dignity. Where would I need to go, to be able to simply live life like everyone else?" (Monga 73). Likewise, Chib also puts down her inner reflection about her disability, "it is then that I began my journey of deep introspection, what is normal? Who is normal? Why am I abnormal? Who decides? I cannot speak, I cannot walk, does that make me abnormal?" (Chib 56). Reading such personal accounts of the persons with disability from their subjective perspectives, the readers can gain deeper insights and appreciations of the unique viewpoints, experiences, and challenges of these individuals, from each of their singular subjective journey with different disabilities. "This was most shocking! What had I done now? Was I so bad that no one, no one at all wished to have anything to do with me? First it was my school, then the music teacher's denial that I would be able to achieve excellence no matter how hard I worked. No one seemed to want to marry me and now hundreds of people were protesting just because I had dared to accept a humble trainee's position at a five-star hotel. This seemed too absurd to make any sense of; just because I was blind, I was apparently being denied the basic right to live in this world." (Monga73), such psycho-social and cultural records, as can be witnessed in these life writings, can also serve as powerful tools for social sensitisation and advocacy, in this regard. Through the true and personal stories of their resilience, struggle, and triumph, such authors with some visible or invisible impairment can raise awareness about the challenges they face due to lack of infrastructure administrative indifference and prevalent misconceptions, as can be asserted through Mehta's statement, "... I would not be allowed to take either the civil or diplomatic service examinations, because the Indian Government felt that blind persons could not hold jobs with the same degree of competency as the sighted. ... As for entering college teaching or a journalistic career, similar handicaps exist in India, because no blind person has been able to pull himself up from the mesh of notoriously bad educational facilities for the blind and hold a topflight job." (Mehta383). So, these unique contributions of these authors, in various aspects of life and living with disability in this country, strongly advocate for greater inclusion and accessibility in the Indian socio-political, governmental and administrative levels, which are still falling behind in disability concerns. Thus, these variegated narratives can bridge, at least to some extent, the wide gap between the disabled and non-disabled communities, that still exists in this socio-cultural backdrop. Primarily it is this greater understanding and empathy of the social beings towards each other, which can positively promote the concept of acceptance and inclusion in the human society in its true sense, and thereby materialize the notion of human diversity.

Challenges faced:

The genre of life writings is no doubt flourishing in literary domain of contemporary India, specially from different marginal communities, disabled community being one of them. But its emergence and gradual progress is not without any nuisance. As any individual with impairment is still regarded as inferior to a non-disabled person in this society, likewise, their literary prowess or artistic creation also sometimes faces criticism, neglect, and doubt in Indian literary society. Though in context to Indian disability studies, these works are appreciated as seminal literature, but in the broader landscape of nationally or globally acclaimed mainstream literary creation, these are rarely mentioned or placed in the same row with the conventional literature. Like marginalized community in human society this literary contribution of the disability stakeholders is also put aside in the margin or pushed to the fringe of mainstream academia, creating barrier in its path to widespread recognition. Not only the academia but one important stakeholder of this literature i.e. the publisher also often show disinterest in publishing such literature because of their supposed low commercial value. Apart from such reception blocks, the literary critics apprehend a risk of compromise in objective, aesthetic and artistic values of these subjective narratives, because of their personal attachments with the representations. However, in order to overcome these challenges, at least to some extent, and to come out of the marginalized position to the mainstream literary world, more awareness, accessibility, and academic focus are necessary concerning such life writings presenting disability.

Conclusion:

Thus, the literary category of life writings, precisely by the primary stakeholders of the disabled community in Indian context, offers unique insights and opportunities, existing challenges and future prospects, past disappointments and present expectations, in regard to disability concern in India. It can be safely claimed after the above discussion that these life writings will determinately play a vital role in shaping the general's conception and understanding of different disability and disability related issues particularly in Indian context. Not only the public sensitization and awareness but these narratives can also inspire new policy formations, constitutional amendments and administrative implementations, which, in turn, will empower disabled communities of this country by giving them their rightful position in the society. Along with the social and administrative sphere, the unavoidable value and contribution of this literary category can also be felt in the field of literature and academia. In one side, these are enriching the repository of Indian literature with their artistic and creative attributes. And on the other side, by documenting the voices of disabled people and challenging dominant narratives around disability, these are advocating social change by engaging in serious discourses around and understanding of human disability. Thus, they are building an exclusive archive in this field. These narratives are also contributing significantly in the discipline of disability studies. So, as we continue to strive for a more inclusive and equitable society, it is crucial to recognize the power of life writings in shaping our understanding of disability as well as empowering disabled community.

REFERENCES:

1. Addlakha, Renu. *Disability Studies in India: Global Discourses, Local Realities*. Taylor & Francis, 2011.
2. Baisnee-Keay, Valerie, Corinne Bigot, Nicoleta Alexoae-Zagni, and Claire Bazin. *Women's Life Writing and the Practice of Reading: She Reads to Write Herself*. Springer, 2018.
3. Chib, Malini. *One Little Finger*. Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, 2011.
4. Davis, Lennard J., editor. *The Disability Studies Reader*. Routledge, 1997.
5. Ghosh, Nandini. *Interrogating Disability in India*. Springer, 2016.
6. Goffman, Erving. *Stigma: Note on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Simon & Schuster, 1986.
7. Kadar, Marlene, editor. *Essays on Life Writing: From Genre to Critical Practice*. University of Toronto Press, 1992.
8. Keller, Helen. *The Story of My Life*. Ocean Books Pvt.Ltd., 2008.
9. Manu. *The Laws of Manu*. Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, Penguin Books, 1991.
10. Mehrotra, Nilika. *Disability Studies in India: Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Springer, 2020.
11. Mehta, Ved. *Face to Face*. Penguin Random House India, 2013.
12. Monga, Preeti. *Flight Without Sight*. Hay House India, 2018.
13. Monga, Preeti. *The Other Senses*. Roli Books, 2012.
14. Tharu, Susie, and K. Lalita, editors. *Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the Present*. Feminist Press, 1991.
15. Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. "The Danger of a Single Story." TED: Ideas Worth Spreading, July 2009, www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story. Accessed 16 Nov. 2016.
16. "Disability & India: Memoirs and Personal Narratives." Bohemian Bibliophile, bohemianbibliophile.ac.com/Disability-&India-Memories-and-Personal-Narrative. Accessed 20 Jan. 2025.
17. "Introduction to Life Writing in India: Its Forms and Development." ePG Path shala, ebooks.inflibnet.ac.in. Accessed 20 Jan. 2025.
18. World Health Organization. "Disability." World Health Organization, n.d., <https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability>. Accessed 16 Mar. 2025.

The Evolution and Impact of Children's Literature

Md.Sabir Alam

Research Scholar, P.G. Department of English, B.N.Mandal University,
Madhepura, Bihar , Pin code - 852113
Email ID – 732080553a@gmail.com

Abstract: *Children's literature has come a long way from its origins in oral storytelling and moral lessons to becoming a diverse and influential field that shapes education, social development, and cultural identity. Early works like Aesop's Fables and Puritan primers focused on teaching ethics, while the introduction of printed books and fairy tales by authors like Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm marked the beginning of literary storytelling for young readers. The 19th century, known as the "Golden Age" of children's literature, brought imaginative tales like Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Little Women, combining entertainment with moral and personal growth. In the 20th and 21st centuries, children's literature has expanded to include a variety of voices, complex themes, and digital formats. Authors such as Dr. Seuss and J.K. Rowling have revolutionized storytelling, while books addressing social justice, environmental issues, and identity formation have gained recognition. Children's literature plays a crucial role in moral development, cultural preservation, cognitive growth, and social awareness. It promotes literacy, emotional intelligence, and advocacy, but also faces challenges like representation, censorship, and adapting to digital advancements. This paper delves into the historical evolution, thematic importance, and societal impact of children's literature, emphasizing its influence on young minds and society as a whole.*

Keywords: *Children's literature, moral instruction, cultural identity, literacy, representation, diversity, digital, education, social impact.*

INTRODUCTION :

Throughout history, children's literature has been a powerful force in shaping the minds of young individuals, reflecting the values of society, and sparking creativity. From ancient oral traditions to modern digital stories, children's literature has gone through significant changes in its form, purpose, and impact. Initially rooted in oral folk tales and teachings of morals, it has evolved into a unique literary genre with the invention of the printing press, the Golden Age of children's books, and the rise of diverse and inclusive storytelling in today's world.

This literature review delves into the historical development of children's literature, focusing on key moments such as early moral teachings, the transition to written stories, the peak of storytelling excellence, and the expansion of themes and narratives in the 20th and 21st centuries. It also explores the vital roles that children's literature plays in shaping moral values, passing on cultural traditions, promoting cognitive development, and raising social consciousness. Furthermore, it examines how children's books impact literacy, education, emotional growth, and activism, while also addressing the ongoing challenges of representation, censorship, and the digital age.

By exploring the historical journey and thematic importance of children's literature, this review aims to offer a deep understanding of its lasting influence on young readers and society as a whole.

Historical Evolution of Children's Literature

1. Early Traditions and Moral Instruction

Children's literature finds its roots in oral traditions, where folktales, myths, and fables were passed down through generations. These narratives served both as entertainment and moral instruction, teaching societal values and ethics (Zipes, 2006). Aesop's Fables, originating in ancient Greece, are among the earliest known examples of such storytelling, with tales like *The Tortoise and the Hare* emphasizing perseverance and patience (Temple et al., 2015).

During the medieval and early modern periods, written texts specifically targeting young readers began to emerge, though they were primarily religious or instructional. Early texts such as *The Primer* and *Catechisms* sought to instill Christian virtues in children (Grenby, 2014). John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), though intended for a general audience, became widely read by children due to its allegorical approach to moral and spiritual fortitude (Shavit, 2009).

2. The Birth of Written Literature

The invention of the printing press in the 15th century revolutionized children's literature by making books more widely accessible. By the late 17th and early 18th centuries, works explicitly aimed at young readers began to take shape. Charles Perrault's *Tales of Mother Goose* (1697) introduced the literary fairy tale as a genre, featuring moralistic stories such as *Cinderella* and *Little Red Riding Hood* (Zipes, 2000). Similarly, the Brothers Grimm's *Fairy Tales* (1812) collected and adapted European folktales, preserving them in written form while reinforcing cultural norms and values (Tatar, 2003).

3. The Golden Age of Children's Literature

The 18th and 19th centuries witnessed a shift from purely didactic texts to stories that combined moral lessons with enjoyment. John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) emphasized the role of pleasure in learning, advocating for engaging literature that fostered curiosity and imagination (Grenby, 2011).

The Victorian era is often regarded as the "Golden Age" of children's literature, as it saw the emergence of classic works that embraced fantasy, adventure, and individuality. Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) redefined storytelling with its whimsical narrative and surreal imagery, while Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868) provided a realistic portrayal of young female protagonists (Avery, 2006). Similarly, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883) introduced adventure fiction, appealing to young readers with themes of courage and exploration (Carpenter & Prichard, 1984).

4. 20th Century and Beyond: Diversity and Inclusion

The 20th century saw an expansion of children's literature, embracing new genres, themes, and perspectives. Authors like Dr. Seuss (*The Cat in the Hat*, 1957) introduced playful and rhyming narratives that encouraged early literacy, while J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (1997–2007) brought complex character development and world-building to young audiences (Nodelman, 2008).

This period also witnessed an increased focus on representation and social issues. Mildred D. Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (1976) explored racial injustice in America, while Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming* (2014) provided a poetic memoir of racial identity and belonging (Myers, 2016).

In the digital age, the landscape of children's literature continues to evolve. E-books, interactive apps, and audiobooks have made stories more accessible and engaging for young readers. Contemporary works address pressing issues such as climate change, gender identity, and mental health, ensuring that children's literature remains a dynamic and influential force in shaping young minds (Short, 2018).

Themes and Functions of Children's Literature

1. Moral and Ethical Development

Children's literature has historically served as a medium for moral and ethical instruction. Early texts, such as Aesop's Fables and Puritan primers, emphasized virtues such as honesty, diligence, and obedience (Grenby, 2009). Over time, the focus of moral education in children's literature has evolved, promoting critical thinking, empathy, and self-awareness (Nikolajeva, 2014).

Modern works, such as *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams (1922), illustrate these themes by emphasizing personal growth and the transformative power of love and empathy. Similarly, contemporary children's literature often presents moral dilemmas that encourage young readers to reflect on ethical issues rather than simply adhering to prescribed values (Hunt, 2005).

2. Cultural Transmission and Identity Formation

Children's literature serves as a significant medium for transmitting cultural values and shaping identity. Fairy tales, for instance, have long been used to reflect societal norms, moral expectations, and collective anxieties (Zipes, 2006). Classic tales such as *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Cinderella* reinforce social roles and moral lessons, demonstrating how literature functions as a cultural artifact (Bettelheim, 1976).

In contemporary contexts, multicultural children's literature has gained prominence in fostering inclusivity and broadening young readers' worldviews. Scholars argue that exposure to diverse narratives helps children develop empathy and a better understanding of different cultural backgrounds (Bishop, 1990). The concept of "mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors" introduced by Bishop (1990) highlights how literature allows children to see reflections of themselves, view different cultures, and step into new experiences. By incorporating stories from various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, children's literature promotes social cohesion and a more nuanced understanding of identity (Short, 2009).

3. Imagination and Cognitive Development

Children's literature plays a crucial role in stimulating imagination, which is essential for cognitive and linguistic development. Through narratives, children engage in symbolic thinking, which supports abstract reasoning and enhances problem-solving abilities (Nikolajeva, 2014). Fantasy literature, in particular, allows young readers to explore hypothetical scenarios, fostering creativity and adaptive thinking (Paley, 2004). Exposure to imaginative storytelling also contributes to language acquisition by introducing new vocabulary and complex sentence structures, ultimately strengthening literacy skills (Beck & McKeown, 2007).

4. Social and Environmental Awareness

Children's literature plays a crucial role in fostering social and environmental awareness. Books like *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss (1971) highlight environmental conservation by illustrating the consequences of industrialization and deforestation. Through its narrative and imagery, *The Lorax* encourages young readers to consider their responsibility toward nature (McGavran, 2012). Similarly, *Malala's Magic Pencil* by Malala Yousafzai (2017) introduces children to themes of social justice, education, and activism, drawing from the author's real-life advocacy for girls' education (Smith-D'Arezzo & Musgrove, 2019). These books empower children to develop an awareness of global issues and inspire them to take action in their communities.

5. Identity and Diversity

Children's literature plays a crucial role in shaping young readers' understanding of identity and diversity. Contemporary works often highlight a range of identities, family structures, and cultural backgrounds, fostering inclusivity and empathy among young audiences (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). For instance, Grace Lin's *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* (2009) weaves elements of Chinese folklore with the protagonist's journey of self-discovery, celebrating cultural heritage and storytelling traditions. Similarly, Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming* (2014) presents a lyrical memoir that

explores racial identity and belonging, offering a deeply personal yet universally resonant narrative on growing up as a Black girl in America (Woodson, 2014). These texts contribute to broader conversations on representation in children's literature, ensuring that diverse voices and experiences are reflected (Thomas, 2016).

The Impact of Children's Literature

1. Educational Impact

Children's literature plays a crucial role in literacy development and educational outcomes. Picture books serve as foundational tools for early readers, aiding in vocabulary acquisition, comprehension skills, and language development (Nikolajeva, 2013). As children progress to chapter books, they are introduced to more complex narratives, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and emotional intelligence (Beck & McKeown, 2001).

Throughout the 20th century, educational reforms increasingly recognized the significance of literature in curricula, leading to the inclusion of seminal works such as *Charlotte's Web* (1952) and *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) in classrooms worldwide (Lynch-Brown, Tomlinson, & Short, 2014).

These texts not only enhance reading proficiency but also impart moral values, encourage empathy, and cultivate a lifelong love for learning (Sipe, 2008).

2. Social and Emotional Influence

Children's literature plays a crucial role in shaping social and emotional development by providing frameworks for understanding emotions, relationships, and the world around them. Stories that explore themes such as loss, friendship, and resilience help young readers navigate their own experiences.

For instance, *Bridge to Terabithia* (Paterson, 1977) delves into grief and imagination, offering solace and understanding to children facing similar challenges. Likewise, R.J. Palacio's *Wonder* (2012) promotes empathy and kindness, addressing themes of bullying and social acceptance (Bishop, 2016). These narratives help children develop emotional intelligence and coping strategies, reinforcing positive interpersonal behaviors.

3. Empowerment and Activism

Children's literature increasingly empowers young readers to engage with social issues, fostering awareness and advocacy. Books such as Malala Yousafzai's *Malala's Magic Pencil* (2017) inspire activism and courage, encouraging children to believe in their ability to effect change in their communities (Gangi & Barowsky, 2017).

Moreover, literature broadens children's perspectives, fostering an appreciation for diversity, inclusion, and ethical decision-making. Stories that address issues of racial and gender equity, environmental consciousness, and human rights help cultivate socially responsible future citizens (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

4. Enhancing Language and Literacy Skills

One of the most significant contributions of children's literature is its impact on language acquisition and literacy development. Research indicates that early exposure to books fosters vocabulary growth, improves comprehension skills, and strengthens phonemic awareness (Mol & Bus, 2011). Interactive reading sessions between caregivers and children enhance narrative skills, preparing young readers for formal education.

According to Whitehurst et al. (1988), dialogic reading—where caregivers engage children in discussions about a book's content—significantly improves early literacy skills. Furthermore, exposure to rich storytelling environments has been linked to higher academic achievement and lifelong reading habits (Neuman & Celano, 2012).

5. Cultural Awareness and Representation

Children's literature plays a significant role in fostering cultural awareness and promoting inclusivity. Books that celebrate diverse cultures introduce children to new traditions, languages, and perspectives, helping them develop empathy and appreciation for different ways of life. For example, *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Peña (2015) provides young readers with insights into the richness of multicultural societies, emphasizing themes of community, kindness, and socioeconomic diversity. Through such narratives, children gain a broader understanding of the world, encouraging inclusivity and respect for diverse backgrounds (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

Representation in children's literature is essential in shaping how children perceive themselves and others. Historically, a lack of diversity in children's books reinforced stereotypes and marginalized certain identities (Nel, 2017). For many years, literature was dominated by Eurocentric narratives, often neglecting the experiences of underrepresented groups. However, contemporary efforts by authors and publishers aim to address these gaps by producing more inclusive literature. Organizations such as We Need Diverse Books advocate for books that reflect a variety of racial, ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic identities, ensuring that children from all backgrounds see themselves represented in the stories they read (Thomas, Reese, & Horning, 2020).

Increasing diversity in children's books also benefits children from dominant cultural groups by exposing them to perspectives beyond their own lived experiences. Research suggests that literature can serve as both a "mirror" that reflects a child's own identity and a "window" that offers a view into others' lives (Bishop, 1990). By engaging with diverse narratives, children develop critical thinking skills, empathy, and a more inclusive worldview.

Challenges and Critics of Children's Literature

1. Representation and Inclusivity

Despite progress, children's literature continues to struggle with issues of representation. Critics argue that mainstream publications often exclude marginalized voices or reinforce stereotypes (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Historically, books for children have predominantly featured white, middle-class protagonists, sidelining diverse cultural backgrounds, abilities, and gender identities (Dahlen & Nichols, 2020). Efforts to diversify the genre are ongoing, with initiatives like We Need Diverse Books advocating for greater inclusivity in both characters and authorship (Thomas, 2016).

2. Censorship and Controversy

Children's literature frequently faces censorship due to its perceived influence on young readers. Books addressing complex or sensitive issues—such as religion, puberty, or social justice—are often challenged by parents, educators, and policymakers (Foerstel, 2002). Notable examples include Judy Blume's *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* (1970), which has been criticized for its candid discussion of menstruation and religious questioning, and Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963), which faced backlash for its depiction of childhood anger and disobedience (Karolides, Bald, & Sova, 2005). The balance between creative freedom and age-appropriate content remains a contentious issue, often sparking debates on what constitutes "appropriate" literature for children.

3. Digital Transformation

The digital age has reshaped children's literature, introducing both challenges and opportunities. E-books, audiobooks, and interactive storytelling platforms are redefining how young readers engage with texts (Unsworth, 2014). While digital formats offer accessibility and engagement, they also raise concerns about screen time, reduced attention spans, and the diminishing role of traditional print books (Hassett & Curwood, 2009). Publishers and educators must navigate these changes carefully, ensuring that digital advancements enhance rather than replace the cognitive and emotional benefits of traditional reading experiences.

Conclusion

Children's literature has undergone a remarkable evolution, transforming from oral traditions and didactic texts to a diverse and dynamic field that shapes young minds in profound ways. What began as moral instruction through fables and religious texts has grown into a vast literary landscape that entertains, educates, and empowers children worldwide. The Golden Age of children's literature introduced imaginative storytelling, while the 20th and 21st centuries have expanded the genre's scope to include diverse perspectives, social issues, and technological innovations.

Beyond entertainment, children's literature plays a crucial role in cognitive development, moral education, and cultural transmission. Stories shape identity, foster empathy, and provide young readers with both mirrors of their own experiences and windows into others' lives. The impact extends beyond childhood, influencing literacy development, emotional intelligence, and social awareness.

However, challenges remain. Issues of representation, censorship, and the rapid rise of digital storytelling continue to shape the future of children's literature. While progress has been made in promoting inclusivity, efforts must continue to ensure that all children see themselves reflected in the stories they read. Additionally, navigating the balance between traditional print books and digital formats presents both opportunities and concerns for educators and publishers.

Ultimately, children's literature remains a powerful and evolving force, one that not only entertains but also educates, inspires, and influences future generations. Its ability to adapt to cultural shifts and technological advancements ensures its continued relevance in shaping young minds and fostering a love for storytelling across the world.

References :

1. Avery, G. (2006). *Children's literature: An illustrated history*. Oxford University Press.
2. Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2001). Text talk: Capturing the benefits of read-aloud experiences for young children. *The Reading Teacher*, 55(1), 10–20.
3. Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2007). *Increasing young low-income children's oral vocabulary repertoires through rich and focused instruction*. Carnegie Mellon University.
4. Bettelheim, B. (1976). *The uses of enchantment: The meaning and importance of fairy tales*. Knopf.
5. Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. *Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom*, 6(3), ix–xi.
6. Bishop, R. S. (2016). *Reflections on children's literature and the African American experience*. Ohio State University Press.
7. Botelho, M. J., & Rudman, M. K. (2009). *Critical multicultural analysis of children's literature: Mirrors, windows, and doors*. Routledge.
8. Carpenter, H., & Prichard, M. (1984). *The Oxford companion to children's literature*. Oxford University Press.
9. Dahlen, S. P., & Nichols, S. A. (2020). *Diversity in youth literature: Opening doors through reading*. American Library Association.
10. Foerstel, H. N. (2002). *Banned in the U.S.A.: A reference guide to book censorship in schools and public libraries*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
11. Gangi, J. M., & Barowsky, E. (2017). *What do I say? Talking with children about race, culture, and social justice*. Teachers College Press.
12. Grenby, M. O. (2009). *The child reader, 1700–1840*. Cambridge University Press.
13. Grenby, M. O. (2011). *Children's literature*. Edinburgh University Press.
14. Grenby, M. O. (2014). *The origins of children's literature*. Cambridge University Press.

15. Hassett, D. D., & Curwood, J. S. (2009). Theories and practices of multimodal education: The instructional dynamics of picture books and primary classrooms. *The Reading Teacher*, 63(4), 270–282.
16. Hunt, P. (2005). *Understanding children's literature* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
17. Karolides, N. J., Bald, M., & Sova, D. B. (2005). *100 banned books: Censorship histories of world literature*. Checkmark Books.
18. Lynch-Brown, C., Tomlinson, C. M., & Short, K. G. (2014). *Essentials of children's literature* (8th ed.). Pearson.
19. McGavran, J. H. (2012). *Literature and the child: Romantic continuations, postmodern contestations*. University of Iowa Press.
20. Mol, S. E., & Bus, A. G. (2011). To read or not to read: A meta-analysis of print exposure from infancy to early adulthood. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137(2), 267–296. <https://doi.org>
21. Myers, W. D. (2016). *Brown girl dreaming: A case study in children's literature and racial identity*. Scholastic.
22. Nel, P. (2017). *Was the cat in the hat black? The hidden racism of children's literature, and the need for diverse books*. Oxford University Press.
23. Nikolajeva, M. (2013). *Reading for learning: Cognitive approaches to children's literature*. John Benjamins Publishing.
24. Nikolajeva, M. (2014). *Children's literature comes of age: Toward a new aesthetic*. Routledge.
25. Nodelman, P. (2008). *The hidden adult: Defining children's literature*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
26. Paley, V. G. (2004). *A child's work: The importance of fantasy play*. University of Chicago Press.
27. Sipe, L. R. (2008). *Storytime: Young children's literary understanding in the classroom*. Teachers College Press.
28. Shavit, Z. (2009). *Poetics of children's literature*. University of Georgia Press.
29. Short, K. G. (2009). Critically reading the word and the world: Building intercultural understanding through literature. *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature*, 47(2), 1–10. <https://doi.org>
30. Short, K. G. (2018). *Critical content analysis of children's and young adult literature: Reframing perspective*. Routledge.
31. Smith-D'Arezzo, W. M., & Musgrove, M. (2019). *Diversity in children's literature: Exploring identity and representation*. Palgrave Macmillan.
32. Tatar, M. (2003). *The hard facts of the Grimm's' fairy tales*. Princeton University Press.
33. Temple, C., Martinez, M., Yokota, J., & Naylor, A. (2015). *Children's books in children's hands: An introduction to their literature* (5th ed.). Pearson.
34. Thomas, E. E. (2016). *The dark fantastic: Race and the imagination from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games*. NYU Press.
35. Thomas, E. E., Reese, D., & Horning, K. T. (2020). *We need diverse books: Advocating for inclusive children's literature*. HarperCollins.
36. Unsworth, L. (2014). *Multimodal literacy and children's picture books*. Routledge.
37. Whitehurst, G. J., Arnold, D. S., Epstein, J. N., Angell, A. L., Smith, M., & Fischel, J. E. (1988). A picture book reading intervention in daycare and home for children from low-income families. *Developmental Psychology*, 24(4), 552–559. <https://doi.org>
38. Zipes, J. (2000). *The Oxford companion to fairy tales*. Oxford University Press.
39. Zipes, J. (2006). *Why fairy tales stick: The evolution and relevance of a genre*. Routledge.

The Role of English Language Comprehension and Communication while Attempting Competitive Examination: A Study

Dr. Abhijeet Nanasahab Pawar

Assistant Professor, Department of English, SGM College, Karad.

Email - adr9795@gmail.com.

Abstract: English is becoming the almost indispensable communication language of young people nowadays. This empirical study consists of survey of students at colleges those who are the aspirant to become administrative officers. The students several attempt to crack the exam challenges to their perseverance and the reason behind is mere English language inability. Hence the present study is an honest attempt to find the role English Language while attempting Competitive examination. The expression of 100 aspirants have been tested to prove that the knowledge of English language assist them to study the knowledge of globe and other disciplines.

Key words: Competitive Examination, comprehension and communication.

1.1 Introduction:

In the present academic scenario the college students look fascinated by the well-known word, 'The Competitive Examination.' Their aspiration to become an administrative or public servant is become toil for them due to the interest of masses. Really, for them the competitive examination is very tough challenge and it is the test for their perseverance, consistency and rigorous efforts towards their task. In between their preparation they work hard to crack the exam. Unfortunately large number aspirant failed due to improper and non-systematic approach of learning. Frequently the questions are been asked by the students about the ways to crack the exam. Generally, amongst these several talks of experts, experts share their ways and methods of looking towards reasoning, math, social sciences, environment science etc. Even they convey their expertise in regarding perseverance and constant efforts in the point of exam. But the question arises in the mind, 'Can it work fruitfully without having proper knowledge of comprehension and communication of language? the answer is NO. Hence, it is an utmost need to define the role of Language, especially English language comprehension to get success and attempting competitive examination.

1.2 Scope and Limitations of Study:

The present study focuses on the role of English language comprehension and communication in attempting competitive examination. The study prominently concern with the aspirant of competitive examination and successful candidates. The study also emphasizes to know the English language proficiency and the efforts need to develop it. The scope is limited to the students of competitive centers from the vicinity of Karad Taluka.

1.3 Objectives of the Study;

1. To delineate the English Comprehension and English Communication.
2. To define the role English Language Comprehension and Communication in attempting Competitive examination.
3. To study the ways of developing language comprehension and communication.

1.4 Hypotheses of the study:

- 1) The role of English language comprehension and communication is complex, critical and useful in attempting competitive examination.
- 2) The English language comprehension and communication builds the confidence amongst the students to get success in exam.

1.5 Research Method: Keeping in view the objectives of the present study a proper research methodology has been used. The primary data for calculating and examining the role of English Comprehension and communication has been collected by well- structured questionnaire for this non-probabilistic sample 100 respondents have been selected under the study area.

1.6 Rationale behind Study: The study aims to define the role of English language comprehension and communication in the success of Competitive examination. Frequently, the students of Competitive examination forgets the basic and prime importance learning language hence they get failure in examination due to inability of comprehension of questions due to lack of understanding . Naturally it effects on communication whether in written or oral mode. Therefore, the rationale behind the study is to make aware about the importance of English Language Comprehension and communication to get success in the Competitive examination.

1.7 Collection of Data: The present study is based on the primary as well as secondary data.

a) Primary Data:

The primary data related to the role of English language comprehension and Communication has been obtained through interview and questionnaire techniques. The study is largely based on a) review of published information and b) Survey from 100 aspirants of various competitive examinations.

b) Secondary Data:

Secondary data has been collected research thesis, article and book published on the English language comprehension and communication of English language.

2. Review of Literature:

The Handbook of Communication Skills by Owen Hargie represents the most significant single contribution to the literature in this domain. Providing a rich mine of information for the neophyte and practicing professional, it is perfect for use in a variety of contexts, from theoretical mainstream communication modules on degree programs to vocational courses in health, business and education. With contributions from an internationally renowned range of scholars, this is the definitive text for students, researchers and professionals alike.

Research Article *Communication Skills for the 21st Century Engineer Marc J. Riemer UNESCO International Centre for Engineering Education (UICEE) Faculty of Engineering, Monash University, Clayton, Melbourne, VIC 3800, Australia* presents English Communication skills are an essential component in the education of engineering students to facilitate not just students' education but also to prepare them for their future careers. In this article, the author discusses various important communication skills required of modern engineers, such as foreign language skills. Also discussed are various elements of communication skills education, such as oral, listening, written, visual, interdisciplinary and intercultural. The impact of emotional intelligence (EQ) is also presented. Suggestions for communication skills development are made, including the posit that communication skills be integrated across the curriculum, rather than include it as a stand-alone subject in already packed engineering curricula, so as to reinforce student learning. Various potential areas for further research are also made.

In *Higher Education Studies*, v6 n2 p154-161 2016 for *Difficulties in Teaching English for Specific Purposes: Empirical Study at Vietnam Universities* mentioned that, this is an alarming situation because English is becoming the almost indispensable communication language of young people nowadays. This empirical study consists of a survey of teachers and students at universities in Hanoi by listing the factors related to teaching English for specific purposes. Then, we give some recommendations for improving effectiveness of teaching English for specific purposes so that students can meet the English requirements for their work and lives.

In Research article *Continuous Professional Development; A Hefty Apparatus for Teaching English for Competitive Examinations by Chatterjee Santadip* *International Journal of English Learning & Teaching Skills*, Volume 3, Number 4, July 2021, pp. 2629-2640(12) reveals English language has become the lingua franca and it is called the global language as well. English has a gargantuan impact in every nook and cranny. In the field of competitive examinations also, English as a subject has a colossal importance.

3. Delineation of English language Comprehension and Communication

3.1 Introduction: The mastery of a language is an important asset in life. It helps us to get job, to convey thoughts effectively with others, to pass time fruitfully and to get success in various competitive exams. In fact all of us need mastery in language to get easiness in daily activities and in order to express ourselves in simple and pleasant manner. In this way, communication of information, knowledge of thoughts is an important function of language that would enhance anyone comprehension and it would result successful respond.

3.2 Comprehension: is the understanding and interpretation of what is read. To be able to accurately understand written material student need to be able to decode what they read; make connections between what they read and what they already know; and think deeply about what they have read. English language learners often have problems mastering science, math, or social studies concepts because they cannot comprehend the textbooks for these subjects. English language learners at all levels of English proficiency, and literacy, will benefit from explicit instruction of comprehension skills along with other skills.

Examples of comprehension skills that can be taught and applied to all reading situations include:

3.2.1. Summarizing: Summarizing means clipping sentences it down to its only essentials. Both techniques can be used to clarify and simplify complex information or ideas and to paraphrase text: Read and make notes. The object of summarizing is to shortly depict the key points of a theory in order to provide context for your thesis. Therefore, it is necessary to read the work first to understand the author's intent. This is a crucial step because an incomplete reading could lead to an inaccurate summary.

3.2.2. Sequencing: Sequencing refers to the identification of the components of a story with the beginning, middle, and end. Also it is an ability to recall and retell the events within a given text in the order in which they occurred. The capacity to sequence events in a text is a key of comprehension strategy, especially for narrative texts.

3.2.3. Inference: It involves using what you know to make a guess about what you don't know or reading between the lines. Readers who make inferences use the clues in the text along with their own experiences to help them figure out what is not directly said, making the text personal and memorable.

3.2.4. Comparing and contrasting: Comparing involves identifying similarities or differences whereas contrasting involves comparing two or more objects or events in order to show their differences.

3.2.5. Drawing conclusions: It is referred to information that is implied or inferred. It means that the information is never obviously mentioned. Even the writers frequently share you more than they say directly.

3.2.6. Self-questioning: Self-questioning is a strategy that involves querying yourself before, during, and after you read to make meaning of text. It is part of active reading. For skilled readers, questioning becomes automatic they might not even realize they are doing it.

3.2.7 Problem-solving: Problem-solving strategies help the reader read accurately, smoothly, and with understanding. It is used by the readers to collect information from within the text and beyond the text (world experience) to help them make meaning.

3.2.8. Relating background knowledge: Background knowledge is the amount of information or knowledge someone has on a particular topic. Background knowledge is acquired by the number of experiences someone has in life or the amount of knowledge they have retained from reading or listening.

3.2.9 Distinguishing between fact and opinion: A fact is a statement that can be proven true or false. An opinion is an expression of a person's feelings that cannot be proven. Opinions can be based on facts or emotions and sometimes they are meant to deliberately mislead others. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the author's purpose and choice of language.

3.2.10 Finding the main idea, important facts, and supporting details: Details, major and minor, support the main idea by telling how, what, when, where, why, how much, or how many. Locating the topic, main idea, and supporting details helps you understand the points the writer is attempting to express. Identifying the relationship between these will increase your comprehension.

3.3 Communication Defined:

Communication is the sending and receiving of information and can be one-on-one or between groups of people, and can be face-to-face or through communication devices. Communication requires a sender, the person who initiates communication, to transfer their thoughts or encode a message. This message is sent to the receiver, a person who receives the message, and finally, the receiver must decode, or interpret the message. This sounds simple enough but is more complicated.

Language involves symbols and signs and is distinct to the culture that speaks and writes in that language. Effective communication requires a shared language and understanding of common concepts. It's also important to bear in mind that a receiver may interpret what the sender puts out differently than what the sender intended, and that this is less likely if the two share the same culture and language

3.3.1 Importance:

The importance of communication can't be overstated. After all, you can't have culture, society, or civilization without the ability to communicate with one another. Good communication prevents wars and misunderstandings, helps us meet our needs, and establishes rules and laws that aid in the structuring of society, helps people find and keep employment, provides information and guidance to people, and passes down cultural traditions, norms, and values.

3.4. An Arena to deals with Epistemological Issues:

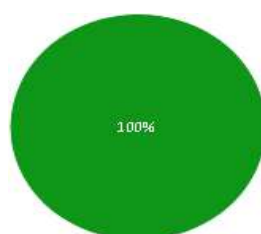
3.4.1 Pragmatics: In linguistics and related fields, pragmatics is the study of how context contributes to meaning. The field of study evaluates how human language is utilized in social interactions, as well as the relationship between the interpreter and the interpreted. Pragmatics encompasses phenomena including implicative, speech acts, relevance and conversation, as well as nonverbal communication.

3.4.2 Semantics: In semantics and pragmatics, meaning is the message conveyed by words, sentences, and symbols in a context. It is also called lexical meaning or semantic meaning. Semantics is the study of the meaning of words and sentences. It uses the relations of linguistic forms to non-linguistic concepts and mental representations to explain how sentences are understood by native speakers.

4.Data Presentation and Analysis

This point is detailing about the data collection through survey and presentation of 100 aspirants from the vicinity of Karad Taluka regarding the role of English Language Comprehension while attempting Competitive examination. The questionnaire is modeled on the Theoretical Framework .The expression on the various facets of English Language Comprehension and Communication has been very intellectually placed in the record by the 100 aspirants to define the role of English Language Comprehension and Communication.

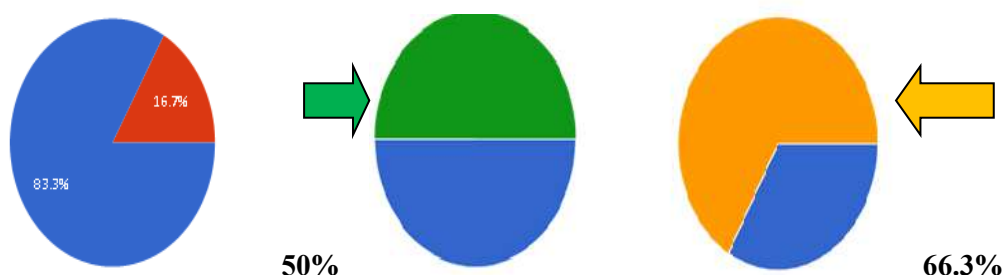
4.1 Implications on English Language:



4.1 Implications on English Language

The above diagram 4.1 presents the implication of the all students on English language Comprehension and Communication. The 100% expressions i.e 100 students reveal that English comprehension and communication useful, benefitted to develop confidence and necessary for better communication while attempting exam and interviews. According to their impression English is useful for making notes at global level through the online sources and books.

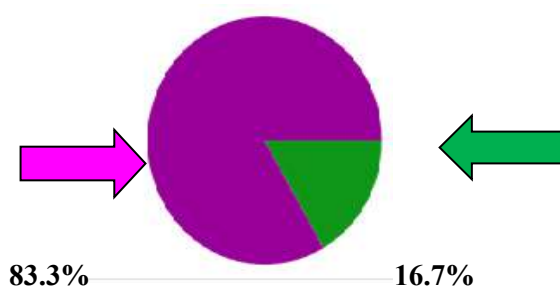
4.2 English Language Aptitude:



4.2.1, 2 & 3 English Language Comprehension and Communication Aptitudes

The above diagrams presents the expression of aspirants about their comfort in regards the English language Comprehension and English language Communication. In **4.2.1** 83.3% i.e near about 84 students are feeling comfortable in the understanding English language while 16.7% i.e 17 have problems in comprehension of English language. In **4.2.2** 50% students have shared that they are uncomfortable while communicating English language. In **4.2.3** 66.3% i.e 66 students have agreed that they commit mistakes while they read and speak English language.

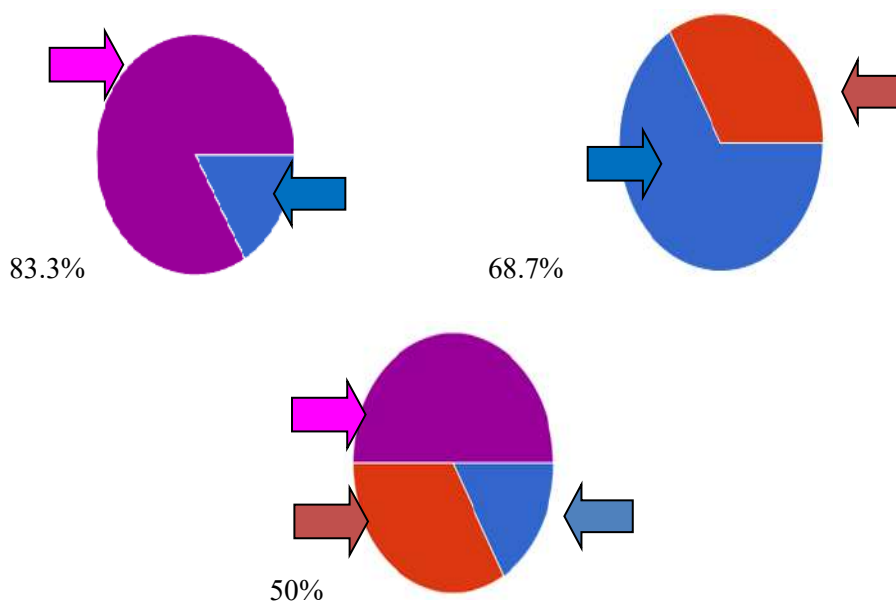
4.3. Impressions on English Language Application:



4.3. Impressions on English Language Application

In above pie diagram 4.3 students have expressed their valuable expression on the English language applications while they do study for examination. According 83.3% i.e 84students they do apply English while they reading books of social sciences and science, while tackling Math, Stats and Geometry examples, while reading and writing notes from internet and facing interviews and mock interviews. On the other side 16.7% i.e 17 have expressed miscellaneous expressions.

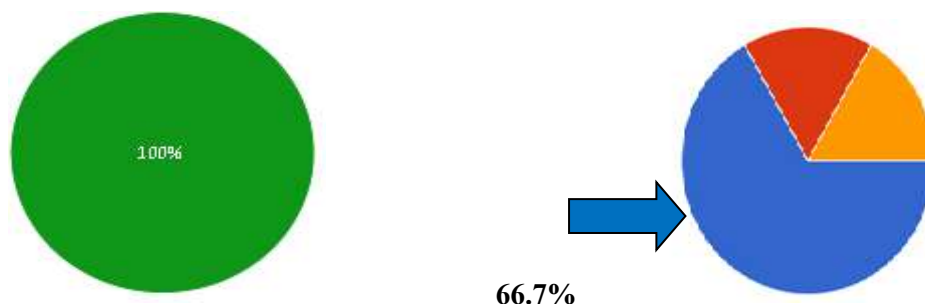
4.4 Implications on English Language Comprehensions and Communications:



4.4.1, 2 &3 Implications on English Language Comprehensions and Communications

Above 4.4.1, 2 &3 diagrams are presenting the implications and data regarding the obstacles, impression on the knowing the ways of Communication and comprehension, and the problem solving of expression on Communication and Comprehension. In 4.4.1 83.3% i.e 84 opinions are revealing that they have the obstacles of vocabulary, grammar and context, hence they are facing the problems of communication and comprehension. Besides in 4.4.2 there are 68.7% i.e 69 students knowing Summarizing, Sequencing, Problem solving, Comparing and contrasting, Drawing conclusions, Self-questioning, and Finding themain idea, important facts, and supporting details are the steps of the English comprehension while others are ignorant about it. In 4.4.3 50% i.e 50 agreed that they are aware about the steps of comprehension while others are unaware about the ways of comprehension.

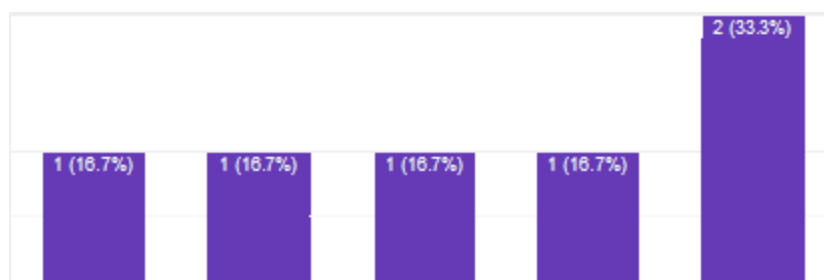
4.5 Implications on English Language Communications:



4.5.1&2 Implications on English Language Communications

In 4.5.1 100% are familiar with the nodes of fair communication such as listening, speaking, and reading and writing. They have agreed that LSRW skills are necessary to improve their communication and comprehension. In 4.5.1 almost 70% i.e 70students have exhibit their positive sign and supported to vital role of English Communication and comprehension in the success and failure in Competitive examination.

4.8 Implications on Obstacles to improve Communication and Comprehension:



4.8 Obstacles to improve Communication and Comprehension

In above bar diagram the highest 34 % i.e 34 hindrances have recorded in regards the problem of vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. While the other expression are concerned with the too much focus on social sciences study, lack of proper guidance of English, and English as a subsidiary etc. :

The detailing the data collection of 100 aspirants from the vicinity of Karad Taluka regarding the role of English Language Comprehension while facing Competitive examination is very significant. The above data reveals the various valuable expressions of aspirants of MPSC, UPSC and IBPS students regarding their comfort zone and obstacles while facing English Language.

5. Conclusion

The meaningful analy

tical study in earlier expressions gives enough data for the researcher to make some findings and suggestions in concern with defining the role of English language comprehension and communication while facing Competitive examination. The close reading and analysis of primary and secondary resources make it clear that English has vital position in to face any competitive examinations. The researcher makes some findings and suggestions these are:

- a) There are 100% expressions valued the importance of English language comprehension and communication while facing competitive examination.
- b) It is fact that aspirants shared that they need to comprehends and do communication in English while doing the study of social sciences, math, geometry, science and current affairs at the glocal level via internet.
- c) The primary and basic problems in learning and communicating are concerned with the grammar, vocabulary, and speech act and listening.
- d) The negligence towards comprehension and communication is due to too much scope given to the study of without understanding and sharing idea clearly.
- e) All the aspirants agreed that listening; speaking, and reading and writing can develop their comprehension and Communication of language.
- f) It is cleared by all expression that to enhance the overall knowledge and success it is utmost need to develop skills of language communication and comprehension.
- g) The English language comprehension and communication builds the confidence amongst the students to get success in exam.
- h) It is fact that role of English language comprehension and communication is complex, critical and useful in facing competitive examination.
- i) Thus hypothesis has been tested at various stages for validity, and has been proved true in the present study.

Suggestions:

- a) It is needed to develop skills of English language communication and comprehension to achieve success in while facing competitive examination.
- b) Students may work on basic skills of language such as listening, reading, writing and speaking.
- c) Students may develop linguistic competence and literary competence i.e. the knowledge of syntactic, pragmatic and semantic.
- d) It is necessary to develop pragmatic and semantic approaches of the linguistic systematically to learn communicative and comprehensive grammar in English.
- e) Syllabi of universalities and colleges may work to develop comprehension and communication skills theoretically and practically.
- f) Students may recognize the value and difference of English language to fetch success in their examination.

Further Research:

Study may give useful scope for the further research. Research students can work on How to mean language? and How to speak language? by testing the aptitude of aspirants. Study also gives scope to soft skills and personality development, communicative and comprehensive grammar of English linguistic, multidisciplinary and Trance disciplinary approaches.

Bibliography

1. Abraham, M.H. and Geoffrey Harphan. "The Glossary Literary Terms." Cengage Learning India, 2005.
2. Chatterjee, Santadip. *Continuous Professional Development; A Hefty Apparatus for Teaching English for Competitive Examinations*, International Journal of English Learning & Teaching Skills, Volume 3, Number 4, July 2021, pp. 2629-2640(12)
3. *Difficulties in Teaching English for Specific Purposes: Empirical Study at Vietnam Universities*, *Higher Education Studies*, v6 n2 2016, p154-161 .
4. Ganguli, A. *English Communication*, SBPD Publication Agra, 2018.
5. Leech, G. and Fan Suaruk. *A Communicative Grammar of English*, Longman, 2nd edition, 2000.
6. *Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, 1992.

7. Pawar, A. (2017). *Art of Listening in Effective Business Communication*. International Journal of Multifaceted and Multilingual Studies, IV(XII), 267–269.
8. *Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies*, Saddleback Educational Publishing House, 2002.
9. Riemer, Marc J. *Communication Skills for the 21st Century Engineer UNESCO International Centre for Engineering Education (UICEE) Faculty of Engineering*, Monash University, Clayton, Melbourne, VIC 3800, Australia.
10. Owen, Hargie. *The Handbook of Communication Skills*, Routledge, London, 2006
11. Chatterjee, Santadip. *Continuous Professional Development; A Hefty Apparatus for Teaching English for Competitive Examinations*, International Journal of English Learning & Teaching Skills, Volume 3, Number 4, July 2021, pp. 2629-2640(12)
12. *Higher Education Studies*, v6 n2 p154-161 2016 for *Difficulties in Teaching English for Specific Purposes: Empirical Study at Vietnam Universities*
13. Marc J. Riemer *Communication Skills for the 21st Century Engineer, UNESCO International Centre for Engineering Education (UICEE) Faculty of Engineering*, Monash University, Clayton, Melbourne, VIC 3800, Australia

Quality-deficiency in English as Second Language Pedagogy of West Bengal School Boards

Dr. Ghazala Nehal

Assistant Professor, Uluberia College, University of Calcutta

Email: khwaish13@gmail.com,

Abstract: *Despite its colonial autocracy, post-colonial global significance of English as second language (ESL) and its emphasis in National Policies cannot be missed. Its “cultural proximity and lexical flexibility” has shifted its “lingua-cultural identity”. Being a foreign language of pre-modern world to being the Elf (English as lingua franca) of the post-modern world, its pedagogical significance in schools with regional languages as Medium of Instruction (MoI) is axiomatic. However, literature review would show a significant lack of constructive learning outcomes in ESL pedagogy of West Bengal School Boards; they show inadequacy even in Basic English use. Having said that, Bengali being Bengal’s native tongue, it would be too overreaching to expect its teachers to facilitate ESL learning as effectively as their Western counterparts. Would that mean that, without foreign roots, students of regional schools cannot learn a foreign tongue? On the contrary, multilingualism - a growing trend for globalization, and English being the ‘lingua franca’, absolutely warrant ESL learning with at least baseline accuracy. However, despite its global appeal, ESL pedagogy experiences quality-deficiency for reasons explored thorough a qualitative analysis of interview, questionnaire and class observation data. Findings showed that quality-deficiency was due to flawed grammar teaching, perfunctory lesson plans, no formative evaluation, inapplicability of teacher training experiences, dissociative rule-learning, unmet learning objectives and socio-economic & psychological défis.*

Keywords: *English as Second Language, language pedagogy, quality-deficiency, West Bengal School Boards, qualitative study.*

Introduction :

12 long years of school study and yet ESL (English as Second Language) learning outputs of West Bengal Boards for Secondary and Higher Secondary Education show accute inaccuracy, either due to teacher-centricity (Samanta, 2016), low motivation (Lakshmi, 2020) or rote learning of rules (Rani, 2019). Even better performing schools are seen to excel mostly in their English writing skill; English speaking skill of Bengali medium students is, essentially, inadequate (Nehal & Halder, 2023). However, Bengali being West Bengal’s native tongue, it would be too overreaching to expect school stakeholders to facilitate English as effectively as their Western counterparts. Neither Bengali teachers nor Bengali students should be expected to teach or learn ESL as those having to study or deliver it as their First Language. It does not imply that, without the native roots, one cannot learn a foreign tongue. Multilingualism, a pre-requisite for globalisation, and English being the ‘lingua franca’ of our times, learning the language with baseline accuracy is indispensable. Despite its global appeal, quality of ESL learning in State Board Schools is deficient for reasons explored thorough a qualitative study into their pedagogical setup and issues.

Operational Definition

The term ‘Quality-deficiency’ in the topic has been viewed as deficiency in (1) teachers’ teaching and (2) students’ communication quality of English as second language (ESL) in Bengali medium schools under West Bengal (WB) Boards for Secondary and Higher Secondary Education.

1. Teachers' teaching quality refers to his/her ability to develop the four English language skills in – listening & reading skills for comprehension ; speaking & writing skills for view-sharing.
2. Students' communication refers to their ability to use the skills for English communication.

Research Question

1. Why are ESL teaching methods in WB School Boards not effective enough to develop language skills?
2. Although Bengali Medium students learn English from Classes I – XII, why are their communication skills still inadequate?

Research Objectives

1. To analyze quality-deficiency in ESL teaching methods in schools under WB School Boards.
2. To analyze quality-deficiency in ESL communication among students from WB School Boards.

Research Design

The present study, with a phenomenological study design, has been qualitatively explored through primary data collection and subsequent coding for data analysis; followed with a detailed discussion on the findings, mostly, with the primary effort to answer the research question.

1. Data Collection

Primary data was collected from Bengali Medium English language teachers and students. 10 Bengali Medium Govt.-aided schools under West Bengal School Boards, randomly selected from three districts of West Bengal (Howrah, Murshidabad & Burdawan) were visited. 2 English language teachers from each school were interviewed. 50 students from each school were given the researcher-made & standardized questionnaire. 20 randomly selected classes were observed.

2. Data Analysis

Descriptive & *NVivo* codes were used to code & compare the interview data and open-ended student responses. The Bengali transcripts required English translation prior to coding. Likert's 5 pt. scale was used to score the close-ended student responses. Codes were, next, arranged into categories and sub-categories and reinforced with scores and secondary data to prepare the research answer.

3. Data Interpretation & Presentation

For qualitative interpretation of data, findings have been presented as 'categories' and "sub-categories" which are individual summation of 1st cycle like/similar codes and 2nd cycle pattern codes. Categories and sub-categories help "to develop a coherent meta synthesis of the data corpus" (Saldana, 2013). The 'grouping' of initial like/similar codes into sub-categories help the researcher to locate the 'pattern' immersing from the vast array of code-salad (Saldana, 2014).

In the present study, under the sub-heading "Key Assertions", the research objectives were presented as categories. As findings under each category, 1st cycle *NVivo* & *descriptive* codes were rearranged into 2nd cycle sub-categories through *pattern coding*. Under "Research Answer", findings under each category and sub-category were discussed and reinforced with secondary data. The study ends with mention of its limitations and an appropriate conclusion.

Key Assertions

Category 1 – *Quality-deficiency in ESL Teaching Methods*

In the present study, quality-deficiency in English as second language (ESL) teaching methods refers to the Bengali medium English language teachers' incapacity to develop the four English language skills in – listening & reading skills for comprehension, speaking & writing skills for view-sharing. The causes have been explored under sub-categories.

Sub-Categories:

a) Flawed Grammar Teaching

Teachers' grammar teaching was sub-categorized as 'flawed' because class observation showed that teachers used "simple & short" sentences to explain rules. Also, because teachers taught English grammar rules through Bengali counterparts; as a result, although the rules helped students to "Do as Directed" grammar exercises, they did not quite develop any of their language skills.

b) Perfunctory Lesson Plans

Teachers' lesson plans were sub-categorized as 'perfunctory' because, as class observation showed, all their plans were practically the same with text reading and Bengali translations as their main components.

c) Absence of Formative Evaluation

Practice of Formative Evaluation was sub-categorized as being 'absent' because evaluation was mostly summative. Interview data showed that Unit Tests at the end of three months without the pass/fail criterion was their evaluative trend. Class tests, Oral tests were not practiced.

d) Inapplicability of In-service Training Experience

In-service training experience was 'inapplicable' because, interview data showed how the training contents being beyond Bengali Medium students' potentials and teachers' poor motivation towards knowledge implementation.

e) Pedagogical Challenges

Interview and Questionnaire data revealed pedagogical issues like students being First Generation learners, reticence due to adolescence, growing dependency on tuitions, poor class attendance, predominance of Bengali language during curriculum transaction and co-curricular activities.

Category 2 - *Quality-deficiency in students' ESL Communication*

In the present study, quality-deficiency in English as second language (ESL) communication refers to the Bengali medium students' incapacity to use the four language skills for Basic English communication. The causes have been explored under the following sub-categories.

Sub-Categories:

a) Dissociative Grammar Learning

Students' grammar learning was sub-categorized as 'dissociative' because of their disconnected rule application in grammar exercises. Class observation showed how they were unable to comprehend or create anything in English. The rules were learnt and yet students experienced cognitive dissociation from the language itself.

b) Unmet Learning Objectives

Students' learning objectives was sub-categorized as 'unmet'. Questionnaire data showed how, despite having studied grammar rules, students were unable to use English in their daily lives. They could not enjoy information sources, reading material or entertainment media in English.

c) Fear of English

Students' attitude towards English has been described as involving 'fear' because of inadequate linguistic familiarity due to poor exposure.

d) Learning Challenges

As found through teacher-interview and student-questionnaire, students faced learning challenges like poverty, forced child labor, peer pressure, and absent parents.

Discussion

Despite its colonial autocracy, post-colonial global significance of English language and its repeated emphasis in National Policies cannot be missed. Due to its “cultural proximity and lexical flexibility” (Nehal & Halder, 2023), its “lingua-cultural identity” has shifted from being a Foreign Language to being the *lingua franca* of all Postmodern societies. Now, being the *Elf* (*English as lingua franca*) of the global world, it would, hence, be axiomatic to assert the significance of English language pedagogy in schools with regional languages as their Medium of Instruction (MoI). National Education Policies of India have, thus, made English language learning a compulsory discipline in school curriculum and have organized pre- & in-service training programs for skill development in English as Second Language (ESL) pedagogy. Despite the efforts, ESL pedagogy in West Bengal School Boards experiences a significant lack of constructive learning outcomes. The following discourse discusses causes for the quality-deficiency and how it has affected students’ communication skills:

Formulaic rule-delivery, hence dissociative learning

Primary data analysis showed that, in ESL grammar teaching methods, teachers followed “sentence-level” instead of “discourse-level” rule practice. The preference is ‘flawed’ because, unlike the latter’s “communicative context... (e.g., a conversation, an email message... a short story or novel, etc.)” for rule actualization, the former’s “context-free, sentence-level phenomena” instills formulaic learning (Celce-Murcia, 2016). Formulaic learning causes Schmidt’s “Consciousness – as – Noticing” [a “subjective awareness of... linguistic features that occurs in the input that the learner is exposed to”] and, consequently, “Consciousness – as – Understanding” [the “awareness of an underlying grammatical rule or generalization”] to be weakly attained (Ellis, 2016). Without the *two Consciousness*, rule-learning is ‘dissociative’ - a clinical term for a “dissociative disorder that consists of recurrent feelings of being detached from ones’ body or mental process.” (Spiegel, 2019). The appropriation denotes students’ learning process as being ‘detached’ from their ‘Consciousness’. The dissociation, reinforced with injudicious “code-switching” with English rules being explained through Bengali counterparts, debilitates “Consciousness – as – Control”, described as learners’ “intentional use of their explicit knowledge”. Without the *three Consciousness*, students, although are able to “do as directed” grammar exercises, they do not quite develop their productive language skills.

Perfunctory lesson plans, hence unmet learning objectives

Class observation showed teachers’ incapacity to differentiate ESL as a “skill-based subject” (Dinda, 2014) hindered attainment of ESL learning objectives. It was apparent in their ‘perfunctory’ lesson plans, designed to treat prescribed prose/poems as ‘contents’ instead of means to an end. Their “content-based” lesson plans did not allow constructive learning. Constructive approaches would require teachers to include ESL skill development as their instructional objective as well as to have creative and diverse lesson plans in accordance to the given literary genre. Without a skill-based pedagogical approach, code-switching and code-mixing became their techniques for futile content-delivery; students learnt and exams conducted, yet the prescribed learning outcomes were ‘unmet’. With content-based teaching, the emphasis was, now, more on content delivery, mostly for syllabus completion. Students, hence, attended compulsory ESL classes for 12 long years and yet could not enjoy information sources, reading material or entertainment media in English. Their receptive language skills were just as weak as their productive skills.

Absence of language proficiency due to score-based evaluation

Exclusive emphasis on scores through quarterly unit tests of summative nature defeats the very purpose of including English as second language in school curriculum. Besides, the evaluation process focusses more on reading & writing skills than on listening & speaking skills. NCERT, 2006 observes how “learners participate in evaluation with more comfort when the experience is not always a failure”. Without the gradational growth in LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing) skills, students’ evaluative experience gets difficult, poor scores soon demotivates ESL learning. There is, thus, a need to shift emphasis from scores to skills, from achievement to language proficiency. “With this in view, NCERT 2017 came up with the concepts of *Assessment for learning* which adopts multiple pedagogical processes to create conducive learning environment, *Assessment of learning* where learners’ learning levels i.e., what the learner at a particular class or stage know and can do, is assessed; and *Assessment as learning* which is a kind of self-assessment where scaffolding and involving students in developing rubrics, portfolio and anecdotes play very important roles...Such comprehensive and continuous assessments are feasible only when teaching, learning and evaluation are considered as one.” (Nehal & Halder, 2023). Easier said than done, the actualization of the shifting paradigms is yet to be achieved.

Anglophobia and inapplicability of new knowledge

‘Anglophobia’ (the fear of foreign language, especially of colonizers), reinforced through formulaic rule-learning, perfunctory lesson plans, predominance of regional language and use of score-based evaluation system, is yet another cause for quality-deficiency in students’ communication skills. Their overwhelming indifference towards English language, subsequently, makes it impossible for teachers to implement new knowledge acquired during in-service/pre-service training programs. NCFTE (National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education), 2009 had asked for training programs to professionally advance teachers in tech-oriented, skill-based pedagogy. “However, the reality is far from this.” (Kidwai, *et. al.* 2013). Despite the new knowledge at hand, they are forced to go back to their old methods of content delivery.

Socio-economic & psychological défis causing pedagogical défis

Inadequate teacher motivation or pedagogical skills are not always responsible for poor performance. These schools do have teachers with advanced skills who fail just as miserably as their pedagogically weaker counterparts. Causes for quality-deficiency in teaching method is, thus, not always integral to the method itself. There are external factors at play. Interview and questionnaire data showed socio, economic and psychological défis factoring into teachers’ teaching method. Poor authority, inadequate rule implementation and other stakeholders unaccountability often make it impossible for teachers to combat issues of First Generation learners, growing dependency on tuitions, poor class attendance, students’ reticence due to adolescence, predominance of regional language in curricular & co-curricular transactions. A similar défis of external nature – external to the learning process, is also to be found among learners, *viz.* poverty, forced child labor, peer pressure, and absent parents.

Study Limitations

- a) All districts of West Bengal were not included.
- b) Other MoIs, *viz.* Urdu Medium and Nepali Medium schools of West Bengal were not included.

Conclusion

The present qualitative study has, thus, delved deep into the causes for quality-deficiency in ESL pedagogy in West Bengal School Boards. Primary data, through interview, questionnaire and class observation of teachers and students randomly selected from Bengali Medium State-aided schools of Howrah, Murshidabad & Burdawan districts of West Bengal, were employed for data analysis. Findings showed that the quality-deficiency was due to internal & external factors – internal & external to the teaching-learning process. Flawed grammar teaching, dissociative learning, perfunctory lesson plans,

unmet learning objectives, score-based evaluation, anglophobia, inapplicability of new knowledge, socio-economic & psychological challenges have caused the pedagogical défis.

REFERENCES

1. Celce-Murcia, M. (2016). *The Importance of the Discourse Level*. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Teaching English Grammar to Speakers of Other Languages* (pp. 4-5). New York: Routledge.
2. Dinda, M. Dr. (2014). *Teaching of English*. Rita Publications. Nabalok Press. Kolkata.
3. Ellis, R. (2016). *Grammar Teaching as Consciousness Raising*. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Teaching English Grammar to Speakers of Other Languages*. New York: Routledge.
4. Kidwai, H., Burnette, D., Rao, S., Nath, S. & Bajaj, M. (2013). *In-service teacher training for public primary schools in rural India findings from district Morigaon (Assam) and district Medak (Andhra Pradesh)*. Retrieved from <https://www.research.gate.net/publication/257890700>
5. Lakshmi, M. V. (2017). Teaching lexis to young learners through comics: Managing resources. Vol 33. Issue 3: sodhganga@INFLIBNET <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/7783>
6. Nehal, G. & Halder, K. Md. (2nd February, 2023). *English as Second language Evaluation Methods in Bengali Medium Schools*. International Journal of Research Culture Society. Monthly Peer-Reviewed, Referred, Indexed Journal. ISSN: 2456-6683. Vol. 7. Issue 2.
7. Nehal, G. & Halder, K. Md. (10th June, 2023). *Linguistic Evolution – from Cave drawings to Lingua Franca status quo of English Language*. International Journal of Research Culture Society. Peer-Reviewed, Referred, Indexed Journal. ISSN: 2456-6683. Vol. 7. Issue 6.
8. Rani, N. (2019) *Techniques in English Teaching as A Second Language: A Comparative Study of Government and Private School of Sirsa District in Haryana State of India*. sodhganga@INFLIBNET
9. Samanta, S. (2016). *Teaching of English Grammar in India–Are We Sailing in the Same Boat? Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow* Volume 16: 5 May 2016 ISSN 1930-2940, 265.
10. Spiegel, D. (2019, March). *Depersonalization/Derealization Disorder*. MSD Manual Professional Version. Retrieved from <https://www.msmanuals.com/professional/psychiatric-disorders/dissociativedisorders/depersonalization-derealization-disorder>

Integrating Critical Theory in English Literature Teaching Modules in Maharashtra: A Student-Centered Approach

¹Sehnaz Khushrow Irani, ²Dr. Rani Sarode

¹Research Scholar, Dept. of English and Languages, Sandip University, Nashik.

²Associate Professor, Dept. of English and Languages, Sandip University, Nashik.

¹ Email - camsehanz@gmail.com, ² Email - drranisarode@gmail.com

Abstract: *This study examines the integration of critical theory into English literature teaching modules in Maharashtra, with a focus on student-centered methodologies. Maharashtra's multilingual and culturally rich milieu underscores the need for a curriculum that transcends traditional, canonized English texts, actively incorporating postcolonial, feminist, and cultural theoretical perspectives. This paper emphasizes the use of regional and global narratives, advocating for Marathi literature and bilingual pedagogies to enhance students' comprehension and engagement with English texts. Grounded in an extensive review of literature and a critical analysis of pedagogical frameworks, this study aligns with the Maharashtra State Curriculum Framework (MSCERT, 2017), fostering analytical thinking, cultural pride, and global citizenship. By integrating local cultural dynamics with critical theory and student-centered teaching, this work contributes to inclusive and adaptable literature pedagogy in India.*

Keywords: *critical theory, English literature teaching, Maharashtra, student-centered pedagogy, Marathi literature, postcolonialism, bilingual education, feminist literary criticism, curriculum development*

INTRODUCTION:

Maharashtra's education system, shaped by reformist leaders like Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, and Savitribai Phule, has long emphasized equity and inclusion (Deshpande & Dhanagare, 2016). Yet, the teaching of English literature often remains confined to canonical texts that lack relevance to students' lived experiences. Integrating critical theory—including postcolonial, feminist, and cultural perspectives—can address this gap, enriching literary education by reflecting Maharashtra's linguistic and cultural diversity. This paper explores designing teaching modules that are rooted in student-centered learning and tailored to Maharashtra's multicultural environment. The focus lies on contextualizing English literature within local discourses, drawing from Marathi literature, themes, and bilingual pedagogies. Beginning with a review of literature, this study situates itself within the broader discourse of curriculum design, regional literary traditions, and cross-cultural pedagogy.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The Evolving Nature of Literature Pedagogy

Traditional approaches to literature pedagogy have gradually given way to methodologies emphasizing critical theory. Tyson (2014) argues that frameworks such as postcolonialism, feminism, and Marxism enable students to engage with literature as a social and cultural artifact, fostering analytical thinking and global awareness. However, their effective classroom integration remains challenging, especially in linguistically diverse regions like Maharashtra. Kumaravadivelu's (2006) concept of "post-method pedagogy" advocates for context-sensitive strategies that prioritize students' cultural and linguistic identities.

Postcolonial Studies and Regional Literature Integration:

Postcolonial scholars, including Viswanathan (1989) and Dharwadker (1995), emphasize the decolonization of literary curricula. These perspectives highlight the importance of regional narratives in challenging Eurocentric ideologies embedded in traditional English literature courses. Incorporating Marathi texts alongside English literature enables students to interrogate themes like identity, resistance, and power structures, fostering deeper connections between local and global narratives.

Student-Centered Learning in Multicultural Contexts:

Showalter (2003) advocates for methodologies like "literary re-creation," where students reinterpret literary works to reflect their cultural contexts. Similarly, Naik (1995) underscores the value of comparative analyses between regional and English literature, fostering cultural resonance. The MSCERT (2017) framework supports such approaches, emphasizing collaboration, discussion, and research to deepen students' literary engagement.

THE ROLE OF CRITICAL THEORY IN ENGLISH LITERATURE MODULES:

Integrating critical theory into teaching modules equips students with tools to analyze literature through diverse lenses, enhancing their understanding of complex themes. For instance, teaching Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* alongside Baburao Bagul's *Jevha Mi Jaat Chorli Hoti* enables students to examine caste oppression within postcolonial and Dalit frameworks (Zelliot, 2010). Similarly, analyzing Vijay Tendulkar's *Sakharam Binder* through feminist theories reveals insights into patriarchy and gender dynamics in urbanizing societies (Deshpande, 2013).

STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING IN THE MAHARASHTRIAN CONTEXT:

Comparative Analysis and Bilingual Pedagogy

Incorporating Marathi literature within English studies fosters cross-cultural dialogue. For example, while teaching T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, educators can draw parallels with B.S. Mardhekar's modernist poetry, allowing students to explore universal themes through regional lenses. Bilingual approaches further enhance comprehension, bridging linguistic gaps and promoting inclusivity (Apte, 2018).

Creative Assignments and Re-creation

Creative assignments encourage deeper engagement with texts. Students might reimagine scenes from Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* in a Maharashtrian context, exploring regional issues like caste or rural-urban dynamics. This aligns with Showalter's (2003) call for "literary re-creation," enabling students to personalize and internalize literary concepts.

Challenges and Pedagogical Solutions

Implementing critical theory in diverse classrooms presents challenges, including students' varying linguistic competencies and familiarity with theoretical concepts. Bilingual teaching strategies, scaffolded assignments, and context-specific examples can address these issues (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Gradual introductions to complex theories, using relatable regional texts, build students' confidence and analytical skills.

CONCLUSION:

Integrating critical theory with student-centered pedagogies offers a transformative approach to teaching English literature in Maharashtra. By contextualizing global narratives within regional cultural discourses, this framework fosters analytical thinking, cultural pride, and global citizenship. The proposed model not only enriches students' literary education but also contributes to the broader discourse on inclusive and adaptive pedagogy in India.

REFERENCES:

1. Apte, V. (2018). *Teaching English through the Medium of Marathi: Bridging Cultural Gaps in Literary Studies*. Pune University Press.

2. Deshpande, S. (2013). *Indian Feminist Literary Criticism: Theory, Practice, Politics*. Orient Blackswan.
3. Deshpande, S., & Dhanagare, D. N. (2016). *Phule, Ambedkar, and the Making of Modern India*. Sage Publications.
4. Dharwadker, A. (1995). *Theatres of Independence: Drama, Theory, and Urban Performance in India Since 1947*. University of Iowa Press.
5. Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding Language Teaching: From Method to Postmethod*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
6. Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production & Curriculum Research. (2017). *Maharashtra State Curriculum Framework 2017*. MSCERT.
7. Naik, M. K. (1995). *A History of Indian English Literature*. Sahitya Akademi.
8. Satchidanandan, K. (2006). *Indian Literature: Positions and Propositions*. Sahitya Akademi.
9. Showalter, E. (2003). *Teaching Literature*. Blackwell Publishing.
10. Tyson, L. (2014). *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
11. Viswanathan, G. (1989). *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. Oxford University Press.
12. Zelliott, E. (2010). *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*. Manohar Publishers.

Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace*: Colonial Shadows and Post-colonial Realities

Santosh Kumar Sahu

Research Scholar, Department of English
MATS University, Pandri Raipur (C.G)
Email ID: ssahu3888@gmail.com

Abstract: Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* is a sweeping historical novel that intricately weaves together the lives of individuals across generations, nations, and cultures. Published in 2000, the novel revolves around the impact of colonialism on personal and collective identities, highlighting themes of displacement, migration, and the intergenerational consequences of historical events. The present paper is an attempt to analyse *The Glass Palace* through the systematic investigation of postcolonial discourse and to explore the profound changes brought in the characters by imperialism, focusing on how colonialism reshaped societies, economies, and relationships across Burma, India, and Malaya. From the royal family's exile to Rajkumar's migrations, the story examines the pain of uprooting and the search for belonging. It delves into how historical events influence familial bonds and generational shifts. The characters grapple with questions of identity in a world reshaped by imperialism and independence movements. Through the story of Rajkumar, Dolly, and their descendants it can be seen how power dynamics, cultural transformations, and the quest for belonging play out against the larger canvas of historical upheaval, such as the fall of the Burmese monarchy, the spread of the British Empire, and the World Wars. As the narrative moves through key historical moments, including the rise of nationalist movements, Ghosh portrays the resilience of individuals and families amid the disintegration of traditional structures.

Keywords: Post-colonialism, Historical, Hegemony, Imperialism, Memory, Migration.

INTRODUCTION:

Amitav Ghosh is an Indian English writer born on 11 July, 1956 in Calcutta. Having been experienced the plight of nation and culture in the colonial period led him to write fiction which is a composite of both history and fiction. He is best known as a postcolonial writer in the field of Indian English literature. The paper explores postcolonial effects on the lives of the people from different ethnicity, culture and nation, and what extent these affected coloniser's lives, specifically in Burma and India, in the novel.

Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Glass Palace* (2000) is a fiction based on the history of Burma and India that captures the time of British invasion of Burma in 1885 through the Second World War and until 1957. The novel parleys about three families, namely the royal family of Burma, a family of Rajkumar Raha and the family of Saya John, starting with the British invasion over Burma in 1885. The royal family includes The baw king and queen Supayalat living with their daughters in the grand palace named The Glass Palace. Gradually, the royal family is expatriated after being defeated by the British army. An eleven year old Indian boy Rajkumar was compelled to draw his livelihood in Burma, having lost his family in the plague. He starts working with Ma Cho at a stall then doing his own business with Saya John.

Meantime in India the royal family is proffered temporary shelter at Madras first and then to a permanent establishment in Ratnagiri in Goa, where other characters are introduced, such as Collector and his wife, Uma. Having established the teak business in Burma, he comes to India to find Dolly, one of the attendants of the queen in the royal family. He weds her and goes back to his mentor Saya John in Burma. Again with his help, he does his business in Malaka. Eventually the Second World War and Japanese attack ruined his business and his family in Burma that compelled him to live in India. This critical approach not only yields light on inferences British imperialism had created but also examined political, psychological and economic aspects of colonisation on the lives of native people.

Post-colonial Realities

"We use the term 'postcolonial, however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day". Postcolonialism is not only a period in history but also an approach to critically investigate the impressions of colonisation on the native ones. Other postcolonial writers started writing about the colonial past and unveiled the hidden realities related to that bitter exploitation. Not only have they talked about the colonial experience but also the politics that shape the whole era. In literature, this approach of reading and interpreting postcolonial text taking into consideration the effects that the colonial period had on the natives of the Middle East, Africa and Asia mostly. Postcolonialism is an approach relating to the reading text of a particular writer who once colonised or lived in the country once a colony. The countries of Africa, Asia, Canada, Australia, and the Caribbean were once the colony. India was also a colony of English. In this approach of probing particular text, different theorists have given different theories to analyse any postcolonial work.

British Imperialism and Hegemony

In a veritable sense, the term 'Hegemony' is akin to dominance and power. British imperialist strived to occupy any less powerful country by manipulating their culture, mind and economic resources through hegemony. They recognise uncivilised ones as the white man's burden. Antonio Gramsci popularised the term hegemony; an Italian Marxist and politician defines hegemony as 'coloniser or ruler of particular colony or country try to convince colonised people by saying their interest is the interest of all through not only grabbing media and education but also economic power. British first occupied Burma by manipulating the Burmese army.

The imperial fleet marched towards the border on 14 November 1885. Just after two days, after hours of shelling, British soldiers conquered the Burmese outposts of Nyaungbinmaw and Singbaungwe. The very next day, at Minhla, the fleet came under heavy fire. The garrison at Minhla was small in size, but it resisted with unexpected tenacity ... the legion of thousand soldiers in the British invasion force and consists of two-thirds Indian sepoy. (*The Glass Palace* 25-26)

After occupying the Glass Palace, where the Konbaung dynasty's last king lived and ruled Burma and queen Supayalat, the British exiled the royal family in India. Gradually, they changed everything in the palace. Saya John describes the aftermath of British imperialism by saying, "The British occupation had changed everything: Burma had integrated into Empire, forcibly converted into a province of British India" (66). Not only this, but also he mentions when he and Rajkumar were talking about the soldiers who occupied the palace. Saya John shares witnessed account of his real experience in Singapore. He says,

In Singapore, I worked for a time as a hospital orderly. The patients were mainly sepoy like these- Indians, back from fighting wars for their English. And remember the smell of gangrenous bandages on amputated limbs, the nighttime screams of twenty-year-old boys sitting upright in their beds. They include peasants, those men, from small countryside villages: their clothes and turbans still smelt of wood smoke and dung fires. (*The Glass Palace* 29)

Diaspora and Displacement

One of the consequences of British colonisation that staggered the faith of the native ones in the course of imperialism in India is that diaspora. The migration of native people from one place to another forcefully or voluntarily shows the cruelty of imperialism. Edward Said rightly remarked that "Our Age with its modern warfare, imperialism and the quasitheological ambition of totalitarian rulers is indeed the age of the refugees, the displaced person, mass migration" (175). Diaspora- in postcolonial studies means being forcefully or voluntarily exiled from their native place and adapting to another place, community, culture, and language. The novel also showcases the displacement of the royal family and their exile from their native place Mandalay. Rajkumar reveals to Dolly about his forced exile from Burma after the Japanese's attack. He says,

- It's disappointing to leave Burma as the boys have grown up here; unaware about any other place. When I first came to Mandalay, the Nakhodka of my boat said: This is a golden land—no one ever starves here. That proved accurate, and despite everything that's happened recently, I don't think I could ever love another place in the same way. *The Glass Palace* (309-310)

Not only British forced poor people to leave their homeland, but also, our people like Rajkumar used them as a tool for his advantage, compelling them to work in teak and timber wood production. This manpower voluntarily leaves their native place for the sake of livelihood. This sense of displacement also can be seen when the royal family was on the way to a new settlement in India.

There was a street in Rangoon named Mughal Street. Many Indians lived there: he had claimed that the residents were more Indians than Burmese in entire Rangoon. The British brought them there, to work in the jetties and other mills, for rickshaws and empty and clean the latrines. As they couldn't find locale for such jobs and the question is, why would the Burmese do that kind of work? *The Glass Palace* (49)

Conclusion

To sum up, after a close reading and closely analysing the novel throws light on theories mentioned above given by various postcolonial theorists that not only British imperialism but the elite class of the Indian origin exploited their people for their own sake of money-making through hegemony, dominance, displacing them from their native land to jungle in Burma. Rajkumar and Saya John benefited through the policies and wood business; therefore, they could not resist, but in the end, Rajkumar was too compelled to live in India after losing his son Neel in the Japanese attack. The defeat of the Burmese army in the war against the British army led the royal family to be exiled and sent to Ratnagiri as their permanent settlement, which shows a cruel act of imperialism. Later, the economic ruins of India and Burma led to even worst conditions. And of course the Second World War and the hegemony of the British put Indian soldiers in a dilemma. Transportation of the lower class for the sake of their advantage by British and people like Rajkumar concludes the notion of hegemony. Rajkumar, who is an Indian by origin, uses Indian manpower for his fortunes. This act of his put him next to the British, who did the same thing. Thus, this novel proves to be an excellent work of postcolonial literature.

References :

1. Ghosh, Amitav. *The Glass Palace*. Noida: Harper Collins, 2017.
2. Loomba, Ania. *Colonialism /Postcolonialism*. New York: Routledge, 2015.
3. Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. United Kingdom: Penguin, 2003.
4. Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back*. London: Routledge, 1989.
5. Williams, Patrick and Laura Chrisman. *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Mulk Raj Anand: A Pioneer of Indo-Anglian Literature.

Thakur Asha Rani

English Professor, Badruka College, Kachiguda, Hyderabad.

Email - asharanithakur79@gmail.com

Abstract: *Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) stands as a seminal figure in the realm of Indo-Anglian literature. He served as a reformer and engaged actively in political activism. He exhibited a profound concern for the impoverished individuals within Indian society. He addressed the socio-political and cultural challenges faced by Indian society, particularly those that precipitated turmoil during the period of Indian Independence. He sought to achieve a significant transformation within Indian society. The Indian populace encountered numerous obstacles concerning the rigorous norms established by their traditional society. Detrimental practices such as the caste system, gender inequality, the subjugation of women, sati, child marriage, and child labour represent significant obstacles to the advancement of individuals and the broader Indian society. He discerned the societal issues and articulated them in his literary works. His objective was to eliminate the societal ills through the medium of his literary works. His works articulate the experiences of the oppressed, particularly focusing on the marginalized segments of society, including the Dalits. The literary works Untouchable and Coolie serve as significant exemplars that illuminate the societal norms experienced by the oppressed Indians. Mulk Raj exemplified a disposition characterized by progressive ideologies. The individual espoused the principles of unity and equality. Similar to Gandhi, he held a conviction in the principle of non-violence. The themes presented are notably compelling, as they reflect the stark realities of life in India. He employed a critical lens to thoroughly examine the afflictions experienced by the marginalized sections. He exemplified the principles of humanism. He was a remarkable visionary dedicated to emancipating Indian society from the constraints of socio-political and economic prejudices. His aspiration was to elevate the populace through the promotion of literacy and awareness, which informed the structure and content of his writings. The characterization presented is exemplary, as it embodies a profound sense of realism.*

Keywords: *Indo-Anglian, Subjugation, Dalits, Downtrodden, Visionary.*

INTRODUCTION

Mulk Raj Anand, a distinguished Indian author, achieved international acclaim for his remarkable contributions to the field of Indian English Literature. His works reflect the struggles faced by marginalised groups and the untouchables. He articulated his characters in opposition to suppression, inequality, and injustice. He held a firm conviction in the principles of gender equality, social justice, and the elevation of marginalised communities. He concentrated on the societal issues prevalent in India and highlighted the unfortunate circumstances faced by marginalised communities. The narration facilitates an exploration of the challenges inherent in traditional Indian society for the readers. His writings cultivate an understanding among his audience regarding the entrenched caste system, colonial oppression, poverty, gender inequality, suffering, exploitation, and various other significant issues of the 20th century. He was an advocate for humanitarian efforts and championed the cause of the marginalised.

Objectives of Anand's study

The objectives of Anand's study encompass the depiction of humanity and the examination of social struggles. The literary contributions of Mulk Raj Anand underscore the inherent dignity and resilience

found within marginalised communities, while accentuating the virtues of kindness, compassion, and the imperative for societal harmony.

1. Influencing the development of young intellects through the lens of Realism:
Anand's writings illuminate the stark realities of caste oppression, poverty, and inequality, cultivating awareness and a sense of responsibility among future generations.
2. Addressing Gender Inequality:
Anand's narratives frequently illustrate the challenges faced by women ensnared in societal conventions, promoting the ideals of gender equality and emancipation from patriarchal limitations.
3. Investigating Caste Discrimination and Social Hierarchy:
Through works such as *Untouchable*, the author elucidates the severe treatment faced by lower-caste individuals, advocating for social reforms and the dismantling of caste-based oppression.
4. Fostering Compassion for the Marginalised:
Anand's humanistic approach compels readers to engage with the plight of the marginalised, underscoring the imperative for empathy and transformative action.
5. Promoting Equity in Rights and Opportunities:
Anand's body of work advocates for a paradigm of equality, wherein individuals are evaluated based on their intrinsic humanity, rather than their birth, social class, or societal status.
6. Advocating for Social Justice and Systemic Reform:
Anand provides a critical analysis of injustice. His works advocate for socio-political transformations via education and seek to empower marginalised communities.

Literature Review:

- "So Many Freedoms: A Study of the Major Fiction of Mulk Raj Anand" by S. Cowasjee: This comprehensive analysis delves into Anand's major novels, exploring the themes of social injustice and human dignity.
- "The Yoke of Pity: A Study of the Fictional Writings of Mulk Raj Anand" by A. Niven: Niven examines the interplay between Anand's personal philosophy and his narrative style, highlighting his empathetic portrayal of marginalized communities.
- "Mulk Raj Anand: A Reappraisal" by M.K. Naik: This work offers a critical reassessment of Anand's literary contributions, discussing his narrative techniques and thematic concerns.
- "Capitalism and Its Consequences: A Marxist Study of Mulk Raj Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud* and its adapted film *Rahi* " by Rajesh Barat: Barat provides a Marxist interpretation of Anand's novel, discussing themes of labour exploitation and class struggle.
- "Novels of Mulk Raj Anand: A Thematic Study" by Manzoor Ahmad Wani: Wani conducts a thematic analysis of Anand's novels, highlighting his portrayal of social issues and the underprivileged.
- "A Critical Reception on Selected Novels of Mulk Raj Anand" by P. Venkata Sudhakar: The work examines the critical responses to Anand's selected works, shedding light on their impact and relevance.

The above works provide diverse perspectives on Anand's literature, enriching the understanding of his contributions to Indian English literature.

Significance of Anand's Works :

The literature of Mulk Raj Anand serves as a significant instrument for comprehending the intricate socio-economic and cultural dynamics of India. Mulk Raj Anand exhibited a profound influence from the ideals espoused by Mahatma Gandhi, particularly those concerning truth, non-violence, and social equality. The novel *Untouchable* serves as a reflection of Gandhian thought, especially evident in the portrayal of Bakha's admiration for Gandhi's advocacy to eliminate untouchability. Anand's narratives frequently underscore the efficacy of non-violent resistance in the face of social oppression. The

protagonists in his works, exemplified by Munoo in *Coolie* and Gangu in *Two Leaves and a Bud*, reflect profound inner conflict, resilience, and a rich emotional landscape. He adeptly illustrates their aspirations, anxieties, and challenges, rendering his narratives profoundly relatable. Anand's oeuvre illuminated the experiences of the impoverished, labourers and marginalised castes, thereby expanding the horizons of Indian literature. The writings function as historical artefacts, encapsulating the socio-political dynamics of early 20th-century India. The comprehensive portrayals of slums, factories, and villages within his literary works offer a profound documentation of poverty, class conflicts, and the repercussions of colonial governance on Indian society. The author's oeuvre exemplifies a synthesis of realism and stream-of-consciousness methodologies, thereby augmenting the reader's immersion in the character's internal monologue. The contributions of his works persist in motivating initiatives that champion equality and justice.

Methodology :

This investigation utilises a qualitative literary analysis to explore the social issues represented in the works of Mulk Raj Anand. The methodology emphasises the subsequent approaches:

- Textual Analysis:

The primary method of this study is a close reading of Anand's major works, including *Untouchable*, *Coolie*, and *Two Leaves and a Bud*. This involves examining his narrative style, character development, themes, and the socio-political context of his writings.

- Thematic Analysis:

The study categorizes Anand's works under key social themes such as caste discrimination, gender inequality, labour exploitation, and social justice. This thematic approach helps in understanding how Anand critiques social hierarchies and advocates for reform.

- Comparative Literary Approach:

Anand's works are compared with contemporary Indian English writers such as R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao to highlight his unique contribution to socially conscious literature.

- Critical Reception Analysis:

The study incorporates insights from literary critics, research scholars, and previous academic works to understand how Anand's novels have been received over time. Works by scholars such as S. Cowasjee, A. Niven, and M.K. Naik are referenced to support critical viewpoints.

- Historical and Socio-Political Contextualization:

The study places Anand's narratives within the colonial and postcolonial framework of India, linking his writing to Gandhian philosophy, the nationalist movement, and the struggles of marginalized communities.

By employing these methods, this study seeks to present a comprehensive analysis of how Mulk Raj Anand's literature serves as a powerful tool for social critique and reform.

Anand's life

Anand was born on December 12, 1905, in Peshawar, hailing from a Kshatriya family. From a young age, he observed the struggles faced by the marginalised. His educational background includes attendance at cantonment schools. Moreover, he completed his graduation at Punjab University and continued his advanced studies overseas. He drew inspiration from Western authors and harboured aspirations for an independent India. He opposed colonialism, casteism, gender inequality, and various other societal injustices. His engagement in the national movement was marked by a profound sense of patriotism. He held a firm conviction in the principles of non-violence espoused by Gandhi and

adhered to peaceful methodologies in the pursuit of independence. His compassionate disposition is evident in his literary works. The thoughts, ideas, and efforts aimed at transforming the lives of Indians are indeed noteworthy.

The audience is presented with the multifaceted themes and intricacies of social existence. He challenged the prevailing sentiments that hindered the advancement of humanity. He contested the harshness exhibited by the ruling class and advocated for the plight of the downtrodden. In his works, he critically examined the shortcomings of social practices while underscoring the importance of ethical values and humanity. He demonstrated a strong commitment to enhancing the conditions of marginalised communities and alleviating their hardships.

Anand's Works

Mulk Raj Anand achieved significant acclaim and international recognition through his remarkable contributions to Indo-Anglian literature. His oeuvre is categorised into various forms, including novels, short stories, and others. The theme presented is both straightforward and resonates with individuals across various age groups. As a proponent of humanist ideals, his writings illuminate the principles of empathy, equality, and justice. The characterisation exhibits a notable degree of realism and depth. The characters embody the authentic aspects of human existence and the challenges therein.

- Untouchable (1935)
- Coolie (1936)
- Two Leaves and a Bud (1937)
- The Village (1939)
- The Sword and the Sickle (1942)
- The Big Heart (1945)
- Seven Summers: The Story of an Indian Childhood (1951)
- The Private Life of an Indian Prince (1953)
- The Old Woman and the Cow (1960)
- The Road (1961)
- Indian Fairy Tales (1946)
- The Story of India (1948)
- The Story of Man (1952)
- More Indian Fairy Tales (1961)
- The Story of Chacha Nehru (1965)

Anand received several prestigious awards:

- International Peace Prize (1953)
- Padma Bhushan (1967)
- Sahitya Akademi Award (1971)

Analysis :

Anand's dedication to the advancement of his country, his sense of patriotism, and his literary contributions that address the hardships faced by the marginalised and the despondent. His aspirations to conceptualise a sovereign and autonomous India. He advocated for women's rights, articulating his opposition to inequality and injustice. His writings serve as profound reflections on the complexities of human suffering. His works are distinguished by their thematic concerns. The themes critically examine the oppression and suffering experienced by marginalised communities, articulating the perspectives of those who are often unheard. The study delves into the themes of poverty, exploitation, and dejection. He prioritises social equality above all else. He elucidated the ramifications of colonialism in *Across the Black Waters* (1939) and *The Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953). His works exhibit a profound engagement with realism. He elucidates the complexities of both the internal and external conflicts faced by an individual. His works encompass a variety of themes aimed at enlightening the untainted minds regarding the stark realities of existence. His works serve as potent

instruments for illuminating societal issues. The quality of his narration and characterisation is truly exceptional. He advocated for the rights of the marginalised. He articulated his principles, leading to the international acknowledgement of his contributions. As a critic, he illuminated the social and political maladies afflicting Indian society. He sought to achieve a transformation in the socio-political landscape and enhance the well-being of society.

Results :

The analysis of Mulk Raj's works yields significant insights into his remarkable contributions to Indo-Anglian literature. The efficacy with which he engages with social issues, alongside the lasting influence of his thematic elements and stylistic approach, is truly remarkable. His works illuminate the intricacies of the caste system, the dynamics of poverty, and the impacts of colonialism. His writings served as a source of inspiration for other authors such as Kamala Markandaya, Arundhati Roy, and Salman Rushdie, encouraging them to engage with social and political themes. The writings have significantly altered the perspective of Indians and instigated a transformation across the globe.

Recommendations

It is essential to concentrate on marginalised communities and develop narratives that are driven by empathy, thereby illuminating the socio-political injustices they face. Investigate contemporary social challenges such as gender inequality and poverty to formulate strategies for a more equitable future.

Conclusion :

Mulk Raj Anand holds a distinguished status within the realm of Indo-Anglian literature. His steadfast dedication to advancing justice is greatly valued. The methodologies employed in his works such as *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud* are remarkable. Anand articulated the experiences of marginalised individuals and illuminated the stark realities of casteism, poverty, colonialism, despair, gender inequality, oppression, injustice and exploitation in India. His compassionate methodology in addressing marginalised communities, coupled with a distinctive narrative style, has established a standard for fellow Indian authors.

Anand's legacy is rooted in his capacity to employ his writings as a formidable instrument for the advocacy of justice. He is recognised globally as a distinguished Indo-Anglian author, a proponent of humanism and an advocate for reform. His works hold significance across various generations. The themes he explores are inherently universal, emphasising the principles of equality, freedom, fraternity and justice. The contributions of his works serve to inspire readers, writers, and reformers alike.

References:

1. Ajmi, Nafsa. "Humanity in Mulk Raj Anand's Novel." *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 9, no. 6, 2021, pp. 48-50.
2. Sharma, Chhavi. "Exploitation and Suffering: Mulk Raj Anand's 'Untouchable' and 'Coolie'." *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 5, no. 10, 2017, pp. 71-73.
3. Sethi, Khagendra. "Sketching Mulk Raj Anand as a Postcolonial Writer." *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2015, pp. 478-482.
4. "Mulk Raj Anand: A Pioneer of Indian English Literature." *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2023, pp. 1-5.

Feminist Resistance to Patriarchy: Rukmini's Agency in Saiswaroopa Iyer's Narrative

Dipti Dinesh Patil

PhD Research Scholar

Department of English, Faculty of Arts, T.C. College, Baramati

Savitribai Phule Pune University Pune.

Email: dipatipatil1271@gmail.com

Abstract: *This paper attempts to explore Saiswaroopa Iyer's Rukmini: Krishna's Wife, published in 2021, by Rupa Publication, is a crucial text in challenging and defying process of patriarchal storytelling through the perspective of mythological reimagination. While reconstructing the character of Rukmini in the Mahabharata, he gives an elaborative; yet empowering portrayal that focuses on her contention against social conventions. The novel depicts intricate patterns of identity, freedom, and rebellion; where Rukmini is not made passive but actively shapes her destiny. This feminist critique, follows how she went against the conventional gender roles and took back women voices in a patriarchal setup. A meticulous reading of the text reveals that, the novel is effectively claiming discourse around current gender issues; the author urges readers to reinterpret myths and what they make women go through. It offers a revisionist portrayal of the mythological character Rukmini, presenting her as a strong, independent woman who challenges patriarchal norms. This reimagining of Rukmini's character serves as a form of resistance against traditional patriarchal narratives in Hindu mythology.*

Keywords: *Rukmini, patriarchy, feminist analysis, mythical reimagination, identity, freedom, rebellion, etc.*

INTRODUCTION:

Saiswaroopa Iyer's novel *Rukmini: Krishna's Wife*, published in 2021, serves as a significant contribution to the genre of revisionist mythological fiction, particularly in its portrayal of female agency and empowerment. The narrative reimagines the life of Rukmini, a prominent figure in Hindu mythology, presenting her not merely as a passive character defined by her relationship with Krishna but as a strong, independent woman who actively resists the patriarchal structures of her time. This paper aims to explore how Iyer's work challenges traditional narratives and offers a feminist perspective that emphasizes Rukmini's agency, resilience, and defiance against societal norms. Revisionist mythological fiction, particularly when written from a female perspective, challenges dominant narratives and offers alternative viewpoints on issues of gender, power, and social justice. Saiswaroopa Iyer's *Rukmini: Krishna's Wife* is an example of such literature, reimagining the character of Rukmini as a formidable and resolute woman who defies societal norms and patriarchal constraints of her era.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, focusing on textual analysis of Iyer's *Rukmini*. The analysis draws upon feminist literary theory to examine the themes of female agency, empowerment, and resistance in the text. Key passages from the text are analysed to illustrate

how Iyer constructs Rukmini's character as a symbol of female strength and autonomy. Besides, the research incorporates secondary sources, including feminist critiques and discussions on mythological revisionism, to contextualise the findings in broader literary and cultural frameworks.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RUKMINI'S CHARACTER AS PORTRAYED BY IYER:

Here, Rukmini is portrayed as a woman of agency, empowerment, and strong identity. She is depicted as fearless, intelligent, and capable of making her own decisions. The character is depicted as a formidable and resolute woman who actively challenges the patriarchal constraints of her era. Departing from traditional narratives that often portray her as a passive figure, his Rukmini emerges as a symbol of empowerment, embodying action and resilience in the face of social norms.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF RUKMINI:

Action and Independence: Rukmini is characterized by her strong will and determination to shape her own destiny. She famously declares, "I don't consent, I don't," (Iyer 38) when faced with an arranged marriage to Shishupala, showcasing her refusal to be a pawn in political games. This act of defiance sets the tone for her character, emphasizing her desire for autonomy and self-determination.

Courage and Fearlessness: Throughout the narrative, Rukmini demonstrates immense courage. For instance, she ventures into the forest alone to find Krishna, defying societal expectations and showcasing her independent spirit. Her willingness to confront danger head-on, even when faced with threats, highlights her bravery and determination to protect those she loves.

Compassion and Solidarity: Rukmini's character is also marked by her compassion and commitment to uplifting other women. She treats her maids with respect and defends them against injustices, emphasizing that "all individuals deserve respect and dignity regardless of their social status"(Iyer14). This sense of sisterhood and solidarity is a crucial aspect of her character, as she stands up for her friends and allies in times of need.

Strategic Thinking and Leadership:

Iyer portrays Rukmini as a strategic thinker who actively participates in governance and decision-making. Her ability to understand complex political dynamics and her proactive approach to safeguarding her community demonstrate her leadership qualities. Her suggestions and actions reflect her intelligence and resourcefulness, making her a capable leader in her own right.

Emotional Depth and Maturity: Rukmini's character is not only defined by her strength but also by her emotional depth. She navigates her relationships with honesty and transparency, expressing her feelings openly while maintaining a strong sense of self. Her maturity is evident in her ability to prioritize the welfare of others, even in challenging situations, showcasing her growth as a character.

Thus, in *Rukmini: Krishna's Wife*, Saiswaroopa Iyer reimagines Rukmini as a complex and multifaceted character who embodies the ideals of agency, empowerment, and resilience. By portraying her as a strong-willed woman who actively resists patriarchal norms, he not only challenges traditional narratives but also inspires readers to recognize the strength and potential within themselves. Rukmini's journey serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of female empowerment and the need to reclaim women's voices in mythology. She demonstrates administrative skills and participates in governance and strategic planning. She takes charge in crisis situations, such as protecting Dwaraka from potential threats. She shows concern for others, including her co-wives and victims of abduction. Through these characteristics, Iyer's Rukmini emerges as a character who resists patriarchal norms and asserts her own agency.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The literature on feminist revisionist mythological fiction highlights the importance of reinterpreting traditional narratives to amplify women's voices and experiences. Virginia Woolf, in her seminal work *A Room of One's Own*, called for the rewriting of history to include women's perspectives, a sentiment echoed by many contemporary feminist writers. His Rukmini aligns with this call, as it seeks to reclaim and celebrate the often-silenced narratives of women in mythology. Scholars like Rashmi Luthra have noted that feminist interpretations of Indian epics often reveal the subjugation of women and challenge the patriarchal ideologies embedded within these texts. His portrayal of Rukmini as a character who defies traditional gender roles and asserts her agency contributes to this discourse, offering a fresh perspective on a well-known mythological figure.

ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT:

Rebelliousness of social norms:

The portrayal of Rukmini in *Rukmini: Krishna's Wife* showcases a character who consistently defies societal norms, challenging the patriarchal structures of her time. This defiance is evident in several key aspects of her character and actions. She boldly rejects the arranged marriage to Shishupala, defying the common practice of women having little to no say in their marital decisions. This act of defiance demonstrates Rukmini's determination to control her own destiny, challenging the patriarchal norm of treating women as political pawns. In a society where women were expected to be passive and submissive, Rukmini takes the initiative to express her love for Krishna. This action subverts the traditional gender roles where women were expected to wait for men to make the first move. Her proactive approach (taking charge in crisis situations) in protecting Dwaraka from potential threats showcases her leadership skills, challenging the notion that women should remain in the background during times of crisis. This defiance of gender roles illustrates her capability and willingness to take on responsibilities typically reserved for men. Rukmini's active involvement in administrative matters and her strategic thinking in forming alliances defy the societal expectation that women should not participate in matters of state. Her active role in these areas challenges the patriarchal notion that governance and strategy are exclusively male domains. Her confrontation with Shishupala when he threatens her maid Malathi demonstrates her willingness to challenge those in power to protect the vulnerable. This action defies the social norm of women, especially those of royal status, remaining silent in the face of injustice. This shows her standing against injustice. Through these acts of defiance, Iyer's Rukmini emerges as a character who consistently challenges and subverts patriarchal norms. Her actions not only assert her own agency but also pave the way for a reimagining of women's roles in mythological narratives.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Rukmini's Work and Empowerment:

Iyer's Rukmini is depicted as a formidable woman who actively resists the constraints imposed by her patriarchal society. From the outset, Rukmini's character is established as one who desires autonomy and freedom. She rejects the notion of being a pawn in political games, famously declaring, "I don't consent, I don't" when faced with an arranged marriage to Shishupala" (Iyer 10,11). This moment encapsulates her refusal to be defined by the expectations of her family and society, showcasing her determination to take control of her own destiny. Rukmini's actions throughout the narrative further illustrate her agency. For instance, her decision to elope with Krishna is not merely an act of romantic defiance but a calculated choice that reflects her desire for self-determination. Iyer writes, "Rukmini's courage reaches new heights when she decides to open up about her true feelings" (Iyer11). This act of expressing her love for Krishna, despite the potential consequences, underscores her strength and willingness to challenge societal norms.

Challenging Patriarchal Norms:

The novel also critiques the patriarchal structures that seek to control women's lives. Her interactions with male characters often highlight the absurdity of these norms. For example, when confronted by Shishupala, Rukmini boldly demands an apology for his inappropriate behavior, stating, "Holding a woman against her will is a crime" (Iyer 8–9). This confrontation not only asserts her right to dignity but also challenges the authority of powerful men who often go unchecked in traditional narratives. Moreover, her relationships with other women in the text reflect a sense of solidarity and sisterhood that transcends the patriarchal divide. Her fierce protectiveness towards her maids and friends illustrates her commitment to uplifting other women, as she treats them with respect and dignity, emphasizing that "all individuals deserve respect and dignity regardless of their social status" (Iyer 8). This portrayal of female solidarity serves as a counter-narrative to the often competitive and adversarial relationships depicted in traditional mythologies.

The Role of Mythical Reimagination:

Iyer's reimagining of Rukmini's story serves as a powerful tool for feminist discourse. By placing Rukmini at the center of her own narrative, Iyer not only challenges the traditional portrayal of women in mythology but also invites readers to reconsider the roles of female characters in epic tales. Rukmini's journey from a silenced figure to a powerful agent of change exemplifies the potential of revisionist fiction to reshape cultural narratives. As Iyer states, "If we don't make the first move, someone else will do it, sealing our fates for their narrow ends" (Iyer 7). This assertion captures the essence of her character and the broader feminist message of the text: the importance of taking initiative and asserting one's action in the face of oppression.

CONCLUSION:

Thus, Saiswaroopa Iyer's *Rukmini: Krishna's Wife* stands as a significant work of feminist revisionist literature that challenges patriarchal narratives through the reimagining of a mythological figure. By portraying Rukmini as a strong, independent woman who actively resists societal constraints, the author not only amplifies female voices but also encourages readers to reflect on the complexities of gender, power, and identity within the context of mythology. This text serves as a reminder of the enduring relevance of feminist discourse in literature and the importance of reclaiming women's stories in the ongoing struggle for equality and empowerment. Through Rukmini's journey, Iyer inspires a new generation of readers to recognize their own agency and challenge the narratives that seek to silence them. Saiswaroopa Iyer's reimagining of Rukmini serves as a form of resistance against patriarchal narratives in mythology. By portraying Rukmini as a strong, independent woman with agency and decision-making power, Iyer challenges traditional gender roles and expectations. This revisionist approach to mythology contributes to the broader feminist movement of reclaiming and reinterpreting women's roles in cultural narratives.

REFERENCES:

1. Iyer, Saiswaroopa. *Rukmini: Krishna's Wife*. Rupa Publication, 2021.
2. Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*. Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1929.
3. Luthra, Rashmi. "Feminist Interpretations of Indian Epics: Subjugation and Patriarchy in Mythological Narratives." *Journal of Feminist Literature*, vol. 12, no. 3, 2019, pp. 45–62.

Manifestation Of Quest for Identity in The Contemporary Poetry from India's Northeast: A Study of Select Poems

¹Uttam Kumar Upadhyaya, ²Champa Chettri

¹PhD Scholar, Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences & Liberal Arts, Sikkim Manipal University

²Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences & Liberal Arts, Sikkim Manipal University

¹Email- anirbaan007@gmail.com, ²Email: chettri.champa@gmail.com

Abstract: Socio-Cultural and Political scenario plays a pivotal role in the making of literature from any region in the world. These parameters also affect the definition of identity for the people of the region. India's Northeast is a house to more than 200 ethnic tribes exercising diverse ethnic traits, linguistic habits, mythical practices, customary traditions and religious affiliation. Identity for the people living in this geographical belt is deep rooted in the pursuit of ethnocultural features which they profess in every step of their life. Poets and litterateurs from the region have constantly been portraying their urge for the preservation and representation of their socio-cultural sensibilities through their creation. They make sincere efforts to depict the interconnectedness of their identity and culture. The contemporary poets have become aware of the impacts of modernization and globalization and come up with the delineation of the need of preservation of culture and identity through their poems. Their appeal to the present generation is an attempt of reaffirmation of identity based on their cultural heritage. This paper aims to study such attempts on the part of the selected contemporary poets from the Northeast of India. It also will examine how the poets manifest their sensibilities towards cultural identity in this otherwise challenging situation.

Key Words: Identity, Culture, Ethnicity, Northeast, Poetry.

INTRODUCTION:

"Identity" as the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines is "the distinguishing character or personality of an individual" and "the relation established by psychological identification". Individual perceptions of identity go to mould a collective identity when it comes to define a group or a race. The socio-cultural, mythical and traditional practices which adorn a particular community are the attributing factors for the cultural identity. This means that apart from the individual self, a human being also is marked with certain features which provide him with a cultural and collective identity. Social identity is a discipline in the study of social psychology that specifies and predicts the circumstantial traits with which individuals perceive them as individuals and a member of a group.

India's Northeast is a collective name ascribed to the amalgamation of eight states of the Indian union namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and Sikkim. This region in the country is a storehouse of diverse socio-cultural, political and religious affiliations. More than 200 ethnic tribes and communities with individual cultural traditions, mythical beliefs, ethnic practices co-exist in this cultural hub which provides cultural dynamism to the region. People here adhere to their cultural roots and reaffirm their identity with the help of various means. It is said that literature is the reflection of society and when a literary creation from any part of the world is examined, we find its affiliation with the regional factors. Poetry here in India's Northeast is also a manifestation of the sensibilities of the people living in the region. Like other forms of art, poetry has

also evolved through a significant time to imbibe the social and cultural character of the region. The region is characterized with a history of socio-political conflicts, marginalization, urbanization and a deeply rooted quest for identity. Contemporary poets from India's Northeast have become the spokespersons of the people residing in this geographical belt to voice the concerns, aspirations and cultural consciousness. Pooja Joshi in her article writes "Contemporary poetry in English from India's North-East has multifaceted voices. It is an expression of an individual poetic self as well as the saga of the tribal people of the region in general. It presents a vista of images of the mountains, hills, rivers, myths and legends, tradition and culture, and multi-ethnic people of the region. Identity crisis, a sense of alienation, increasing globalization and migrancy are some of the dominant features of contemporary politics in the North-East" (Joshi, 2016). Poetry here penetrates the very essence of the cultural framework of a tribe or community. Due to the onset of globalization and modernization, newer generations tend to get affiliated with the newly found comfort which is a serious concern, and the poets pen down these concerns to awaken the conscience of the people. Tilottama Misra highlights in the introductory chapter of "The Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India" that:

"An intense sense of awareness of the cultural loss and recovery that came with the negotiation with 'other' cultures is a recurrent feature of the literatures of the seven north-eastern states." (Mishra, 2011)

DISCUSSION:

In the contemporary scenario, Temsula Ao, Robin S. Ngangom, Kynpham Singh Nongkynrih, Mamang Dai, Desmond Kharmawphlang etc. are the shining stars of the Northeastern poetry. They represent various states of the conglomeration to record their feelings and sentiments in this rapidly changing world when cultural legacy and past glory are at stake. Dustin Lalkulhpuia observes that the poetic works from Northeast of India "not only represent cultural loss but also bear witness to the resilience of Indigenous identities, firmly tied to the land. These literary depictions expose the ruptures between capitalist progress and place-based identities, evoking emotional attachments to threatened lifeworlds." (Lalkulhpuia, 2024). Identity and belongingness are the frequently explored thematic concerns of the poets of the region. They portray the concept of alienation, nostalgia and cultural displacement through the lens of northeastern perception. Kynpham Singh Nongkynrih, a celebrated poet from Meghalaya articulates his sense of deep loss of cultural grandeur and the need of preservation of identity. His poems are manifestations of his sensitivity towards the issue. His poem "The Ancient Rocks of Cherra" deliberates upon the mythical rocks as symbols of time, memory and history which are the intrinsic traits of cultural identity. He sings:

"These rocks,
older than time,
hold stories
we have forgotten."

In another poem titled "The Desire of Roots", the poet longs for a deeply rooted identity while he reflects on the bonding of the people with their native land. He outlines that he has been pulled towards the past amidst the loss of cultural legacy and indigenous identity. He says:

"I have put down roots, but not deep enough
I have turned to stone, but not hard enough..."

Nongkynrih presents to the readers a landscape of his native land which is full of Khasi myths and lores. He aims at establishing the connection between such mythical culture and identity of the people in his poems. His poem "A Day in Cherrapunjee" is an instance of his exploration of identity through his attempts of finding the interconnectedness between such indigenous beliefs and cultural identity. He sings:

"They have told me

how the evil Thlen was killed
in this very spot
by the wisdom of our forefathers,
who poured red-hot iron bars
into his feasting belly.
.....
These very stones were then
the mortars to pestle the spices.”

Another widely acclaimed poet from India’s Northeast, Mamang Dai becomes an advocate of the rich cultural traditions of her community and pours down her feelings to make a universal appeal to the reading public. She talks about the essence of imbibing the sense of belongingness and thus cling to cultural identity. In one of her famous poems named “The Voice of the Mountain”, she sings:

“The other day a young man arrived from the village.
Because he could not speak
he brought a gift of fish
from the land of rivers.
It seems such acts are repeated:
We live in territories forever ancient and new,
and as we speak in changing languages.”

In this poem, she presents to the readers the theme of interconnectedness of culture and identity. The poem also explores how the cultural history and mythical practices shape the present identity of an individual and the race. Similarly, another poem written by the poet titled “An Obscure Place” attempts to restate the root of the people and the connection between past cultural legacy and identity. The poem reads:

“The history of our race
begins with the place of stories.
We do not know if the language we speak
belongs to a written past.
Nothing is certain.”

Likewise, the poem entitled “Missing Link” visualises the close affinity between nature and identity. The poet also talks about the Adi myth of twin gods which is an integral part in the life of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. She Sings:

“Remember
the river’s voice,
Where else could we
be born, where else
could we belong,
if not of memory
divining life and form
out of silence,
Water and mist,
the twin gods
water and mist
And the cloud woman
always calling
from the sanctuary
of the gorge...”

In this way, we see that Mamang Dai has emerged as a poet of reaffirmation of cultural roots and ethnic identity which seem to struggle during the concept of global village. The contemporary poets from India's Northeast have utilised the poetic platform in English as well as their native languages to showcase their keenness towards manifestation of cultural identity. Temsula Ao, an exemplary literary figure from Nagaland also writes poems to prioritize the need of the preservation of culture and identity. Through her poems, she bridges a gap between the community and the rich cultural standards. Exploration of mythical beliefs makes a strong appeal in her poem titled "The Stone People from Lungterok". The poem delineates the myth of the six stones of Lungterok in the following lines:

"From stones we came,
Steeped in the lore of our birth,
The earth holds us still."

These lines portray how the Ao Nagas are closely linked with their ethnic legacy. This application of indigenous myths allows the poet to draw a line to assert and affirm identity through cultural consciousness. The root of any tribe or community is largely found in its socio-cultural history and Temsula Ao very beautifully delineates such history in her poems to manifest identity of the people concerned. At the same time, Temsula Ao is also aware of the effects of foreign cultural infiltration and laments the loss of native cultural traits. In one of her poems from "Book of Songs", she tries to awaken the people for a cultural consciousness. She says:

"Then came a tribe of strangers
Into our primordial territories
Armed with only a Book and
Promises of a land called Heaven
Declaring that our Trees and Mountains
Rocks and Rivers were no Gods
And that our songs and stories
Nothing but tedious primitive nonsense."

Another remarkable poet from the region Robin S Ngangom is also not an exception to this trend of the Northeastern poets. His poetry is marked with the sincere appeal for preservation of culture through which identity can be reaffirmed. Due to various external factors, the peace and harmony of his native land is compromised which makes him grief stricken. Violence, infiltration and displacement have now become common in the hills which has poised a great threat to the question of identity of the people. Ngangom also treats poetry as a medium of expressing his agony and placing an urge to the younger generation to become conscious of the need of preservation of cultural identity. In one of his famous poems titled "Native Land", he portrays the mournful state of his native land due to the onslaught of conflict and violence that has added to the degradation of the cultural standards and glorified past identity. He sings:

"I ceased thinking
of abandoned children inside blazing huts
still waiting for their parents.
If they remembered their grandmother's tales
of many winter hearths at the hour
of sleeping death, I didn't want to know,
if they ever learnt the magic of letters.
And the women heavy with seed,
their soft bodies mown down
like grain stalk during their lyric harvests;
if they wore wildflowers in their hair

while they waited for their men,
I didn't care anymore."

The quoted lines depict how the old rituals and customs have been replaced by conflict and displacement thus devaluing the rich cultural grandeur. His poem entitled "The Strange Affair of Robin S Ngangom" highlights how cultural legacy is lost, and identity has been surrendered. He says:

"Not once can I say
I am the captain
behind this wheel of fire.
I remember misplacing
a bronze bell
somewhere, sometime.
I left behind many untended hearths.
Rushing back, I discovered
something had changed me.
I can say
I am this or that,
that I envied the character
of water and stone.
that I envied the character
of water and stone.
As a boy I was made a sheep,
now I am enchanted into a goat
that the townspeople
enjoy driving to the square
with a marigold garland
between my horns."

The poem delineates a sorrowful state wherein mythical beliefs and cultural richness have become submissive in front of the newly conceived comfort and luxury of globalisation and modernisation. Another poet from the Northeast of India, Desmond Kharmawphlang also becomes prolific when he talks about past legacy of his people and the present sense of cultural devaluation. Cultural integration and mythical practices which are the invincible parts of one's identity have been ignored for the sake of modernity. This realisation leaves the poet in an unending agony. His poem titled "The Pony Cart Driver Speaks" is an expression of the anguish he suffers from due to this sense of loss. The poem resonates with the thoughts of how the past richness had been and how it has fled away to the infinity. The poem reads:

"Let me cast these runaway thoughts
somewhere, where the cartwheels utter
its agony on great stretches of
memory, printed on dust and ditches.
This is a voice ripped from the past,
though there is no past to discover.
No money in laden carts or punishing work.
The pony's twitching muscles finally yielded
and the songs of gadflies flew away."

Apart from the above instances, it can be said that contemporary poetry from other states of the region like Assam, Tripura, Sikkim etc also penetrate the poetic sensibilities revolving around native cultural past legacy and mythical richness. Nabakanta Barua, Hiren Bhattacharya, Nilim Kumar etc. are the

representative poets from Assam who adhere to the cultural tapestry of the state. Their poems are imbued with the essence of cultural traits of the people and the sense of belongingness in the formulation of collective identity. Contemporary poets from Tripura such as Chandrakanta Murasingh and Bikashrai Debbarma are also spectacular exponents of cultural dynamism of the state. Their poetry also evolves through the cultural essence of their native people and aim at reaffirming identity through the socio-cultural lenses. Similarly, Sikkim, a tiny state from India's Northeast is also a house to numerous cultural and ethnic traditions. Poets here also exercise their creativity in solemnising the cultural richness of the state which ultimately provides the core of identity as a socio-cultural perspective.

CONCLUSION:

From the above study, it can be said that the contemporary poetry from the region is an honest documentation of the sensibilities of the poets as well as the people living here. It has already been stated that more than 200 ethnic tribes and communities co-exist in this culturally vibrant region making it a cultural hub. Each of these ethnic communities practise individual ethnic tradition which becomes the indicator of the community's identity. Poets here sincerely acknowledge the ethnic traits in constituting identity of the people as a social construct with the help of different features that mark them with. Rich cultural dynamism of the past guides the very essence of identity for all these people. However, the very recent confrontation with the contemporary globalised scenario has made cultural traits to dilute and thus identity assertion has become a challenge. In such a crunch time, the poets come up with their unwavering zeal and enthusiasm to showcase the cultural exponentiation of the region which makes their poetry mouthpiece for preservation of culture and identity. In the truest sense of the term, contemporary poetry from India's Northeast showcases manifestation of quest for identity in the present scenario when cultural preservation and ethnic consciousness have become so vital to sustain amid the aftereffects of globalisation and modernisation. Poetry here is not just the overflow of feelings of the poet but is also the cultural vein of the people living in the region.

REFERENCES:

1. Ao, T. (2013). *Book of Songs: Collected Poems*. Heritage Publishing House.
2. Bargohain, R., & Mokashi-Punekar, R. (2020). Poetry, identity and geography of Culture: Representations of landscapes in poetry in English from Northeast India. *Asian Ethnicity*.
3. Bender, M. (2012). Ethnographic Poetry in North-East India and South-West China. *Rocky Mountain Review*, 106–129.
4. Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge.
5. Chaterjee, G., Roy, D., & Putatunda, T. (2022). From Anonymity to Identity: Orality in Three Women Poets from North-East India. *Rupkatha Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 4(2).
6. Joshi, P. (2016) Interrogating Cultural and Identity Negotiations in the Poetry of North- East Tribes. *Dialogue*, 12(2)
7. Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Identity. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved February 4, 2025, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/identity>
8. Mukherjee, R. (2018). Postcolonial and Ecocritical Readings of Identity, Culture and Environment from Selected Works of Shillong Poets. *Dialog*, 33.
9. Ngangom, R. S. (1988). *Words and the Silence*. Writers Workshop.
10. Nongkynrih, K. S. (2011). *The Yearning of Seeds*. Harper Collins.
11. Zankar, R. D. (2024). The Role of Culture in Modern Indian Poetry. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, 12(6).
12. (2011). *The Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India: Poetry and Essays* (T. Misra, Ed.). OUP.
13. (2009). *Dancing Earth: An Anthology of Poetry from North-East India* (R. S. Ngangom & K. S. Nongkynrih, Eds.). Penguin Books India.
14. (2024). Identity in Northeast Indian Literature (D. Lalkulpuia, Ed.; 1st ed.) [Review of Identity in Northeast Indian Literature]. Routledge.

Needed Introspection In Religious Faith [Water Pollution ‘.’ Idol Immersion]

Dr. Neelam Narayan

Post Graduate, Department Of Philosophy
Awadhesh Pratap Singh University, Rewa, Madhya Pradesh.
M.Ed & Doctorate in Sociology
Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Maharashtra.
Email.id: dr.neelamnarayan999@gmail.com

Abstract: *Idol worship in Hinduism, rooted in ancient scriptures, symbolizes devotion through physical representations of divine forms. Festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi and Durga Puja celebrate this tradition. However, idol immersion contributes to water pollution as idols made from non-biodegradable materials and toxic paints end up in water bodies. Studies show a rise in pollutants during these events, with heavy metal contamination and decreased oxygen levels. Despite regulations like the Environment Protection Act and the Water Act, enforcement is weak. The National Green Tribunal advocates eco-friendly alternatives, but religious sentiments hinder change. A balanced approach is needed to respect traditions while promoting environmental sustainability.*

Keywords: *Religious Faith, Idol Immersion, Water Pollution, Humanity.*

INTRODUCTION:

Religion plays a crucial role in providing meaning, purpose, and social unity, while promoting psychological well-being, social stability, and positive change. It encourages virtues like honesty, forgiveness, and compassion, enhancing personal and societal well-being. Religious involvement has been linked to better mental health, social support, and lower rates of harmful behaviors. However, blind faith can sometimes harm the environment, as seen with idol worship in Hinduism. The immersion of idols in water bodies after worship leads to pollution, threatening water quality and aquatic life. This issue highlights the need for environmentally conscious practices within religious traditions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Mukherjee Sagarika, Paramanik Manas, [2022], Impact of Durga Idol Immersion on Water Bodies with Early and Late Removal of Idols in Asansol: This study examines the impact of Durga idol immersion on the water quality of two ponds in Asansol, West Bengal. The research highlights that idol immersion, along with the disposal of associated materials like flowers and ashes, significantly affects water quality. One pond was managed efficiently, where authorities promptly removed the immersed materials, while in the other, the debris remained for days. Water samples collected before and after immersion showed a deterioration in parameters like pH, TDS, BOD, COD, and heavy metal content. The findings suggest that idol immersion leads to pollution, but timely removal of debris can minimize its impact. The study emphasizes the importance of adhering to pollution control guidelines, using eco-friendly materials for idol-making, and reducing non-biodegradable objects to improve water quality.

Ujjania N C, Gadhia Mohini, Bengani Ranjana, [2023], Impact assessment of Idol immersion on water quality: This research focuses on the impact of idol immersion on the water quality of the Tapi River during Ganesh festivals in 2010, 2014, and 2019. Samples collected pre-immersion, during immersion, and post-immersion indicate a decrease in dissolved oxygen (DO) and an increase in biological oxygen demand (BOD) and chemical oxygen demand (COD). The highest BOD levels were recorded in 2014, while COD fluctuations were more pronounced in 2010 and 2014 than in 2019. The study concludes that idol immersion significantly pollutes river water, urging the adoption of eco-friendly religious practices to mitigate pollution.

Objectives of this Research:

1. To find out the root and reason of ‘Idol worshipping’ and its relevance.
2. To analyze how sometimes religious faith turns harmful.
3. Constitutional Law, Rules and Regulation related to water pollution.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This qualitative research has used a historical and analytical approach, involving:

1. Historical Analysis: Examining religious scripts on ‘Idol worshipping’.
2. Relative Study: Between Idol worshipping and water pollution.
3. Thematic Analysis of Solution: Between idol worshipping and water pollution.

Source of Data:

1. Primary Sources: Historical documents, religious texts, and archival materials.
2. Secondary Sources: Academic journals, books, reports.
3. Digital Sources: Reliable databases related to idol worshipping and water pollution.

FINDINGS:

Definition: Religion:

From time immemorial, humanity has sought solace in religion, not merely as a doctrine but as a guiding force that shapes existence. Religion, in its purest form, is the bridge between the finite and the infinite, offering meaning to life's mysteries and purpose to human aspirations. It weaves the fabric of social harmony, reinforcing unity, morality, and stability in an ever-changing world. Beyond societal order, religion nourishes the soul, instilling virtues like honesty, patience, and gratitude, which refine human character.

Religious Faith:

Religious faith is a deeply personal and complex phenomenon that has shaped human societies for millennia. It encompasses a wide range of beliefs and practices, from monotheistic religions like Christianity and Islam to polytheistic traditions like Hinduism and ancient Greek religions. At its core, religious faith often involves a belief in a higher power, a set of sacred texts or teachings, and a commitment to a particular way of life.

However, religious faith can also be a source of conflict and division. Throughout history, religious differences have fueled wars and persecution, leading to immense suffering and loss of life. Despite these challenges, religious faith continues to play a vital role in the lives of billions of people around the world.

Idol Worshipping:

Hindus worship ONE cosmic God in three forms: Mantra, Yanta and Vighraha: The actual Sanskrit word is 'Archa vighraha'. Archa means worshipable. Vighraha means form or deity. The word 'Vighraha', is said 'Idol' in the English Language.

The concepts of Sagun Brahman and Nirgun Brahman in Hinduism:

Hindu philosophy describes the ultimate reality, Brahman, in two primary aspects:

1. **Sagun Brahman (God with attributes):** Sagun Brahman refers to the personalized, manifested form of God with qualities such as love, compassion, and justice. It is worshiped through deities like Vishnu, Shiva, and Devi, who embody divine attributes. This form is accessible to devotees as it provides a tangible connection to the divine through idols, rituals, and prayers. Scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita (12.5) acknowledge the importance of Sagun worship, as it is easier for most people to connect a deity with form.
2. **Nirgun Brahman (God without attributes):** Nirgun Brahman, on the other hand, represents the formless, absolute reality beyond human perception. It is pure consciousness, without qualities or attributes, as described in the Upanishads (e.g., Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 3.8.8). This concept is central to Advaita Vedanta, which sees the universe as an illusion (Maya), with only Brahman as the eternal truth.

These two perspectives cater to different spiritual inclinations, allowing devotees to approach the divine in ways that resonate with their understanding. Both concepts coexist in Hinduism, offering flexibility in spiritual practice. Some worship God through form, while others seek realization of the formless ultimate truth.

REASONING BEHIND IDOL WORSHIPING:

1. A Historical Incident: Swami Vivekananda's Explanation

In the court of the Maharaja of Alwar, a minister questioned Swami Vivekananda about the need for idol worship. In response, Swamiji asked the minister to spit on a photograph of the king. The minister refused, as he saw the king symbolically represented in the photo. Swami Vivekananda then explained that idol worship works in the same way—it is a means of showing respect and reverence to the divine through a physical representation.

2. A Continental Example: The Importance of Symbols

Icons and symbols play an essential role in human understanding. Just as a flag and seal represent an entire country, its people, and values, idols serve as representations of the divine. A nation's identity, history, and sovereignty are embedded in its flag, reducing vast knowledge into a single symbol. Similarly, Sagun Brahman (God with form) helps in understanding the Nirgun Brahman (formless absolute reality). Idol worship provides a tangible way for devotees to connect with the infinite, just as symbols help people grasp complex concepts in a simplified form.

IDOL WORSHIP TRACES IN ANCIENT HINDU SPIRITUAL SCRIPTURES:

1. Parama Samhita 3:7;

“nirākāre tu deveśe na arcanam sambhave nṛṇām |

na ca dhyānam na ca stotram tasmāt sākāram arcayet ||”

“It is impossible for the human being to worship, meditate or praise a deity without form. Therefore the Lord should be worshiped through an icon.”

2. Bhagavata Purana 11.27.12;

“Saili daru-mayi lauhi

lepya lekhyā ca saikati

mano-mayi mani-mayi

pratimasta-vidha smṛta II”

“The Deity form of the Lord is said to appear in eight varieties — stone, wood, metal, earth, paint, sand, the mind or jewels.”

3. Sukla Yajurveda Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.5.19;

“rūpaṃ rūpaṃ pratirūpo babhūva, tadasya rūpaṃ praticakṣaṇāya | indro māyābhiḥ pururūpa īyateII”

“(He) transformed Himself in accordance with each form; that form of His was for the sake of making Him known. The Lord on account of Māyā (notions superimposed by ignorance) is perceived as manifold.”

4. Sukla Yajurveda Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.3.1;

“dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtaṃ caivāmūrtaṃ ca martyaṃ cāmṛtaṃ ca sthitaṃ ca yacca sacca tyāṃ caII”

“Verily, there are two forms of Brahman: gross and subtle, mortal and immortal, limited and unlimited, definite and indefinite. Just like the waves of an ocean, are its finite manifestations, so are the various forms of God.”

5. Shiva Purana (Vayaviya Samhita, 16.43-44);

“Pratyakṣaṃ ca paroḁṣaṃ ca dvididhaṃ brahma me smṛtaṃ |

Pratyakṣaṃ liṅgaṃ ity uktāṃ paroḁṣaṃ nirguṇaṃ smṛtaṃ || (16.43)

Yathāśakti ca yaḥ pūjāṃ kuryād bhaktisamanvitaḥ |

Sa sāyujyaṃ labhet so'pi Śāmbunā saha mokṣadam ||” (16.44)

“The Supreme Brahman is of two types: Pratyaksha (visible) and Paroksha (invisible). The visible aspect is represented by Lingam (Sagun Brahman - God with form). The invisible aspect is the Nirgun Brahman (formless absolute reality). Whoever worships to the best of their ability with devotion, attains liberation (moksha) and ultimately unity with Lord Shiva.”

6. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (3.9.1);

“Gargyaḥ ha vai Varuṇiḥ Janakaṃ rājānaṃ upasasāra |

Tam uvāca—Bhagavo, adṛṣṭaṃ draṣṭā, aśrutaṃ śrotā,

Amantaṃ mantā, avijñātaṃ vijñātā,

Nānyatrāto'sti, nānyad ato'sti, nānyad ato'sti ||”

Gargi, the son of Varuni, approached King Janaka and asked:

- "O revered one, what is that which sees but cannot be seen,
- hears but cannot be heard,
- thinks but cannot be thought of,
- knows but cannot be known?
- There is nothing beyond it, nothing separate from it, nothing outside of it. "He who meditates upon a name and form (murti) attains liberation."

THE SCIENCE OF IDOL-WORSHIPING IN PRESENT ERA:

Sadhguru, a living saint of the present era: “The temple was not created as a place of God or a place of prayer. It was created as a place of energy where everyone could go and make use of it. There

is a whole science of idol-making where a certain form is created with a particular material and energized in a certain way. Different idols are made in different ways where they relocate or rearrange the chakras in certain places to make them into completely different possibilities. Idol-making is that science through which you manifest the energy in a particular way so that your quality of life can be enhanced. If the basic aspects of the temple – the size and shape of the idol, the mudra that the idol holds, the parikrama, the ‘garbha griha’, and the mantras used to consecrate the idol are properly matched, a powerful energy system is created. This is a way of recharging yourself with very positive vibrations of life so that you go into the world with a different perspective. It was created as a place of energy where everyone could go and make use of it.”

Why Is Idol Worship Advocated in Hinduism?

1. **Aid for Concentration:** Provides a tangible focus for devotion. Human minds struggle to grasp the infinite, formless divine. Idols provide a focus for devotion, helping to cultivate spiritual discipline.
2. **Symbolism of the Divine:** Murtis (idols) are not just stone or metal but representations infused with divine presence through rituals, which is called ‘Prana Pratistha (Consecration)’. Through rituals, the divine presence is invoked in the idol.
3. **Bhakti (Devotion) Path:** Idol worship fosters an emotional and devotional connection with God, making it easier for devotees to develop spiritual consciousness.
4. **Cultural Continuity:** It preserves ancient traditions and practices, allowing generations to engage with spirituality in an accessible manner.
5. **Manifestation of the Supreme:** Hinduism acknowledges that God manifests in multiple ways: formless (Nirguna) and with form (Saguna): catering to different spiritual needs.

Thus, idol worship is a powerful tool for spiritual growth, transforming devotion into an experiential realization of the divine presence.

IDOL WORSHIPPING THE TWO WAYS:

1. **Permanent Idol in a temple.**
2. **Temporary Idol making, worshipping and immersing the idol in any water body after a particular period:** For a particular pooja of a specific deity. Festivals like Durga Puja, Ganesh Chaturthi, and Saraswati Puja center around elaborate idol worship.

Above in both of the situations the idols symbolize divine attributes, enabling devotees to focus their prayers and spirituality.

This research is upon the temporary Idol making, worshipping and immersing the idol in any water body after a particular period. The most powerful evidence we find in:

1. Ganesh/Ganpati Pooja:

1a. Brahma Vaivarta Purana (Ganapati Khanda), describes how Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati first made an idol of Ganesha and worshipped it, setting an example for the world.

Ganesha is the "Vighnaharta" (remover of obstacles). Worshipping Ganesha brings wisdom, intelligence, and prosperity. The worship of Lord Ganesha in idol form began as a part of Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism) and evolved through temple worship, household rituals, and grand public celebrations.

1b. Ganesh Purana (Upasana Khanda, Chapter 2, Verse 18-19)

"Śuciḥ sannihitaṁ kṛtvā mūrtiṁ vināyakasya ca |

Yaḥ pūjayati bhaktyātha sa eva labhate śubham ||"

"One who worships the idol of Lord Ganesha with devotion attains auspiciousness and success."

1c. Mudgala Purana (Chapter 2, Verse 17)

"Mūrtim sthāpaya yatnena pūjayed vināyakam |"

"One must carefully establish the idol of Ganesha and worship him with devotion."

1d. C. Skanda Purana (Chapter 16, Verses 24-26):

"Vinayakam sada pujiyam devairapi surasurair |
Tena vighnani sarvani nashyanti vighnanayakah ||"

"Yatra yatra sthito devo Vinayakah prapujyate |
Tatra tatra sthitam lakshmih sarva siddhikarim shubham ||"

"Tasmat sarveshu karyeshu Vinayakam supujayet |
Nanyatha siddhimapnoti yatha bhaktih tatha shubham ||"

"Lord Vinayaka (Ganesha) is always to be worshipped by the gods, celestial beings, and even demons. By his grace, all obstacles are destroyed, as he is the remover of hindrances. Wherever Lord Ganesha is worshipped with devotion, there prosperity (Lakshmi) remains, bringing success and auspiciousness. Therefore, in all endeavors, one must first worship Lord Vinayaka. Without doing so, success cannot be achieved; as per one's devotion, auspicious results follow."

The installing and worshipping a Ganesh idol at the beginning of any new venture ensures the removal of obstacles.

The practice of public Ganesh idol worship (Ganesh Chaturthi festival) became widely popular in India, especially after it was revived by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1893 to promote unity during British rule, where the motive was political public gathering for independence.

2. Durga Pooja:

In Markandeya Purana, particularly in the Devi Mahatmya (Durga Saptashati/Chandi Path), it describes the Goddess being worshipped in various forms.

1a. Markandeya Purana (Durga Saptashati / Devi Mahatmya) – Chapter 12, Verses 7-12:

Tām devi tu praṇamyātha rājā'vāptamanorathah |
Sūtaṁ samprekṣya sāvajño vijñāya sa punaḥ sthitaḥ ||
So'pi vipro'bhavad rājan smaran pūrvajanmani |
Sa ca samyagupāsyainām prāptavān icchitaṁ phalam ||
Evaṁ bhaviṣyamāṇeṣu manuṣyotsavasattamāḥ |
Yatkiñcidiṣṭaṁ vāñchanti labhante tatsamāhitāḥ ||
Sa ca rājarṣiratraiva svapuraṁ prayayau punaḥ |
Samprāpya rājyamakṣuṇṇaṁ bhuktvā bhogān anuttamān ||
Tatas tasyāntakāle sa yāti sāyujyamātmanaḥ |
Devīprasādān nṛpate tathā vipraśca dharmataḥ ||
Tasmāt sarvaiḥ prayatnena mahādevīm samāśrayet |
Sā hi dātā ca mokṣasya sā hi sarṁsārabandhinām ||

Meaning: After worshipping the Goddess Devi with devotion, the King (Suratha) regained his lost kingdom and had his wishes fulfilled. Recognizing this divine intervention, he humbly paid his respects to the Goddess. The merchant (Samadhi), who had also been worshipping the Goddess, realized his past birth and attained the knowledge of his previous existence. By sincerely worshipping the Goddess, he too achieved his desired goals. Thus, in the future, those who worship the Goddess Devi with devotion and determination shall attain whatever they wish for, as she grants the fulfillment of desires. The royal sage (King Suratha) returned to his kingdom, regained his rule, and enjoyed great pleasures without any

obstacles. At the end of his life, by the grace of Goddess Durga, he attained liberation (Sayujya Mukti) and merged with the divine. Similarly, the merchant also attained spiritual enlightenment and liberation through righteous devotion. Therefore, all human beings should wholeheartedly take refuge in Mahadevi (Goddess Durga), as she alone is the bestower of both worldly success and ultimate liberation, freeing devotees from the bondage of the material world.

RELEVANCE & SIGNIFICANCE:

- These verses emphasize the power of devotion to Goddess Durga, showcasing how both a king and a merchant attained their respective goals—worldly success and spiritual liberation—through her worship.
- It reinforces the belief that prayers to the Goddess lead to both material and spiritual fulfillment.
- The passage also highlights the idea that Maa Durga is the ultimate liberator (moksha-dātrī), guiding devotees towards enlightenment and freedom from worldly sufferings.
- It serves as a scriptural basis for the tradition of idol worship and Durga Puja, as seen in the story of King Suratha and Samadhi worshipping a clay idol of Durga for three years.

Over time, especially in Bengal, Assam, and Odisha, clay idols (murtis) began to be sculpted and worshipped in grand rituals, which led to the modern-day Durga Puja celebration.

Idol (temporary) worshipping contributes to water pollution:

As the researcher stated above, the two major idol worshipping, Durga Puja and Ganesh Chaturthi, mainly contribute to water pollution. These festivals involve the creation of elaborate clay idols of deities, which are worshipped for a specific period before being immersed in rivers, lakes, or ponds, symbolizing the return of the deity to their celestial abode.

Facts and Figures related to idol immersion and water pollution:

1. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and National Green Tribunal (NGT), idol immersion during Ganesh Chaturthi adds approximately 100,000 tons of waste annually to Indian rivers and lakes.
2. As 99.9% of the idols have been made of 'plaster of paris (PoP)', with synthetic colours and non-biodegradable materials, so after immersion of these idols, in the various water bodies leads to water pollution.
3. Studies show a 40-60% spike in water pollution levels post-immersion events, including reduced dissolved oxygen and increased heavy metal concentration.
4. In 2015, the Madras High Court highlighted the detrimental effects of idol immersion on aquatic ecosystems, noting that materials such as clay, bamboo, metals, and chemical-laden paints released into water bodies lead to siltation and toxicity, adversely affecting marine life and water quality. The court emphasized the need to transition to eco-friendly practices, suggesting the construction of artificial ponds for idol immersion to mitigate environmental harm.

Helpless Laws, Legal Framework and Gaps:

A. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1974 aims to prevent and control water pollution, maintaining or restoring the quality of water in India. Key points include:

1. Establishment of Central and State Pollution Control Boards (CPCB and SPCBs): To monitor and enforce pollution control measures.
2. Pollution Standards: Setting water quality standards for industries and wastewater discharge.
3. Pollution Control: Regulating industries causing water pollution through consent procedures.
4. Prohibition of Discharge: Prohibiting untreated or harmful effluent discharge into water bodies.
5. Penalties: Imposing fines and imprisonment for violations.
6. Public Awareness: Promoting awareness and participation in water conservation efforts.

This Act is central to managing India's water pollution challenges.

B. The National Water Policy of India (2012) aims to ensure sustainable management of water resources for equitable distribution, conservation, and efficient utilization. Key points include:

1. Water as a Basic Human Right: Ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water for all.
2. Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM): Promoting holistic management, involving stakeholders.
3. Conservation: Encouraging rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, and water-saving techniques.
4. Water Quality Management: Addressing pollution through regulatory frameworks.
5. Water Pricing: Promoting fair and equitable water pricing for sustainability.
6. Climate Change Impact: Addressing climate-induced water scarcity and variability.

The policy emphasizes sustainable, inclusive water management and conservation strategies for future generations.

C. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) and The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has issued several key guidelines to address idol immersion and water pollution:

1. Use of Eco-Friendly Materials: Idols must be made of natural, biodegradable materials to prevent chemical pollution.
2. Avoid Harmful Substances: Prohibition of harmful substances such as plaster of Paris and synthetic paints that contribute to water pollution.
3. Pollution Control: Strict rules on immersion in water bodies, mandating that idols not contain harmful substances like plaster of Paris and synthetic paints.
4. Timely Immersion: Immersion should be conducted promptly, and debris removed quickly to minimize contamination.
5. Use of Artificial Immersion Tanks: Encouraging the creation of artificial tanks for immersion to protect natural water bodies. Establishing specific locations for idol immersion to avoid unregulated dumping into rivers and lakes.
6. Awareness Campaigns: Promoting public education on environmentally safe idol-making and immersion practices. Promoting eco-friendly practices and public education on minimizing environmental impact during festivals.

D. World Water Day:

World Water Day was first observed in 1993, as established by the United Nations. It is celebrated annually on March 22.

The theme for World Water Day 2024 was "Water for Peace". The theme called for people to work together to use water as a tool to build a more peaceful world.

CONCLUSION:

Idol worship, deeply rooted in cultural and religious traditions, has become a source of environmental concern due to the materials used for idols and their immersion in water bodies. Striking a balance between faith and ecological responsibility is essential, requiring stricter regulations, public awareness, and eco-friendly practices. Hindu philosophy views idol worship as a bridge to understanding the formless Brahman, with devotion leading to spiritual liberation (moksha). The Vayaviya Samhita emphasizes idol worship as a means to connect with the divine form and realize the higher truth.

Recommendation:

Public awareness is needed regarding, Delhi's guidelines for idol immersion focus on using natural materials for both idols and pooja items, such as coconut, fruits, milk, and flowers. They

encourage avoiding toxic materials and emphasize eco-friendly practices, highlighting the spiritual significance of each natural offering. The guidelines also stress the importance of respecting tradition, discouraging showy displays, and fostering real devotion. By integrating sustainable practices into religious customs, the guidelines aim to preserve both cultural heritage and environmental integrity. The emphasis on natural ingredients and the avoidance of non-biodegradable materials ensures that religious expression aligns with ecological responsibility, safeguarding water bodies and promoting spiritual well-being. So, using idols made of natural clay and organic dyes, along with minimal non-biodegradable decorations, can reduce the environmental impact. Creating artificial immersion tanks is one of the best solutions. Implementing controlled disposal methods for the idols and pooja materials can reduce the strain on water bodies and protect aquatic life. Raising awareness through campaigns about the harmful effects of idol immersion and promoting eco-friendly alternatives is essential for wider compliance. Local communities must be encouraged to participate in eco-friendly practices, ensuring that religious customs and environmental concerns coexist. Religious Gurus must come forward to preach the public that in Hinduism nature is worshipped as God and Goddess. So, by polluting the environment/water no one can receive the grace of God.

JOURNAL REFERENCES:

1. Mukherjee Sagarika, Paramanik Manas, [2022], Impact of Durga Idol Immersion on Water Bodies with Early and Late Removal of Idols in Asansol, International Journal of Zoological Investigations 08(01): 152-161
2. Ujjania N C, Gadhia Mohini, Bengani Ranjana, [2023], Impact assessment of Idol immersion on water quality, Journal of Sustainable water resources management 9(4)
3. Bengani Ranjana, Ujjania N C, Sangam Kinjal, Roy Lovely, [2020], Idol immersion and its consequences on water quality of Tapti river Surat, Gujarat. International Journal of Advanced Research in Biological Sciences volume 7, Issue 10-2020
4. T Jagadeeshwara Chari, Dharavath Ram Kumar, Bhukya Saikumar, [2023], Impact of immersion of Idol statue on water quality of Komaticheruvu Lake, Siddipet, Telangana, Journal of Aquaculture, 2023, 32:49-55

Thesis references:

1. Gupta, Sanjay Sen, [2012], Wooden idols of West Bengal and aesthetic approach, Department of visual arts, University of Calcutta, West Bengal
2. Shree, Jai, [2014], Study of Shakti worship in ancient India with special reference to Archaeological Sources, Department of History, Mamta Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh
3. Seal, Kousik, [2024], Impact of lead on genotoxicity and erythrocytes abnormalities of edible fishes a comparison between pre and post Idol immersion in the ponds of Hooghly area West Bengal, Name of the department Nutrition, Seacom Skills University, Sauria, West Bengal

Book references:

Bhattacharya, Haridas, [1956], The Cultural Heritage of India, Ramakrishna Mission publication, Volume-IV, pp 400-444

Rhetoric: The Attractive Artistry of Language

Dr. Neelam Narayan

Research Scholar, Department of Translation Studies
Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), INDIA
M.Ed. Ph.D. Sociology, Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Maharashtra.
Email: dr.neelamnarayan999@gmail.com

Abstract: Rhetoric is the art of persuasive communication, encompassing speech, writing, and visual media. Originating in ancient Greece, it was defined by Aristotle as the ability to discern the available means of persuasion in any situation. Rhetoric integrates logic, ethics, and emotional appeals to influence thought and action effectively. It plays a vital role in shaping public opinion, fostering dialogue, and driving social and political change. In practical terms, rhetoric is present in various forms, from political speeches and academic essays to advertisements and social media posts. Each context requires adapting style, content, and tone to suit the audience and purpose. True rhetoric seeks to convey truth and inspire ethical decision-making, but it can also be exploited through propaganda, demagoguery, or insincere messaging. Modern rhetoric extends beyond traditional spoken and written formats to include visual and digital elements, such as images and multimedia presentations, which also aim to persuade and influence. Rhetorical theory examines how language constructs meaning, mediates power, and fosters societal organization. In everyday life, rhetorical thinking involves strategic language use to achieve specific goals, appealing to emotions, logic, and values. Understanding rhetoric enables individuals to critically analyze communication, engage in meaningful discourse, and make informed decisions in a complex world.

Keywords: Language, English Language, Rhetoric, Communication.

INTRODUCTION:

Rhetoric is integral to language learning as it emphasizes effective communication, a cornerstone of mastering any language. It enhances communication skills by teaching learners to organize and present thoughts clearly, adapting style, tone, and word choice to various contexts. Exposure to idioms, expressions, and figures of speech enriches vocabulary, encouraging creative language use for articulating ideas effectively. Rhetoric sharpens critical thinking by requiring learners to analyze and construct arguments, fostering the ability to evaluate information and craft well-reasoned responses. It also aids in understanding cultural norms and communication styles, enabling meaningful language use while grasping nuances like persuasion and politeness in different cultures. Moreover, practicing rhetorical skills, such as public speaking, boosts confidence, helping learners use the language fluently and persuasively. By integrating rhetorical techniques, language learning becomes more dynamic, fostering skills for real-world communication and ensuring practical and cultural relevance. But, extremist rhetoric involves using exaggerated, divisive, or inflammatory language to promote extreme political, religious, or ideological views, often alienating or targeting specific groups.

Objectives of this research:

- To find the fundamentals of Rhetoric in the English language.
- To find the uses of the Rhetoric artistry in the English language.
- To find out the difficulties while using Rhetoric artistry in the English language.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Eric Jenkins, [2021], *On the Sublime: A Field Model for Understanding the Affective-Rhetorical Event*: Most scholars consider Longinus' contribution to rhetorical theory as part of a heritage that adds little more than other conventional manuals, especially because Longinus' offers much in the way of quotation but little in analytic explication. According to Robert Duran, for instance, there exists a "widely accepted view" that Longinus' import rests in its generative function for the concept of sublimity while otherwise having "no lasting substantive or theoretical influence". Likewise, many rhetorical scholars consider *On the Sublime* a conventional manual. Donald Russell, George Kennedy, and Jeffrey Walker each group the text with other manuals of the time, claiming that Longinus represents a tradition or treating it as one of many treatises on the "high style." Much of this reception concludes that Longinus' contributions to rhetorical theory are minimal, with his technical elucidation being mostly inadequate and circular. For instance, George Walsh depicts the text as equivocal and never "purified of errant intuition", and Guerlac contends that Longinus offers a tautological version in which "sublimity comes from sublimity". Phillip Shaw draws a similar conclusion, even claiming that, despite Longinus' stated intent, "it is easy to conclude that the author secretly regards his subject as formally unteachable". Ned O'Gorman disagrees to an extent, instead celebrating the text for allowing rhetoric to "come into its own" because "Longinus made rhetoric itself into a sublime object". In O'Gorman's read, *On the Sublime* constitutes a crucial moment in rhetorical history that valorizes rhetoric for direct effects rather than reducing rhetorical judgment to various ends like persuasion or identification.

John M. Murphy, [2019], *John F. Kennedy and the Liberal Persuasion*: John F. Kennedy looms large in the public imagination and has long captured the interest of rhetorical critics and scholars of the US Presidency. In this deeply researched and elegantly written book, John M. Murphy situated Kennedy's public address within its historical, political, economic, social, and cultural context to explain why. In the book's preface the mercy of us a compelling rationale for what he terms "rhetorical readings" of history and, in particular, the rhetoric of John F. Kennedy. Murphy rejects a division between "text and context, foreground and background" and instead argues for readings each rhetorical act as an "intertextual matrix" that "flows from the into others, while maintaining its integrity as a particular address at a specific moment". From the outset, then, this methodological approach invites the reader to understand John F. Kennedy's rhetoric as a reflection of history and a response to his allies, critics, and adversaries. What emerges is a rhetorical portrait of the thirty-fifth president of the United States and the times in which he lived, a picture that itself performs Murphy's call to examine well known public performances on the rhetorical stage as both a product and producer of their contexts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Researcher has adopted two key methods in this research:

1. Finding the tools of Rhetoric artistry.
2. Analysis of the uses of Rhetoric in the English language.
3. Data collection through Interview Schedule.

Source of Data:

1. Primary Source: Survey
2. Secondary Source: Literature, Documents, journals, reports, etc.

FINDINGS:

Rhetoric Definition:

"Rhetoric is an Art of Persuasive Writing and Public Speaking. It offers immense value by teaching essential communication skills. It empowers individuals to master the art of persuasion, enabling them to craft compelling arguments and convey ideas effectively in fields like business, law, politics, and

education. It also builds confidence by providing techniques for clear and impactful communication, enhancing delivery and influence for professionals, students, and leaders. Additionally, it fosters critical thinking by teaching the principles of rhetoric, such as audience analysis, logical argument construction, and emotional appeal. These skills enhance the ability to evaluate and present arguments rigorously. With practical applications in debates, presentations, negotiations, and professional writing, the course equips learners with tools for real-world success. For leaders and advocates, rhetoric is indispensable for inspiring teams and advancing causes. Overall, it lays a strong foundation for effective communication, critical for personal and professional growth.

Compulsory Components of Rhetoric:

1. **Rhetorical Substance/Structure:** The framework or organization of a rhetorical work to convey ideas persuasively.

Example: A political speech by Mahatma Gandhi during the Salt March exemplifies this structure:

- Introduction: Explaining the unjust salt tax.
- Narration: Describing British exploitation.
- Arguments: Advocating non-violent protest.
- Counter Argument: Refuting the notion that protests harm governance.
- Conclusion: Inspiring people to join the movement.

2. **Modes of Appeal:**

- **Logos:** Appeals to logic and reason.
 - Example: Ambedkar using statistics to highlight caste inequality in his speeches.
- **Ethos:** Establishes credibility through authority or trustworthiness.
 - Example: Rabindranath Tagore's reputation as a philosopher enhances the impact of his essays on nationalism.
- **Pathos:** Appeals to emotion.
 - Example: Bal Gangadhar Tilak's emotional call for Swaraj ("Freedom is my birthright") stirred patriotic feelings.

Modes of Appeal works on either Inductive or Deductive Reasoning:

(A). Inductive Reasoning:

- Definition: Drawing general conclusions based on specific observations.

Example: If the street is wet in the morning, one can conclude that it rained.

Types:

1. **Similarity:** Inferring based on similarities between two cases.
 - Example: Observing the success of the Green Revolution in Punjab and assuming similar methods will succeed in other Indian states.
2. **Difference:** Identifying distinctions to infer outcomes.
 - Example: Comparing literacy rates in Kerala and Bihar to infer the role of education policy differences.
3. **Cause and Effect:** Inferring causality from patterns.
 - Example: Noticing that government subsidies for fertilizers increased agricultural output in Haryana.
4. **Testimony:** Using expert opinions or personal accounts.
 - Example: Citing Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's advocacy for education reform to emphasize its importance.

5. **Statistics:** Generalizing based on numerical data.

- Example: Concluding that mobile penetration boosts digital literacy in India based on survey data.

(B). **Deductive Reasoning:**

- Definition: Deriving specific conclusions from general premises.

Example: All men are mortal. Joe is a man. Therefore Joe is mortal.

Types:

1. **Syllogism:** Logical structure with a major premise, minor premise, and conclusion.

- Example:
 - All citizens have voting rights (major premise).
 - Women are citizens (minor premise).
 - Therefore, women have voting rights.

2. **Validity and Truth:** Validity focuses on logical consistency; truth concerns factual accuracy.

- Example: "If all states with high literacy rates have better healthcare, Kerala has better healthcare" (valid, but not necessarily true).

3. **Enthymeme:** An argument with an implied premise.

- Example: "Kerala leads in health indices because of its literacy rate" (implies a link between literacy and health).

4. **Definition:** Reasoning by defining terms.

- Example: Defining "secularism" in the Indian Constitution to discuss its implications.

5. **Contradiction:** Opposing ideas that cannot coexist.

- Example: "India is a secular state but promotes religious policies" (contradictory claim).

6. **Contraries:** Statements that cannot both be true, but both can be false.

- Example: "India is either a socialist state or a capitalist state" (both could be false).

7. **Antecedent and Consequent:** If-then reasoning.

- Example: "If India invests in renewable energy (antecedent), it will reduce pollution (consequent)."

8. **Cause and Effect:** A specific cause leads to a specific effect.

- Example: Increased rural electrification causes higher agricultural productivity in India.

3. **Tropes:**

- Definition: Tropes involve the use of figurative language to convey meanings beyond the literal, often through comparisons or symbolic expressions.

Example: "Time is a thief" implies time takes away opportunities without literally being a thief.

Types:

- **Allusion:** Indirect reference.
 - Example: Nehru's "Tryst with Destiny" speech alluding to India's long fight for freedom.
- **Anaphora:** Repetition of phrases.
 - Example: Gandhi's "Do or Die" in the Quit India Movement speech.
- **Metaphor:** Implied comparison.
 - Example: India is referred to as "Mother" in patriotic songs.

- **Alliteration:** Repeated consonant sounds.
 - Example: “Delhi’s determined dream for democracy.”
- **Assonance:** Repeated vowel sounds.
 - Example: “India will rise with pride high.”
- **Sibilance:** Repeated 's' sounds.
 - Example: “Silent struggle shines.”
- **Metonymy:** Substituting a concept.
 - Example: Referring to the Indian Parliament as "Sansad."
- **Personification:** Giving human traits to non-humans.
 - Example: “India’s soul cries for justice.”
- **Paradox and Oxymoron:** Self-contradictory ideas.
 - Example: “Peaceful resistance” (Gandhian philosophy).

4. Style:

- **Definition:** Style refers to the distinct way a writer or speaker expresses ideas, shaped by choices in diction, tone, and syntax.

Example: In a formal style – “We cordially invite you to the event,” compared to a casual style – “Hey, come join us!”

Types:

- **Diction:** Word choice.
 - Example: Use of Sanskritized Hindi in speeches by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- **Syntax:** Sentence structure.
 - Example: Nehru’s flowing sentence structure in “Discovery of India.”

5. Schemes:

- **Definition:** Schemes involve the arrangement of words or phrases for artistic or rhetorical effect, often altering their usual order or pattern.

Example: “She came, she saw, she conquered” uses repetition of structure for emphasis.

Types:

- **Antithesis:** Contrasting ideas.
 - Example: “Freedom is not given; it is taken.” – Subhas Chandra Bose.
- **Elision (Ellipsis):** Omitting parts of sentences.
 - Example: “We shall win... because we must.”
- **Hyperbaton:** Unusual word order.
 - Example: “A mighty nation, India is becoming.”
- **Chiasmus and Antimetabole:** Reversal of structures.
 - Example: “Ask not what the country can do for you; ask what you can do for the country.”
- **Polyptoton:** Repeating words in different forms.
 - Example: “Fight for freedom, for freedom we fight.”
- **Parallelism:** Repetition of structure.
 - Example: “We shall fight in fields, fight in streets, and fight in the hearts of men.”

Parallelism is the tool which can be used in both inductive and deductive reasoning.

Inductive reasoning

Starts with specific examples and generalizes. For example, one might notice that parallel lines never meet, and conclude that this is true for all parallel lines. This is because one can't draw lines to infinity to prove it. Deductive reasoning Starts with general principles and applies them to a specific case. For

example, one might know that if two lines are cut by a transversal line, then the corresponding angles are congruent. If one also knows that angles 1 and 2 are congruent, one can conclude that lines 1 and 2 are parallel. In this way, in geometry, one can use inductive reasoning to find patterns and then use deductive reasoning to prove those patterns. For example, one might notice that all right triangles have two acute angles. One can then use deductive reasoning to prove that this is true for all right triangles.

6. Fallacies:

● Definition: Logical fallacies are errors in reasoning that undermine the validity of an argument.
Example: "It's true, because many people think it's true".

Types:

1. **Fallacies of Fact:** Errors based on incorrect or distorted facts.

- Example: "India was never colonized by any foreign power other than the British" (ignores Portuguese and Mughal rule).

2. **Fallacies of Reasoning:** Logical inconsistencies that make an argument flawed.

- Example: "If India grows economically, every citizen will automatically become rich."

3. **Inductive Fallacies:** Errors in reasoning when making generalizations from insufficient evidence.

- Example: "Because two start-ups succeeded in Bangalore, all start-ups in India will succeed."

4. **Faulty Generalization:** Drawing a conclusion about a group from a small sample.

- Example: "All Indian politicians are corrupt because two were involved in scams."

5. **Slippery Slope:** Claiming that one event will inevitably lead to extreme consequences.

- Example: "If India bans diesel cars, it will destroy the automobile industry and lead to mass unemployment."

6. **Deductive Fallacies:** Errors in reasoning when conclusions do not logically follow from premises.

- Example: "If all engineers are good at math, and Ramesh is an engineer, he must be good at all subjects."

7. **Equivocation:** Using ambiguous language to mislead.

- Example: "India is a democratic country; therefore, every citizen gets what they vote for."

8. **Either/Or Fallacy:** Presenting only two options when others exist.

- Example: "Either India becomes a superpower, or it remains a developing country forever."

9. **Faulty Causal Associations:** Assuming a false cause-effect relationship.

- Example: "India's cricket team wins matches because of Sachin Tendulkar's lucky presence."

10. **Context-Dependent Fallacies:** Arguments that ignore contextual factors.

- Example: "India's rural population is poor because they lack jobs" (ignores other factors like education and infrastructure).

11. **Argument ad Hominem:** Attacking the person instead of the argument.

- Example: "Your views on economic policy are invalid because you're not an economist."

12. **Straw Man:** Misrepresenting someone's argument to attack it.

- Example: "Those who oppose tax cuts want India to remain poor."

13. **Argumentum ad Populum:** Appealing to popular opinion rather than evidence.

- Example: "Everyone believes yoga originated in India, so it must be true."

14. **Leading or Complex Question:** Framing a question that presumes guilt or an unproven premise.

- Example: "When will India stop being corrupt?" (assumes corruption without proving it)

In this manner one can find that various kinds of fallacies may create a false impression. In Rhetoric language it is called 'Refutation'.

7. **Refutation:**

A refutation proves that something is false. Refutations pop up often in law debates and philosophical arguments. While a validation tells you something is true, a refutation does the opposite: it says or proves that something is untrue, refuting the claim.

Example:

Claim: "The Indian education system does not produce skilled professionals."

Refutation:

This claim is false. India has consistently produced skilled professionals who have excelled globally. For instance:

- Indian engineers and scientists have contributed significantly to organizations like NASA, Google, and Microsoft.
- Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google, and Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, are products of the Indian education system.
- Prestigious institutions like the IITs and IIMs are globally recognized for producing top-tier talent in engineering, management, and technology.
- India's IT sector, powered by professionals from Indian educational institutions, contributes significantly to the global economy and innovation.

By showcasing these facts, the claim is refuted as the evidence clearly disproves the argument that the Indian education system fails to produce skilled professionals.

8. **Extremist Rhetoric:**

Definition: Highly provocative or polarizing speech. Extremist rhetoric involves using exaggerated, polarizing, or divisive language to push an agenda, often disregarding opposing viewpoints or moderation, to incite strong reactions or compliance.

Example. Extremist Rhetoric in the Context of Reservation in Indian Educational Institutes: Extremist rhetoric on reservations often polarizes debates, portraying reservations as either the sole solution to inequality or as the root cause of merit erosion. For instance, some argue that reservations unfairly disadvantage "meritorious" students, branding them as victims of reverse discrimination. On the other hand, others may claim that reservation policies alone can entirely resolve systemic inequalities, ignoring the need for broader socio-economic reforms. Such rhetoric fuels hostility between communities, oversimplifies complex socio-political issues, and undermines constructive dialogue. A balanced approach requires recognizing reservations as one tool among many to address historical injustices while striving for equitable education reforms.

The key points of collected data, relevant to this topic:

This article presents the findings of a survey conducted at Government Senior Secondary School, Sector 104, Gurgaon, Haryana. The school serves students from classes VI to XI, with a total enrollment of 464 students, comprising 252 boys and 212 girls, including two differently-abled girls.

The teaching staff consists of 21 members, including Post Graduate Teachers (PGTs), Trained Graduate Teachers (TGTs), and the principal. For language instruction, the school has appointed two PGTs and three TGTs. Hindi and English are compulsory subjects, while Sanskrit is offered as a third language up to class VIII.

Between English and Hindi, only 5 students found Hindi difficult, whereas a significant majority of 443 students identified English as the most challenging language to study.

Students find Grammar difficult in learning English. Apart from grammar, they find Vocabulary, Syntax, Verbal Proficiency, Contextual Understanding, and the meaning and usage of idioms and phrases difficult to master. The students also find rhetoric challenging to understand and to use due because of following factors:

1. **Language Barrier:** Many rural students are more comfortable in their regional language, while rhetoric is often introduced in English or Hindi. Complex rhetorical devices like metaphors, irony, or hyperbole may feel inaccessible.
 - Example: They struggle to understand the phrase "The pen is mightier than the sword" due to its metaphorical nature, interpreting it literally.
2. **Limited Exposure:** They have limited access to literary or communicative activities that teach rhetorical techniques, such as debates or speech competitions.
 - Example: A school debate on "Over use of AI" confuses students, because they are unfamiliar with formal arguments or persuasive techniques.
3. **Contextual Disconnect:** Rhetorical examples in textbooks often rely on global contexts.
 - Example: Lessons on persuasive writing featuring urban issues like traffic congestion may feel irrelevant to a rural student concerned with agricultural challenges.
4. **Lack of Practice Opportunities:** These schools lack resources or platforms like public speaking clubs, limiting students' chances to practice rhetoric.
 - Example: A student might find it daunting to participate in a village panchayat meeting to voice concerns about school infrastructure.

The researcher found that these issues should be addressed by localized and contextually relevant examples, along with bilingual teaching, which can make rhetoric more accessible for these school students.

CONCLUSION:

Rhetoric involves various elements that contribute to effective communication and persuasion. Substance refers to the core idea or point being communicated. The mode of appeal includes logos (logical reasoning through deductive and inductive approaches), ethos (ethical appeal based on credibility), and pathos (emotional connection with the audience). Designing arguments involves structured steps: introduction, narration (context or situation), presentation of arguments and facts, counter arguments, and conclusion. Syntax (word order) and diction (word choice) shape the clarity and impact of communication. Tropes like allusion evoke associations with a specific idea or person, while parallelism adds rhythm and balance. Specific techniques include anaphora (repeating initial words for emphasis), metaphor (comparing unrelated things for symbolic meaning), alliteration (repetition of consonant sounds), assonance (repeated vowel sounds), and sibilance (repetition of "s" sounds). When designing an argument, it is essential to articulate the main idea, introduce the subject, engage the audience, state facts, present arguments, address counterarguments, and conclude with a peroration (summation and call to action). Each component works cohesively to persuade the audience and effectively deliver the intended message.

Recommendation:

For a Rhetoric work design, an argument should be framed in following steps:

1. Articulating your main Idea,
2. Introduction,
3. Breaking the Silence,
4. Naming the subject,
5. Engaging the audience,
6. Statement of fact,
7. Argument,
8. Counter arguments,
9. Peroration: Final summation or call for action.

JOURNAL REFERENCES:

1. John M Murphy, [2019], John F. Kennedy and the Liberal Persuasion, Journal for the History of Rhetoric, Volume 24 - Issue 3, Pages 336-338
2. Eric Jenkins, [2021], On the Sublime: A Field Model for Understanding the Affective-Rhetorical Event, Journal for the History of Rhetoric, Volume 24, Issue-3, Pages 315-355

THESIS REFERENCES:

1. Salihu, Sakina, [2004], Role of grammar and rhetoric in improving communicative competence at the PG level an experiment, Department of English Language Studies, Madurai Kamaraj University.
2. Gangavane, Dipti Dilip, [1990], Towards a theory of persuasive competence studies in language and rhetoric, Department of Philosophy, Savitribai Phule Pune University.
3. Singh, Ankit, [2023], Politics and performance Rhetorics of Hindutva leadership in India 1990s to present, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University.
4. Biswas, Chumki, [2015], Development of an oral skills program focusing on rhetorical abilities and fluency activities through task based teaching, English Department, University of Mumbai.
5. Kumar, Jayant, [2023], Rhetoric and its publics some aspects and reception in India CA 1967-2017, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Using ICT to Teach English Listening and Speaking Skills to Marathi Medium Students

¹Sehnaz Khushrow Irani, ²Dr. Rani Sarode

¹ Research Scholar, Dept. of English and Languages, Sandip University, Nashik

² Associate Professor, Dept. of English and Languages, Sandip University, Nashik

¹ Email - camsehanz@gmail.com, ² drranisarode@gmail.com

Abstract: This paper explores the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance English listening and speaking skills among Marathi medium students. These students face significant challenges in learning English due to linguistic differences and limited exposure to the language. ICT offers innovative tools, such as language learning apps, multimedia resources, and interactive platforms, which can bridge these gaps and provide an immersive language-learning experience. The paper highlights the importance of a student-centered approach in improving pronunciation, vocabulary, and conversational skills. Additionally, it examines the role of teacher training and policy frameworks in ensuring the effective integration of ICT in classrooms.

Keywords: ICT in education, English language teaching, Marathi medium, listening skills, speaking skills, student-centered learning, language acquisition, educational technology

INTRODUCTION:

Using ICT in education has changed the way languages are taught, opening up many new possibilities for teaching. For Marathi medium students, learning English listening and speaking skills is particularly tough due to the differences in language and the lack of exposure to English. ICT can help bridge this gap by creating engaging, interactive environments where students can practice and improve. This paper focuses on how ICT can be used to teach English listening and speaking, especially in primary schools where students are just starting to learn the language.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

ICT in Language Learning The benefits of ICT in language education are well-known, with studies showing how it helps with communication, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Tools like audio-visual aids, interactive apps, and digital storytelling make learning fun and give students a real-world context for the language. ICT can be especially helpful for non-native English speakers by giving them opportunities to use the language in practical ways (Dudeny & Hockly, 2012).

Challenges for Marathi Medium Students Marathi medium students face some unique challenges when learning English. Limited access to English-speaking environments and a lack of relevant materials make it harder for them to learn. This shows the need for ICT tools that are tailored to the students' native language and culture. Using a bilingual approach in teaching can help students understand English in a way that makes sense to them (Apte, 2020).

The Importance of Listening and Speaking Skills Listening and speaking are the foundation of learning any language. Research shows that focusing on these skills early on helps students become more confident and proficient. Tools like speech recognition software and interactive dialogues are great ways to help young learners improve these skills (Brown, 2007).

Global View on ICT in Education ICT isn't just about language learning. It also helps students develop problem-solving, collaboration, and digital skills. Studies from countries like Finland and South Korea show that ICT in education leads to better overall skills. For Marathi medium students, learning with technology can also help them develop the digital skills they'll need for the future (World Economic Forum, 2020).

How to Use ICT Effectively

Interactive Multimedia Tools Multimedia tools like animated stories and songs can keep students engaged and provide them with useful language input. Young learners especially benefit from visuals and sounds that help them link spoken words to written text. Platforms like YouTube Kids, with its collection of English rhymes and stories with subtitles, can help students connect the two.

Gamification in Language Learning Gamifying learning, or adding game-like elements to lessons, has been shown to boost engagement. Language apps like Duolingo and Hello English do this by giving students rewards like points and badges, making learning fun. These apps can be customized to support bilingual learners, helping them feel more comfortable navigating the material.

Speech Recognition Software Tools like Google Voice Typing can help students practice pronunciation and fluency by giving instant feedback. In class, teachers can use these tools in activities like role-playing or storytelling, making learning English fun and interactive.

Teacher Training For ICT to work in the classroom, teachers need to be prepared. Professional development programs focusing on ICT skills and teaching methods can help teachers use technology effectively. These programs should include hands-on practice, lessons on how to create interactive lessons, and ways to assess students' language skills using technology.

Overcoming the Digital Divide

Infrastructure Challenges One of the biggest barriers to using ICT in Marathi medium schools is the lack of digital infrastructure, especially in rural areas. Not all students have access to devices or reliable internet, and some schools don't have the funding needed to make these changes. Solving these issues requires effort from the government, educational organizations, and local communities.

Policy Support

Government programs like Digital India aim to improve digital access and literacy across the country, offering a framework to bring ICT into schools. For Marathi medium students, targeted initiatives that combine digital literacy and language learning can help address gaps and provide equal opportunities for all students.

Broader Impact of ICT in Education

Building Digital Skills

ICT doesn't just teach English—it also helps students develop essential digital skills. As technology becomes more important in everyday life, learning how to use it is crucial. By using ICT tools in language classrooms, students can gain skills like navigating devices, finding online resources, and practicing safe internet habits.

Promoting Collaborative Learning

ICT tools like Google Classroom make it easy for students to work together on projects, share ideas, and get feedback in real time. This collaborative learning can be particularly beneficial for language learners, as interacting with peers helps improve communication skills.

Creating Inclusive Learning ICT can also make education more inclusive. Tools like text-to-speech software and visual aids support students with different learning needs, ensuring everyone can benefit from the lessons. For Marathi medium students, bilingual resources can help bridge language barriers and make learning more accessible.

CONCLUSION:

Using ICT to teach English listening and speaking to Marathi medium students has the potential to change the way they learn the language. By creating interactive and engaging environments, ICT can help students overcome language barriers and build their communication skills. However, challenges like infrastructure issues and the need for teacher training must be addressed for ICT to be truly effective. With the right policies and support, ICT can improve language education and give students the skills they need to succeed in the digital world.

REFERENCES:

1. Apte, V. (2020). *Bridging linguistic gaps: Language education in Marathi medium schools*. Pune University Press.
2. Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
3. Dudeney, G., & Hockly, N. (2012). ICT in ELT: How to develop communication skills. *ELT Journal*, 66(1), 73-81.
4. Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
5. MSCERT. (2017). *Maharashtra state curriculum framework 2017*. Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production & Curriculum Research.
6. World Economic Forum. (2020). *The future of jobs report*. WEF Publications.

Linguistic challenges in Amitav Ghosh's *the nutmeg's curse: Parables for a planet in crisis*

¹V.Kavitha, ²Dr.S.Veeralakshmi

¹Assistant Professor of English, Kunthavai Naacchiyaar Government Arts College for Women
Thanjavur-613007

Email: v.kavitha@kngac.ac.in

²Associate Professor, Department of Translation Tamil University Thanjavur Tamilnadu.

INTRODUCTION:

Amitav Ghosh, a celebrated Indian writer, has consistently examined themes of colonialism, environmental degradation, and cultural hegemony in his works. His 2021 book, *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis*, extends this exploration by investigating the historical and linguistic dimensions of climate change and imperialism. One of the critical aspects of the book is its linguistic complexity, which presents interpretative and analytical challenges to readers. Ghosh's language choices, intertextual references, and engagement with non-Western epistemologies both complicate comprehension and enrich the narrative. This article delves into the linguistic challenges in *The Nutmeg's Curse*, illustrating how language functions as a tool of resistance, inclusion, and exclusion in discussions on climate change and colonialism.

COMPLEXITY OF LANGUAGE AND STYLE:

Ghosh's writing in *The Nutmeg's Curse* is deeply academic and philosophical, requiring familiarity with historical, anthropological, and ecological discourses. Unlike his fictional works that rely on storytelling and character-driven narratives, this book leans heavily on argumentation and analysis, making it a challenging read for those unaccustomed to such a style. His reliance on specialized terminology and abstract concepts may pose difficulties for casual readers, limiting the accessibility of his message. Additionally, Ghosh employs long, intricate sentences that sometimes obscure clarity. While his rhetorical flourishes enhance the literary quality of the text, they also contribute to its complexity. Readers must engage with the text attentively, often revisiting sections to fully grasp the layered meanings embedded in his discourse.

Use of Multilingual References

A major linguistic challenge in *The Nutmeg's Curse* arises from Ghosh's use of multilingual references. He integrates words, phrases, and concepts from different languages, including Sanskrit, Arabic, Dutch, and Malay, reflecting the global nature of colonial histories. While these references enrich the text and ground it in diverse cultural perspectives, they also create interpretative difficulties for readers unfamiliar with these languages. For instance, Ghosh incorporates indigenous terminologies related to nature and the environment, challenging the dominance of English in climate discourse. However, the lack of direct translations or extensive explanations can make it difficult for some readers to fully grasp the significance of these terms. As a result, linguistic diversity both deepens the narrative and presents a barrier to immediate understanding.

Intertextuality and Historical Allusions

Ghosh's text is highly intertextual, engaging with numerous literary, historical, and philosophical texts. He frequently references colonial records, religious scriptures, and contemporary scholarship on environmental history. While this intertextuality enhances the book's intellectual depth, it also makes it more challenging for readers unfamiliar with these sources. For example, Amitav Ghosh

draws on the works of scholars such as Jason Moore and Edward Said, linking ecological crises with colonialism and capitalism. He also invokes historical events such as the Banda Massacre of 1621, which may not be widely known to general readers. Understanding these references often requires external research, making the reading experience more demanding but ultimately more rewarding for those who engage deeply.

The Challenge of Translating Non-Western Epistemologies

One of the most significant linguistic challenges in *The Nutmeg's Curse* is Ghosh's attempt to convey non-Western ways of knowing and understanding the world. He critiques the Eurocentric framework of knowledge production, emphasizing indigenous and non-Western perspectives on climate and nature. However, articulating these perspectives in English—a language deeply rooted in Western epistemology—poses a challenge in itself. Ghosh frequently discusses indigenous worldviews that lack direct equivalents in English. Concepts such as interconnectedness, animism, and deep time are often conveyed through metaphor and allegory, requiring careful interpretation. Moreover, some indigenous terms do not translate neatly into English, leading to potential distortions of meaning. This linguistic dilemma highlights the broader issue of linguistic imperialism in academic and literary discourses.

The Politics of Language in Climate Discourse

Another challenge in *The Nutmeg's Curse* is Ghosh's engagement with the politics of language in climate discourse. He argues that mainstream discussions about climate change are often framed in technocratic and scientific language that excludes non-experts. By contrast, Ghosh adopts a narrative approach that incorporates storytelling, mythology, and historical analysis, making his arguments more accessible yet still complex. However, this approach also raises questions about audience engagement. While Ghosh seeks to challenge the dominant climate discourse, his own linguistic choices sometimes mirror the very exclusivity he critiques. The academic tone of his writing, coupled with dense philosophical arguments, can make the book inaccessible to some readers, particularly those outside academic and literary circles.

Strategies to Overcome Linguistic Challenges

While *The Nutmeg's Curse* presents significant linguistic challenges, there are ways to navigate and appreciate its complexity:

1. **Supplementary Reading:** Engaging with related works on colonialism, environmental history, and indigenous knowledge systems can provide valuable context.
2. **Glossaries and Annotations:** Keeping a glossary of key terms and concepts can aid comprehension.
3. **Slow Reading and Reflection:** Taking time to read and reflect on Ghosh's arguments helps in grasping their deeper implications.
4. **Discussion and Analysis:** Engaging in discussions, whether in academic settings or book clubs, can enhance understanding through multiple perspectives.

CONCLUSION:

Amitav Ghosh's *The Nutmeg's Curse* is a linguistically rich and intellectually demanding work that challenges a reader to rethink colonial histories, environmental crises, and knowledge production. While the book's complex language, multilingual references, intertextuality, and epistemological challenges may pose difficulties for a reader, these very aspects also deepen its impact. Ghosh's exploration of language as both a barrier and a tool of resistance underscores the importance of linguistic diversity in shaping global discourses on climate change and justice. By engaging with the book's linguistic challenges, one can gain a more profound appreciation of its critical arguments and its contribution to contemporary thought.

REFERENCES:

1. Ghosh, Amitav. *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis*. University of Chicago Press, 2021.
2. Moore, Jason W. *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. Verso Books, 2015.
3. Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. Pantheon Books, 1978.

Coloniality and Environment: Subaltern Ecologies in Contemporary North - Eastern Literature.

Ritesh Kumar Tewary

PhD Research Scholar, Department of English

Binod Bihari Mahto Koyalanchal University, Dhanbad, Jharkhand.

Address: Near Jharkhand Public School, New Bhamal, Nirsa, PO & PS - Nirsa, Dhanbad, Jharkhand – 828205.

Email: tritesh349@gmail.com

Abstract: *Subaltern literature is a branch of postcolonial literature that highlights the themes of lives of marginalized people, their oppression, discrimination and subordination. The main aim of subaltern literature is to raise awareness of social and economic perspectives and render voice to the marginalized sections of the society. The paper focuses on the subaltern ecology of the North-Eastern part of India through the poetry of contemporary writers like Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai. The poems of these two writers concerning nature and ecology would be analyzed to determine the effects of colonialism. The ecological environment of the region is used as a tool to show how nature and ecology are linked to the memory, identity and culture of the indigenous tribes residing there. Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai through their poetry try to give voice to the subaltern section of society. The north-eastern region of India has been facing challenges related to wavering identity, loss of culture, oppression, neglect and prejudice. The region is full of flora and fauna and is home to so many natural and useful herbs. The natural landscape is a symbol of collective memory and identity of the indigenous tribes. The research paper demonstrates how contemporary authors like Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai represent their homeland and try to express their struggles, dilemma and agony. Colonialism hampered the growth of the region, terming the people or tribe as primitive and uncivilized, providing them the status of subalterns. Even after independence, the North-eastern part of India has not got its due position or status. Ao and Dai through their poetry put emphasis on this aspect in a sovereign way. Through qualitative analysis, including text readings, the research aims to uncover the issues concerning coloniality and environment as well as the topic of subalternity in contemporary north-eastern writing. Overall, the study contributes to a greater understanding of subaltern ecology in the realm of contemporary north-eastern writing. It would also shed light on stories which are hidden in the lap of nature which can help the region grow and be a part of the main-frame of the nation.*

Key Words: *Nature, Ecology, Environment, Colonialism, Subaltern, North-Eastern writing, Identity.*

INTRODUCTION:

Coloniality and Environment in the context of Contemporary North-Eastern writing has been the subject of discussion in the recent time. Coloniality had a great impact on environmental conditions of North-east India. Ecocriticism is a very relevant term in this context. Ecocriticism is the study of literature and ecology from a multidisciplinary point of view. It examines how nature and culture are interrelated and have an impact on one another. Culture is a very effective tool to portray one's identity and if we have a specific cultural identity, we can have our distinct voice to be established as an autonomous group. The major goal of ecocriticism is to uplift the voices of marginalized sections of

any society and develop a relationship between culture and the environment. Temsula Ao, one of the most prominent authors of North-Eastern India, has a significant contribution in the literature. It is very obvious from the literature coming out of the region and specifically from Ao's poetry that there is an earnest and mutual wish for revival of cultures as people consider themselves not belonging to an identity that is artificially constructed and thrust upon them by any foreign or outside entities. The British administrators wanted to shift or change through Evolution, and the tribes through Revolution. Temsula Ao has an opinion that identities are made, un-made and remade and in that way, a new and distinct identity is created. The research paper exemplifies the issue through her poetry. Her poems like *The Forest, Pristine, Blessings, My Hills, The Bamboo, Lament for an Earth, A Strange Place*, etc. speak about her tribe, Ao-Naga. The themes of subalternity, coloniality and ecology have been examined in a profound way.

Mamang Dai is another contemporary North-Eastern poet whose poetry concerning ecology would be discussed in the paper. She portrays the conditions of tribes in the region of Arunachal Pradesh. Her poetry puts emphasis on the impact of modernization ushered in by colonizers. She opines very strongly that there is a great need for ecological stability in order to have a distinct identity. Traditional tribal beliefs is one of her most popular topics to be studied. She highlights the negative effects of modernity, saying that modernization pushes the indigenous tribes into the shell of subalternity. Her poems to be discussed are *The Hills Speak, Rivers, Birthplace, The Voice of the Mountain, The Sorrow of Women*, etc. Through these poems, she brings out the struggles of her community and also attempts to provide them some kind of voice to uplift them. The paper is an effort to determine the impacts of coloniality on the environment and ecology of the North-Eastern region of India. Subaltern ecologies have been discussed through the poetry of Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai. The main objective of the paper is to throw light on the aspects of subalternity, coloniality and ecology through the poetry of contemporary North-Eastern authors. These themes are the dynamic ones in the contemporary scenario and the paper is all about it.

THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION OF INDIA: A HIDDEN TREASURE:

The North-East region of India, popularly known as the "Seven Sisters of India" comprises seven states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura and Mizoram. This region has a rich cultural heritage and their culture is linked with the ecological environment. The region is full of flora and fauna. The forest cover has various types of medicinal plants which are very useful for human beings. The scenic background adds another dimension to the area. It adds to the beauty of the place. All the seven states could prove to be magnificent places for tourists and hence could prove very beneficial in terms of revenue. The variety of the north-eastern part of India makes the region unique and special. There are more than 200 tribes residing there and each tribe has its own traditions, culture, language and customs. Our life is entirely dependent on nature. Whatever is needed in life is obtained from nature, directly or indirectly and the north-east region is rich in natural ingredients. The matter of concern is that the region has not got the identity that it deserves. During the colonial administration, the British government constantly hampered the traditions and cultures of the tribes. The indigenous tribes were looked upon as primitives, outdated and uncivilized as they worshipped nature and its elements. Nature and Ecology are connected to the identity, culture and memory of the tribes and as a result, ecology is everything for them. But the colonizers started destroying the natural environment in the name of development. It can be said that the colonizers tried to loot the treasure in the name of civilization and modernity, thus establishing the region as subaltern.

Even after the period of independence or in the post-colonial times, the situation has not changed much. The military and the government of India, instead of preserving the treasure, or protecting the identity and traditions of tribes, played a significant role in oppressing, marginalizing and subjugating the tribes. Nature and women are considered in feminine terms because of their reproductive characteristics and the women are subjugated by the patriarchal society. In every society, women play a very vital role in safeguarding their culture, traditions and customs. In a patriarchal society, a woman is not allowed to do that.

During colonial rule, the local people of the north-east had conflicts with the British rulers and that was fine. But even in the post-colonial era, the situation was more or less the same. After independence, the people of the region created conflicts among themselves. The tribes got divided. The military, government and the third prominent group arising called 'the undergrounds' were the main reasons behind the conflict. The indigenous tribes were in a state of chaos and confusion whom to support. In addition to all these factors, one of the prime factors for the region not being able to get its due position is people's selfish motives. For instance, more and more trees are being uprooted or cut down in the name of so-called development. The lush and green surroundings is being converted into barren lands for construction of buildings, factories, etc. As a result, the north-eastern part of India has not been able to come to the fore-front. It has been unable to enter into the main-frame of the nation. If proper steps are taken by the government and the authorities concerned, the north-east of India can prove to be a blessing for the whole country. The variety this area has in its store in the form of natural vegetation, animals, languages, customs, etc. is an authentic aspect. If political and other types of conflicts are handled in an efficient way. This region can play a significant role in the country's development. But it has not received its due status. It has not been able to achieve the transition from local to global. This region has the potential to get identified with the global world and in order to achieve that, proper planning is needed. Along with that, political strategies are required. The violence in the form of terrorist attacks and attacks by other groups is a matter of urgent concern. The people residing in the states of north-eastern part of India are constantly under threat. As a result, the local people migrate to other places and the people from other states hesitate to enter the region. India is full of tourist places attracting Indians as well as foreign tourists. If this area gets rid of all types of conflicts and problems mentioned above, the region could develop as a great tourist hub. And then, the area can be termed not as 'Hidden Treasure' but as 'Emerging Treasure'.

Coloniality and Ecology in the contemporary North-Eastern literature: -

Coloniality and Ecology are two aspects which play great roles in the north-eastern region of India. This would be analyzed through the poetry of contemporary North-Eastern literature.

Let's discuss coloniality in this context. Coloniality is a mixture of behaviors, principles and the structures of power that arises from colonialism and it keeps influencing culture, traditions and knowledge production. Coloniality is an ideology regulating intellectual perspective of the modern world. As already mentioned in the previous section, the colonizers tried to suppress the civilizations, traditions and customs of the tribes in the name of modernity. Temsula Ao states in one of her poems, *The Forest*:

"The Forest once a home
to spirits and beasts,
Now silent and forlorn
a victim of our greed."

The poem highlights the negative effects of modernity on indigenous cultures of the tribes. The colonizers' main motive was expanding their business and to get that, they used the concept of modernity. Ao tries to say that the colonial administration used the theme of 'development' to satisfy their own greed. For instance, indigenous tribes are great devotees of nature and worship the natural elements like rivers, hills, jungles, etc. but the colonizers were of the opinion that this action was uncivilized and meaningless. They influenced people according to their own wishes. They started cutting green trees in order to set up factories, railway lines and other constructive elements. The result was deforestation and loss of natural habitat and in connection to that, the loss of their culture, traditions and beliefs. Ultimately, greed is the reason behind this. In the poem *The Hills Speak*, Mamang Dai demonstrates how economic expansion started by the British authority affects the ecological surroundings and the tribes' quality of life. The indigenous tribes sensed a feeling of distance with nature. A sense of disparity was created between ecology and indigenous tribes. The colonizers mocked at the indigenous knowledge system and did all the tasks that they wanted to do in the name of

modernity. In one of her poems, *Pristine*, Ao talks about the effects of modernization and industrialization on the environment. She sheds light on the fact that the natural landscape of the north-eastern region is continuously losing its fertility and is becoming barren due to the industries and factories. In these poems, the colonizers are described as ‘strangers’ as they are the outsiders and do not care at all for the local landscape. They really act like strangers or invaders. So, colonialism is a huge factor in deteriorating the harmony of man and nature. Now let us talk about the ecological aspect of north-eastern India. As already mentioned, the north-eastern region is rich in flora and fauna. The diverse nature of flora and fauna makes the place unique. The poetry of Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai is resplendent with ecological elements. Nature and Ecology are deeply connected to their culture, identity and traditions and they have stated this emphatically in their poetry. The poem *Blessings* by Temsula Ao needs to be discussed here. It is a poem from the poetry collection *Songs that Tell*. Ao exemplifies the natural surroundings as a blessing for human beings and for other living creatures. Nature is really a blessing for us as our life is run or controlled by nature. The natural resources like air, water, woods, food, etc, which are obtained from nature are a special boon or gift. The poem criticizes the so-called advancement and development of human civilization that misuses the blessings of nature and as a result, raises class struggles. Man’s greed results in overusing the natural resources. In want of more and more, we keep extracting natural resources limitlessly and the balance of nature is demolished. The blessing of nature becomes poison for the human beings. So, the poem is an attempt to raise consciousness among human beings about the benefits of natural resources and to avail it, it needs to be used in a certain limit.

***My Hills* is another such poem by Temsula Ao highlighting the importance of nature. Some lines from the poem are very relevant in today’s scenario:**

- “The rivers are running red, the hillsides are bare, and the seasons have lost their magic.”
- “Because the very essence of my hills are lost forever.”
- “The sound and sights have altered in my hills.”
- “I no longer know my hills, the birdsong is gone, replaced by the staccato of sophisticated weaponry.”

These lines from the poem by Temsula Ao is clear evidence of the fact that the hills in her living area were once rich with natural beauty and peace, but now the hills have become barren and dull because of wars and conflicts. As said by William Wordsworth, Nature is a source of peace, solace and happiness. Natural beauty gives us peace by satisfying our senses and wisdom. Ao states in the poem that earlier, the hillsides were a great source of birdsong, lovely sights, which evokes a sense of calmness in this busy materialistic world. But the saddening fact is that man’s selfish motives and the want of more power and authority have created havoc in nature in the forms of weapons, wars and rampage. Mamang Dai also analyses the themes related to ecology through her poetry. For instance, the poem *Rivers* in her collection *River Poems* is one such poem related to nature. Dai treats the rivers as a human soul. She is of the opinion that the river is a source of dreams, self-punishment and pilgrimage. Rivers are the priceless part of nature that are life-giving. It sustains life forever. The region surrounding any river is full of vegetation. Along with that, so many aquatic animals are found in a river. These creatures are a great source of food for people. But here again, the concerning issue is people’s extreme greed. They hunt in extreme amounts. The result is that the balance of the natural ecosystem is destroyed. Mamang Dai sheds light on many ecological themes in her poetry. Nature is her central theme in poetry. She puts emphasis on the relationship between humans and nature. Humans are an integral part of nature and it cannot be separated or neglected at all. It is our center of life. It cannot be given the status of subaltern. Dai is primarily concerned with the impacts of modernization on nature. Nature is facing a huge setback because of modernization. So, she focuses on the urgent need of ecological stability. Unless and until the ecology is stabled, peace and happiness cannot be achieved. One more poem *Birthplace* from her poetry collection *River Poems* is important to note. To quote a few lines from the poem:

“We are the children of the rain
of the cloud woman,
brother to the stone and bat
in our cradle of bamboo and vine
in our long houses we slept,
and when morning came
we were refreshed.”

The poem is a clear manifestation of the fact that these human beings need to understand very well that they are closely attached to nature, including both the living and nonliving elements. Nature is our birthplace, our workplace as well as our death place. It needs to be looked upon as our own home, our abode. The approach should be earth-centered and not human centered. Man should not try to become the master of nature and putting it into the margins would be fatal for human beings. Ecology and life on earth are linked and that link should not be broken for any purposes. Nature is at our very centre. It is an inseparable part of life and Dai and Ao try to demonstrate that through their poetry.

Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai: The voices of the subalterns and the marginalized The contemporary poets from north-eastern India, Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai render voices to the indigenous tribes of the region through their poetry. The indigenous tribes are put into the margins of the society by the government and political parties, militants and the dominant groups. These two writers have tried to portray the conditions of the tribes through their narratives. Temsula Ao is a poet from Nagaland. Her poetry collections have the word ‘Songs’ in them like *Songs that Tell*, *Songs that try to say*, *Book of Songs*, *Songs from here and there*, etc. These poetry collections are a rich symbol of oral traditions or narratives of the Ao-Naga tribes. Stories connected to the history of tribes are passed down to the generations through folktales in the form of oral narratives. Temsula Ao has beautifully given her voice to the oppressed and marginalized sections of her society through her poetry.

In her poem *The Bamboo*, she states:

“The bamboo whispers memories
of the songs and the dances
of the times and the places
of the stories of the past.”

The above lines demonstrate how important memory and culture are for the long-term environment friendly ecosystem in the region. Ao’s poetry analyses a deep relation between nature, culture and identity of tribes of Northeast India. Identity of any group acts as their voice. In her poetry, nature is not just a background or setting, it is a living element that plays a pivotal role in the survival, remembrance or memory and cultural practices of the tribes. Her poetry reflects a deep connection to Naga culture and thus provides them a strong voice. Her poem *Lament for an Earth* reveals her lamentation over the disastrous condition of earth as a result of modernity, industrialization and urbanization. She keeps her opinion in front of all through the poem that extreme harm is being caused to nature or earth in the name of development. She reflects on the condition of our planet that has become miserable. The flora and fauna of Northeast India has come under stake just because of the selfish motives of the people who are in the dominant discourse. The ideology of the dominant groups tries to suppress the voice of the tribes who protest these types of invasions. Temsula Ao exemplifies this issue very strongly in the poem by raising her voice. She mourns over the pitiable situation of earth through her lines from *Lament for an Earth*:

“We took too much, we gave too little,
Now Earth cries, her wounds brittle.”

A Strange Place is another poem composed by Temsula Ao in her collection *Songs that Tell* in 1988. She writes,
“This world is a strange place
where people are
Exiled in their own lands
And imprisoned in their own minds.”

Ao puts forward her thoughts very gracefully in this poem. The own lands of the tribes have become a strange place for them. They are forced to leave their own workplaces by outsiders as if the tribes have no right on the lands. The deplorable fact is that the voice of the people of indigenous tribes has been subjugated by the powerful groups and is still being treated in the same way and Ao throws light on this issue in the poem. These poems are clear evidence of the fact that Temsula Ao puts forward her opinions in the matter of indigenous tribes of the Northeast region. She brings her indigenous Naga perspective into her writings and presents very strongly that nature is not a separable part of human life but nature and human life are deeply connected. She appeals to the reader to maintain the beauty and sanctity of the earth. She puts emphasis on the influence of oral tradition in her works. She reflects her deep connection to Naga culture. Her poems show how nature and ecology are interrelated with cultural identity. It demonstrates her expertise in indigenous ecological wisdom which supports her in rendering voice to the marginalized people and to remove the tag of subalterns. Her poems are like a mirror for society. The poems bring out the concerns of the North-easterners. It is very obvious that a society's culture, identity, traditions, customs, language, etc, are the pillars of that society and Temsula Ao's poetry focuses on these aspects in a really dignified way.

Mamang Dai is another contemporary North-East poet from Arunachal Pradesh. She has composed some notable poetry collections like *River Poems*, *The Balm of Time*, *Midsummer Survival Lyrics*, etc. She uses her poetry to clarify the value of the mysticism of her native land. She presents nature as a store of memory and experience. She is of the opinion that every culture has its own story or stories and she uses those stories to demonstrate the power of the human voice. She is not in favour of the concept of 'modernization' that disrupts the ecology and converts our earth into barren lands. Let us analyse some of her poems to understand her attitude towards nature and ecology. *The Voice of the Mountain* is a fine poem by Mamang Dai. Mountain has been personified by Dai in this poem. She gives it a voice that tells of knowledge, wisdom and timelessness. The mountain is a medium of linkage between humans and nature and it shows the bond between them. Every generation, culture, society has some fascinating stories with them and narrating those stories is a great way of expressing the opinions. It is obvious that each and every poem in this world has some stories related to their life. The stories are a great medium of expressing our voice. Here in the poem *The Voice of the Mountain*, the mountain has been assigned with these tasks. The mountain holds many stories related to the tribes living around it. It holds stories of many generations. People take birth, spend their life-span and then die. The mountain acts as a witness of their struggles, hardships, battles, happiness, sadness and everything. The mountains see them growing up, battling hard and eventually dying. So, it holds the memory in a collective way. The mountain is a symbol of collective memory of the indigenous tribes. It provides its strong voice to the people of North-east India.

The Sorrow Of Women is another poem by Mamang Dai in this context. Dai portrays the relationship between nature and women. As already explained, Nature is looked upon in feminine terms because of the reproductive quality. The poem demonstrates the patriarchal system of society. In a patriarchal society, the females are given less or almost no power. They are considered weaker compared to the males and are exploited by the males. Even in North-East India, the local tribes are patriarchal. The women are considered as something benefit giving materials. They are looked upon in terms of gain, sometimes because of their beauty, sometimes because of their productive features. They are exploited to the very extreme limits. Mamang Dai related these issues in a very fine way. The poem *The Sorrow of Women* deals with the hardships women face in their daily life. The poem exemplifies how the women's voices are suppressed by the male members and right to express is snatched from them.

In the same way, Nature is also looked upon by the people. Natural resources are exploited by selfish human beings to satisfy their goal. As the males treat the females in a patriarchal society, nature is also treated by the exploiters in the same way. Nature is something which can be exploited for materials gain. This is the mindset of people in this materialistic world. The result is deforestation, fertile lands becoming infertile, increase in pollution etc. Thus, the poem *The Sorrow of Women* binds Nature and Women through the same thread and offers to render voice to the oppressed. These poems are a clear manifestation of Mamang Dai's spirit regarding nature and ecology. Her poems depict nature as a source of collective identity and voice. She portrays nature as a testimony to human history. She also deals with the issues of ecological loss and loss of traditional lifestyles. Through her poetry, she puts emphasis on the view that humans are part of nature and are responsible for its downfall. So, they need to look after nature and keep it at the center of life. Man should let nature speak and if that does not happen, the result would be disastrous. Dai tries to address a very serious issue through her poetry. She says that human beings constantly try to decide the destiny of the earth without giving any attention to what nature wants to tell us. This tendency or behaviour of human beings has been responsible for the serious ecological crisis. Human beings do not want to give freedom either to nature or to women.

Hence, both Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai attempt to render their voices to the North-Eastern region of India through their poetry. They display a strong sense of sympathy for the downtrodden and subjugated. They themselves have faced the hardships of life in their homelands, so they can really connect themselves to the context. Their combined motive is to give the message of preservation of natural resources with care. Listening to the concerns of Nature, Women and other Subaltern sections of society are very much necessary to sustain life on earth. Human beings need to understand this issue and should work towards the goal by helping each other grow as well as be the voice of the weak.

CONCLUSION: -

The North-East region of India is an emerging location in terms of its varied and rich heritage. From the research paper, it is clearly evident that the culture, identity and memory of the indigenous tribes are deeply intertwined with the Nature and Ecology of the area. Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai through their poetry depict the struggles of the tribes especially in the field of politics. Subjugated by various political authorities and the military department, the indigenous tribes have been trying to establish themselves as a group and the natural environment plays a pivotal role in that. The poems analyzed in the paper can be grouped under the category of "Eco-poetry" in which both the authors try to provide voice to the subalterns. The colonizers had a huge impact on the colonized, terming the latter as outdated, uncivilized and primitive and their deep connection to the landscape gave them a new identity. Nature is everything for the tribes. It is a powerful tool for the revival of culture and tradition. Temsula Ao and Mamang Dai build up their theory around coloniality and environment. Their poetry acts as a mirror to look into it through various angles. Nature and the natural elements are portrayed as witness to the life struggles of the tribes. The collective memory and the indigenous knowledge of the local inhabitants are presented through the ecological poetry of the authors. The aspects discussed in the paper could be traced back to the Romantic era. North-Eastern contemporary literature with emphasis on Nature and Ecology finds a rootedness with the Romanticism highlighted by the leading figures like Willam Wordsworth. To sum up the whole paper in one line, it could very well be said that Nature, Ecology and Environment are types of weapons through which the indigenous tribes try to get into the mainframe of society and to establish themselves as a distinct group.

REFERENCES:

1. Ao, Temsula. *Songs That Try to Say*. NEHU: Writers Workshop, 1992. Print
2. Ao, Temsula. *Songs From Here and There*. Shillong: NEHU Publication, 2003. Print
3. Ao, TEmsula. *Books of Songs: Collected Poems 1988 - 2007*, Nagaland: Heritage Publishing House, 2013.
4. Ao, Temsula. *Songs That Tell*, Writers Workshop, Kolkata, 1988.
5. Dai, Mamang. *Midsummer Survival Lyrics*. Guwahati: Wordsmith Publishers, 2014.
6. Dai, Mamang. *River Poems*. Kolkata: Writers Workshop, 2013.
7. Dai, Mamang. *The Black Hill*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2005.

The Arrow of Justice: Unraveling Adivasi Struggles in *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*

¹Baneshwar Gorain, ²Dr. Devyani Singh (Supervisor)

¹Research Scholar, Department of English, ²H.O.D, Department of English,

²Bokaro Steel City College, Bokaro,

^{1,2}Binod Bihari Mahto Koyalanchal University, Dhanbad, Jharkhnad

Village: Satanpur, Police Station: Sector Twelve District: Bokaro

State: Jharkhand, India, Pin No. 827013

Email: ¹baneshwar5857@gmail.com, ²devyanisinh@gmail.com

Abstract:

Mahasweta Devi's Chotti Munda and His Arrow, a landmark novel, translated into English by **Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak**, is a seminal exploration of the systemic exploitation and resilience of India's indigenous Munda community. This powerful narrative, set in the region of Jharkhand, spans the colonial and postcolonial eras, dissecting themes of land alienation, caste oppression, bonded labor, and the betrayal of independence-era promises. The protagonist, **Chotti Munda**, becomes a living embodiment of resistance, drawing strength from the symbolic arrow that unites cultural heritage with collective justice. This article examines the nuanced portrayal of Adivasi struggles, the socio-political implications of the novel, and its relevance in today's discourse on indigenous rights. Devi's ability to blend history, folklore, and realism makes *Chotti Munda and His Arrow* an enduring critique of structural inequities.

Keywords: Indigenous identity, resistance, exploitation, land rights, marginalization, socio-political commentary.

INTRODUCTION:

Mahasweta Devi was one of the greatest Indian Bengali authors, novelists, critics, and activists. She devoted her entire life in raising her voice against injustice, and making the society aware of the contemporary challenges, faced by the marginalized indigenous people. She tried her best to improve the lives of the downtrodden communities, both through her writing, and by persuading Indian leaders to take some initiatives or concrete action for their betterment. She remained one of India's most powerful voices for social justice, particularly for the Adivasis and Dalits. Her writing bridges activism and literature, creating a potent platform for marginalized voices.

Devi's Chotti Munda and His Arrow, originally written in *Bengali* in 1980 and later translated into English by a postcolonial writer **Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak**, is a landmark novel that spans decades of colonial and post-colonial India, capturing the trials, tribulations, and resilience of the Munda tribal community. The narrative, primarily set in the region of Jharkhand, revolves around the life of the protagonist **Chotti Munda**, a legendary figure whose journey symbolizes the collective struggle of the Adivasis for dignity, land, and identity. Devi skillfully weaves together folklore, history, and realism, portraying the exploitation, and systemic marginalization faced by indigenous communities at the hands of landlords, moneylenders, and state machinery. The arrow, an iconic symbol in the story, represents both the cultural heritage of the Munda communities, and their spirit of resistance. This article critically examines the themes of resistance, exploitation, land rights, and marginalization in the novel, highlighting Devi's role in amplifying the voices of the oppressed.

Historical and Political Context in Chotti Munda and His Arrows

The novel *Chotti Munda and His Arrows* is deeply rooted in the historical and political context of the British, and the independent government in India, especially regarding the aspects of exploitation, resistance, and resilience of the tribal and adivasi communities. The novel spans about a century, particularly from the colonial government to the post-independence India, showing how *Adivasis* and *tribal communities* faced exploitation at the hands of colonial rulers, landlords, moneylenders, and later, the independent Indian state.

“Something raises an urgency in Dhani’s voice. He was born in 1834. He was a young man at the time of Sidhu-Kanhu’s Hul.....he has reached 81 in 1915” (Devi, translated by Spivak 18).

The lines quoted above, make it clear that the novel spans almost a century, covering key moments in India’s history, while focusing on the plight of the Munda tribe and their fight against systematic oppression.

Themes and Critical Interpretation in Chotti Munda and His Arrows

The novel *Chotti Munda and His Arrows* exposes the multiple forms of exploitation, faced by *Adivasi Communities*, including the loss of their land, bonded labourer, and caste-based discrimination. It is a powerful exploration of the themes of resistance, survival, systemic injustice, and resilience. It is also a blend of oral storytelling traditions with historical realism, addressing deep social and political issues. Under British rule, the Mundas suffered economic hardships as their lands were forcefully taken away by landlords and moneylenders. Even after independence, the new Indian state continued these exploitative structures, reinforcing Adivasis' socio-economic marginalization. It also highlights how folklore and mythology play a great role in preserving *Adivasi* identity and history.

1. **Resistance and Survival:** One of the central themes of the novel is tribal resistance against various forms of oppression, namely dispossession of their land and forest, debt trap, and bonded labour. The protagonist, *Chotti Munda* represents the *Munda community*, fighting for his community against *Dikus* (*outsiders and powerful people*) just like *Birsa Munda, Dhani Munda, Budhu Bhagat, Tilka Manjhi*, and many more. The novel highlights how *Chotti’s* arrows symbolize both *Physical resistance* (against zamindars, moneylenders, government officials, and oppressors) and *cultural survival* (preserving Adivasi identity and customs from various influences).
2. **Betrayal of Adivasis in Independent India:** The novel portrays how even after independence in 1947, the condition of the tribal communities remained same as they stayed landless, voiceless, and exploited at the hands of so-called elite class.

“Lala Bijmath lives in the same village. Each inhabitant is known to him. He lends money, takes interest, takes bonded labour” (31).

The above lines make it clear that how the landlords and moneylenders were exploiting the Adivasi communities by putting them in debt trap and making them bonded labourers from generation to generation, and forcing them to live an impoverished life throughout their lives.

3. **Role of Oral Tradition and Storytelling:** One of the major themes of the novel is *Oral Tradition, Folklore* and *storytelling* which play a vital role in preserving the culture, tradition, and customs of the tribal communities. They help them to pass their history and culture from generation to generation. In the novel, *Dhani Munda*, the eldest surviving member of the community, passes down historical events to *Chotti Munda* while ensuring he receives thoroughly archery training. Over time, *Chotti Munda* himself became a legendary figure, with his stories being passed down and retold not only within his own community but also among other tribal communities. The lines quoted below are the evident of the above argument.

“Chotti hadn’t a clue that stories were being made up about him outside the Munda community as well. He practiced his arrows every day. And he goes from

fair to fair, for archery contest. Koel said, Chotti? You've got a spellbound arer, after all" (29).

4. **Colonial Oppression and Tribal Resistance:** The novel is set during the 19th century when the *Britishers* were running the government of our country. It was the time when the *English* were exploiting the tribal communities through various oppressive policies, including land ownership, and forest rights. The novel portrays how the tribal communities who historically lived in harmony with their lands and forests, were displaced and marginalized through land revenue systems and forest laws. The novel reflects the traditional resistance of the tribal communities against colonial exploitation through various rebellions including the *Santhal Rebellion* (1855-56) and the *Birsa Munda's Ulgulan* (1899-1900). The paper highlights how the protagonist, *Chotti Munda's* symbolic arrows serve as a metaphor, representing the enduring spirit of this resistance.
5. **Land, Identity, and Cultural Erasure:** Land has always been an integral part for the *Adivasi* communities and they can go to any extent to save their motherland as land is not merely a source of livelihood but a symbol of their identity and cultural continuity. The novel highlights how the protagonist, *Chotti Munda*, along with *Dhani Munda* and others, historically fought against the powerful to protect their land, identity, and culture. The line quoted below shows that they once they had enough quantity of arable land in which they used to do farming.

"All t' arable land belongs to t' Munda and t' Oraons" (13).

The author *Mahasweta Devi*, through *Chotti Munda*, portrays the tribal communities as active agents of their own history. Through oral traditions, folklore, and lived experiences, the novel reconstructs a history that mainstream historiography has erased.

6. **Socio-Economic Exploitation and Systemic Marginalization:** The novel is a searing critique of the systemic exploitation and marginalization of the *Adivasi* communities in both colonial and postcolonial India. The novel exposes how *Adivasis* remain at the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy, subjected to oppression by landlords, moneylenders, the state, and even progressive political movements that claim to fight for justice. The lines below show how the innocent tribal people were trapped by the elite class.

"Lala Baijnath said to Birsa, What's to worry about cash? Borrow, pay with labour" (28)

They were excluded from social mobility, education, and political representation. They were treated as *Uncivilized* and *Backward*. The following line highlights how the powerful people and the government either ignore or fail to provide them with even their fundamental rights.

"Moneylender gave liquor to the adivasis, and colour to the outcaste Hindu villagers" (19).

- 6.1. **Economic Exploitation:** The novel exposes how capitalist structures function as a new form of colonialism, keeping *Adivasis* impoverished even after independence. The novel, *Chotti Munda and His Arrows* reveals how the capitalist structures were exploiting the innocent and kindhearted tribal communities by taking their thumbprint on the paper and making them lifelong bonded labourers. The illiterate *Adivasis* were sometimes taking loan as edible goods or sometimes money from the moneylenders and unknowingly becoming their prey. The quotation below is the testimony of this argument.

"It's very easy to bind the Adivasis in debt. If they once put their thumbprint on paper, they give bonded labour for generations. Of course this is just as applicable to untouchables" (30).

6. 2. **Political and Legal Oppression:** The police and local administration function as enforcers for landlords and moneylenders, using violence to suppress *Adivasi* protests. Rather than safeguarding the rights of tribal communities, the government criminalizes them, labeling them as rebels or expendable laborers. The novel illustrates how *Chotti Munda* and his community were pushed into a fight for mere survival rather than being acknowledged as independent political forces. It emphasizes that *Adivasi* struggles should not be reduced solely to class conflict, but must be recognized as a distinct political movement advocating for tribal autonomy and rights.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS: CHOTTI MUNDA:

Chotti Munda, the protagonist of the novel, is a deeply symbolic and multi-dimensional character who represents the collective history, suffering, and resilience of the *Adivasi* people. His life, spanning nearly a century, reflects the transformation of tribal identity in colonial and postcolonial India. In the novel, *Chotti Munda* is a famous character because his name represents the name of a holy river, a village, and *Chotti Fair*.

1. **Chotti as a Symbol of Adivasi Resistance:** From a young age, *Chotti* was aware of the injustices faced by his community. He embodies collective memory, ensuring that the stories of oppression and resistance are passed down to generations. His mastery of archery is not just a skill but a symbol of traditional tribal strength and resistance. As he grows older, his struggle evolves from personal survival to collective defiance against exploitative landlords, corrupt officials, and greedy moneylenders.

“Everything in *Chotti Munda*’s life is a series of stories” (09).

Thus, *Chotti Munda*’s life mirrors historical *Adivasi* resistance movements, especially that of *Birsa Munda*, a real-life indigenous hero of the *Munda Rebellion*. His arrows symbolize both physical rebellion and cultural resilience.

2. **Chotti’s Leadership and Role in the Community:** *Chotti*, as a young boy, has the first hand experience of the brutal exploitation of his people under colonial government. He is taught archery by *Dhani Munda* which later becomes both a literal and metaphorical weapon. He gradually emerges as a leader, uniting his community first against feudal landlords and later against the oppression of the post-independence government. His wisdom and perseverance make him a folk hero, much like the real-life *Birsa Munda*. The following lines define *Chotti Munda* and reveal his ambitions, portraying him as an ordinary, yet determined man.

“Chotti is only a poor lad. He came to his sister’s house in a famine year to live on a bite to eat. Whose only life’s dream was to shoot an arrow to win at the *Chotti Fair*” (14)

The novel highlights how *Chotti* remains a legend in his community, embodying their struggles, memories, and hopes. He emerges as a symbolic leader, representing the collective struggle of his people.

Symbolism of the Arrow and Chotti’s Leadership in Chotti Munda and His Arrows

In the novel, the arrow is a central and recurring symbol that evolves throughout the novel. It represents *Adivasi* culture, resistance, survival, and transformation across different historical and political contexts. *Mahasweta Devi* uses the arrow as both a literal weapon and a metaphor for the broader struggles of the *Munda* community.

1. **The Arrow as a Symbol of Adivasi Tradition and Identity:** The *Mundas* are traditionally skilled archers, and archery is an integral part of their cultural identity. *Chotti Munda*’s expertise in archery establishes him as a protector and leader of his people, connecting him to historical *Adivasi* warriors like *Birsa Munda*. The lines below justify the argument how the *Munda*

communities have a special bonding with their bow and arrows and they use them as both their means of survival and symbol of resistance.

“Let’s forget him. A Munda, a savage, they always shoot arrows. Arrows are their companion. Chotti hadn’t a clue that stories were being made up about him” (29).

2. ***The Arrow as a Weapon of Justice and Resistance:*** During *British* rule in India, the *Adivasi* communities were using their arrows to fight against the colonial rule and feudal lords, like in the *Munda Rebellion* (Ulgulan). In the novel *Devi* explores how Chotti’s arrows initially serve as tools of defense, but later they become a symbol of organized rebellion against oppression. The arrows here represent armed resistance against historical and systemic oppression, justifying that the tribal communities have always fought for their rights.
3. ***The Arrow as a Political and Revolutionary Symbol:*** The novel depicts how *Chotti Munda’s* perception of his arrows evolves as he grows older. With the proper guidelines from *Dhani Munda* and with his own life experiences, *Chotti* understood that the arrows were no longer just a literal weapon for their livelihood but also about their political awareness, collective organization, and cultural strength. Thus, the research article finds how the arrows transform from a simple weapon into a revolutionary symbol, representing the ongoing fight for justice.

Socio-Political Relevance in Chotti Munda and His Arrows

The novel remains a powerful socio-political text that speaks directly to contemporary India’s failures in addressing *Adivasi* rights, economic justice, and state repression. *Mahasweta Devi’s* critique of the postcolonial state and capitalist exploitation continues to hold true, making the novel a relevant and urgent read for anyone concerned with social justice, indigenous rights, and political resistance.

1. Land Rights Movements: Adivasis still fight for ownership: Even today, *Adivasi* and indigenous communities across *India* face forced displacement due to large-scale industrial and infrastructural projects, including dams, mines, and highways. Despite promises of land reforms and tribal welfare, *Adivasis* continue to be dispossessed of their land, for mining & development, forcing them to work as bonded laborers or sharecroppers. The novel argues that colonialism may have ended, but the structures of oppression remain intact, proving that political freedom did not translate into real empowerment for the *Adivasis*.

2. The Novel as a Call for Action: Raises awareness on indigenous issues. The novel raises awareness about India’s failures in addressing *Adivasi* rights, economic justice, and state repression. The novel remains relevant as *Adivasi* communities continue to struggle for land rights, representation, and socio-economic justice. It serves as both a historical reflection and a call for action for the marginalized. The novel highlights how the new Indian state failed to address the historical injustices faced by tribal communities. Corruption, land acquisition by industrialists, and political neglect continued to push *Adivasis* to the margins of society, reinforcing the idea that freedom remained an illusion for them.

CONCLUSION

The novel *Chotti Munda and His Arrow* is not merely a novel about resistance; it is a profound socio-political commentary on the enduring inequities faced by India’s indigenous populations. It is a powerful critique of postcolonial India’s failure to deliver justice to *Adivasis*. It exposes how the exploitation of tribal communities did not end with independence but instead continued under new forms of oppression, leaving them marginalized and betrayed. It also asserts that true liberation goes beyond political independence, demanding economic justice, cultural recognition, and genuine self-governance. Until then, *Adivasis* will continue to resist, just as they have for centuries. The novel leaves the reader with a sense of unresolved struggle, highlighting the continuing resilience and resistance of *Adivasi* communities despite centuries of exploitation and oppression. *Devi’s* work stands as an essential critique of both colonial and postcolonial structures that have marginalized *Adivasi* voices.

Through the character of *Chotti Munda*, Devi illustrates the struggles of an entire community, making the novel a critical text in the discourse on indigenous rights, land sovereignty, and systemic oppression.

WORK CITED:

Primary Source

1. Devi, Mahasweta. *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*. Translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Seagull Books, 2019, pp. 03-327.

Secondary Source

2. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, translator. *Imaginary Maps: Three Stories by Mahasweta Devi*. Routledge, 1995.
3. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Walther Kong, Verlag, 2021.
4. Guha, Ranajit. *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*. Duke University Press, 1999.
5. Sundar, Nandini. *Subalterns and Sovereigns: An Anthropological History of Bastar, 1854-1996*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

Reimagining Indianness: Echoes of Bhagavad Gita in Milton's Paradise Lost

Soyam Prabha Sahoo

PG 1st year,

Dept. Of English, Panchayat College, Bargarh, (affiliated to Sambalpur University, Burla),
Odisha, India.

Email: prabhasoyam29@gmail.com

Abstract: *Freedom comes with responsibilities. It is not that everything happens exclusively by the God's will, but more purely, nothing can happen without God's sanction. Love, in its bonafide form, always provides choices. The love of the Supreme for his part and parcel-the soul manifests in the gift of free will. These teachings of love and free will is, deeply rooted in Indian philosophy, echoes in 17th century poet, John Milton's magnum opus-Paradise Lost. By examining Paradise Lost through the lens of Indian philosophical thoughts, it's timeless teaching, specifically from the concept of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family), we can spot a common string of divine love, desire, free will, and destiny, holding the humanity together. While Milton exposes the cause of human degeneration arises from the misuse of free will, the Gita provides a timeless nectarine knowledge for understanding the root cause of dilemma. This paper delves how the philosophical principles of free will, karma, and destiny merge together in Milton's Paradise Lost and in the Bhagavad Gita. It argues that regardless of different cultural and philosophical thoughts, both works guide the soul toward the same ultimate destination: love for the Supreme. The root cause of suffering by the souls in Paradise Lost, proximal with Krishna's teachings to Arjuna, explicate the shared spiritual wisdom of these diverse western and eastern traditions. Ultimately, Paradise Lost and the Bhagavad Gita merges to reveal that true freedom lies in understanding and synchronizing with the will of the Supreme, understanding what is free will, how it works and its disbursement in the form of ignorance, from a cause of suffering to a path of liberation.*

Key words: *spirituality, Indianness, paradise lost, Bhagavad Gita, free will, spiritual amalgamation.*

INTRODUCTION:

Paradise Lost and the *Bhagavad Gita* are the magnum opus of great authors John Milton and Vyasa Dev which addresses the universal and ultimate themes such as free will, divine love, and human destiny. While distinguished by different cultural, linguistic, philosophical and religious contexts, these texts echo each other in reconnoiter the moral dilemmas of humanity, the root cause of suffering, and the urge of enlightenment. The *Bhagavad Gita* is not solely a religious text but a manual guide for navigate the battlefield of existence. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, in *Religion, Science, and Culture*, writes, "Religion is not a mere set of doctrines, but a discipline that transforms the character of man, uplifting his spirit to realize the eternal." (p-1968) This epitomizes the true divine essence of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which offers timeless knowledge for overcoming challenges and transcending the karmic bondage, for salvation while living the life to fullest.

Mahatma Gandhi, in *Mahatma Gandhi on Hinduism (P-2022)*, stated the *Gita* as "an allegory in which the battlefield is the soul and Arjuna, the individual soul, struggling for self-realization." This interpretation aligns with the human struggles and suffering as illustrated in Milton's epic, where Adam and Eve's free will shape their spiritual destinies. Gandhi's assertion that "Self-surrender to the divine

will is the surest path to freedom” underscores the common philosophical thread connecting these works.

As Krishna advises Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurukshetra,
"Karmaṇye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana" (BG 2.47)

"You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duties."

Similarly, Milton's epic is not just a narrating of the Fall but a contemplation on free will and moral responsibility. His declaration, *"The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven,"* abbreviates the transformative power of human choice.

In reimagining Indianness through the echoes of the *Bhagavad Gita* in *Paradise Lost*, this paper explores the consolidates of these works on themes of free will, moral dilemmas, destiny and the path from ignorance to enlightenment. Both texts echoes with contemporary concerns of choice, leadership, decision making and humanity's interconnected destiny, as contemplated in the Indian philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*—the world as one family.

Moral Dilemmas and Human Responsibility

The *Bhagavad Gita* begins with Arjuna's moral dilemma— *drīṣṭvemaṁ sva-janaṁ kṛiṣṇa yuyuṣuṁ samupasthitam ; sīdanti mama gātrāni mukhaṁ cha pariśhuṣhyati* . (BG 1.28): Arjun said: O Krishna, seeing my own kinsmen arrayed for battle here and intent on killing each other, my limbs are giving way and my mouth is drying up." whether to fight against his lineage or abdicate the battle altogether. This internal conflict reflects the mental tension and suffering faced by Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*. Arjuna's crippled reflects universal dilemmas, as Krishna reminds him:

"Uddhared ātmanātmānam nātmānam avasādayet"(BG 6.5)

"Elevate yourself through the power of your mind, and do not degrade yourself, for the mind can be the friend and the enemy of the self."

In *Paradise Lost*, Adam and Eve cope with their free will disguised and derived by ignorance versus obedience to God. Eve's temptation contemplates the moral complexities of human choices:

"Greedily she engorged without restraint, and knew not eating death."

when Satan being disguised in the form of serpent, manipulated Eve, she hesitates but later, influenced by his arguments she proceeds forward thinking, eating forbidden fruit will bring knowledge to her.

"But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;

God so commanded, and left that command

Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live

Law to ourselves; our reason is our law." (Book IX, 651–654).

she contemplates whether she must obey God or must pursue her inner desire of power and knowledge. Adam's moral dilemma to choose between being obedience to God or his love for Eve, leads to result of his downfall.

Milton illustrates their fall to foreground the weight of moral responsibility, straighten with Krishna's divine teaching that ignorance is the root cause of all suffering: *"ajñānenāvṛitam jñānam tena muhyanti jantavaḥ"* (BG 5.15)

"Living entities are deluded because their inner knowledge is covered by ignorance."

DESTINY VS. FREE WILL:

According to our Indian philosophy, destiny is the situation that comes to us as the reaction to our past lives' actions. Our destiny is not under our control but the choices we can make is in our hands and this is known as free will. The strain between destiny and free will is central to both texts. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna explains the reciprocity between karma and free will:

"Kṛtakarmakṣayo nāsti kalpakoṭīśatairapi,

Avaśyameva bhoktavyaṁ kṛtaṁ karma śubhāśubham." (Shiva Purana 8.23.39)

"Every entity must endure the consequences of their actions, good or bad."

However, Krishna also highlights the evolutionary power of kriyamana karma (actions performed with free will), allowing individuals to shape their future. In *Bhagavad Gita*, it is stated that, "the omnipresent God doesn't involve himself in the sinful and virtues deeds of anyone. The living entities are deluded because their inner knowledge is covered by ignorance" (B.G.5.15). Here, it can be referred that, whatever choice we make, from our ignorance is not by the will of God but because of our delusion of false ego. Milton similarly portrays destiny as a consequence of choices. Satan's rebellion, urge to enjoy the power of supreme, for instance, is not predestined but arises from his deliberate enviousness and ignorance of reality. This is precises in his submission: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven." Adam and Eve's fall, though anticipated by God, remains a result of their free will. As Milton writes: "They themselves ordained their fall." In the chapter 18, verse 63, it is Lord Krishna provides free will to Krishna, by saying "yathecchasi tatha krur" - deliberate and do as you desire, which crystalizes that not everything is predestined and human are their own destiny maker.

IGNORANCE AND ENLIGHTENMENT:

Ignorance (avidya) serves as a common theme in both texts, portrayed as the root cause of human suffering. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna explains how ignorance blinds individuals to their divine nature and guna:

"nādatte kasyachit pāpam na chaiva sukṛtaṁ vibhuḥ" (BG 5.15)

In *Paradise Lost*, Satan's ignorance of divine love and ultimate truth leads to his fall, while Adam and Eve's desire for forbidden knowledge represents humanity's everlasting struggle between ignorance and enlightenment. The serpent's temptation is a metaphor for misused freedom, reflecting Krishna's teachings on misguided desires and ignorance.

Krishna's guidance offers a path to overcome ignorance through knowledge (vidya):

"Vidya-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini śuni chaiva śvapāke cha paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ" (BG 5.18)

"The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater."

Milton reverberates this with the possibility of vindication through divine grace and mercy, as seen in Adam's repentance: "Full of doubt I stand, Whether I should repent me now for all, I ever did in will or deed."

LEADERSHIP AND MORAL ACTION:

Both texts provide effective lessons on leadership and responsibility. Krishna's guidance to Arjuna epitomizes responsible leadership, balancing free will with duty. He states:

"Tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samāchara, Asakto hy ācharan karma param āpnoti pūruṣhaḥ" (BG 3.19)

"Perform your prescribed duties without attachment, for by working without attachment, one attains the Supreme."

In contrast, Satan's misuse of leadership and ignorance in *Paradise Lost* illustrates the dangers of envy and self-obsession. His fall is a admonition, teaching modern leaders the importance of humility righteousness, virtue and goodness.

PHILOSOPHICAL DIVERGENCES:

The *Bhagavad Gita* and *Paradise Lost* diverge significantly in their theological foundation. The Gita's piled understanding of the Supreme God contrasts with Milton's monotheistic portrayal of God. While Krishna's divine teachings encompass karma, dharma, and bhakti, Milton's God emphasizes justice and mercy. These differences highlight the cultural and philosophical contexts of the works.

The *Bhagavad Gita* asserts:

"yo māmajam anādim cha vetti loka-maheśhvaram"(BG 10.3)

"Those who know Me as unborn and beginning-less, and as the Supreme Lord of the universe, they among mortals are free from illusion."

Milton's God, on the other hand, is a figure of stubborn justice, as seen in his proclamation of humanity's punishment.

Symbolism: A Comparative Analysis

The symbolic elements in both texts deepen their philosophical reflection. The forbidden fruit in *Paradise Lost* represents misused freedom, while the battlefield of Kurukshetra symbolizes life's struggles. Both symbols reflect the aftermath of choices, urging individuals to accord with their actions with higher truths.

Relevance for Modern Society

The timeless nectarian teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Paradise Lost* echoes with contemporary issues. Krishna's philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, or the world as one family, offers a vision for global unity. Similarly, Milton's emphasis on salvation and divine grace provides hope in a disintegrated world.

Both texts remind us of the importance of self-mastery, art of surrendering and ethical decision-making. As Krishna advises:

"bandhur atmatmanas tasya yenatmaivatmana jitah" (BG 6.6)

"For those who have conquered the mind, it is their friend. For those who have failed to do so, the mind works like an enemy."

CONCLUSION:

The *Bhagavad Gita* and *Paradise Lost* converge in their exploration of free will, moral responsibility, and the path to enlightenment. They offer timeless insights into the human condition, guiding individuals toward self-mastery, ethical leadership, and spiritual liberation. By aligning their teachings with modern challenges, humanity can embrace unity, compassion, and resilience in an ever-changing world. Finally, the article endeavors to develop in the students appreciation for the divine and find "their own cultural strengths, spiritual amalgamation and mutual tolerance envisioning a new world order of humanity and global peace" (Bhanja, R and Meher, N, 2017).

REFERENCES :

1. Bhanja, Rajashree & Meher, Nilima, Tradition and culture of Western Odisha in 21st C Language Classroom's, UGC National Conference on Tradition, Fair & Festivals of Western Odisha, Panchayat college, Bargarh, India, 10th-11th Sept, 2016.
2. Prabhupada, Swami Bhaktivedanta A.C., Bhagavad Gita as it is, Bhaktivedanta Book Trust; 1st January. (1972)
3. Milton, John (1964-65). Paradise Lost. Prakash Books, India, Reprint 2023.
4. Radhakrishnan, Sarbapalli, Religions, science and Culture, Orient Paperbacks; 2024
5. Gandhi, Mahatma, Mahatma Gandhi on Hinduism, Rupa Publications, 2022

Exploring Caste and Narrative Perspective in Premchand's 'Deliverance': A Critique of Social Inequality

¹Dr. Kulbhushan Sharma, ²Anupama Sharma

^{1,2}Assistant Professor of English

Government College Karsog, District Mandi (HP),

Email- 1kaybee24.rj@gmail.com, 2anupamakb26@gmail.com

Abstract: *The present paper explores the portrayal of caste discrimination in Premchand's short story "Deliverance", highlighting its critique of the entrenched caste system in pre-Independence India. The narrative follows Dhuki, a low-caste shoemaker, who, despite the oppressive social norms of untouchability, must seek a marriage date for his daughter from the high-caste priest, Pandit Ghasiram. Through this interaction, the story illustrates the exploitation of lower-caste individuals by higher-caste oppressors and critiques the moral contradictions within the caste system. The paper examines the question of narrative perspective, asking whether a victim, an oppressor, or a detached third-party narrator would best illuminate such social issues. Furthermore, it questions the ability of a non-Dalit writer, such as Premchand, to authentically represent Dalit experiences. By analysing Premchand's characterisation and themes, the paper probes the broader socio-cultural rifts in pre-Independence India and the effectiveness of literary interventions by humanist writers in addressing caste-based oppression. It also investigates whether such narratives can still foster social change in contemporary India, where casteism persists despite legal progress. The paper contends that Premchand's work remains a critical tool for understanding caste discrimination, while raising ongoing questions about the authenticity and responsibility of representing marginalised voices in literature.*

Keywords: *Dalit, Casteism, Oppression, Narrative Perspective, Social Change.*

INTRODUCTION:

Premchand's short story 'Sadgati' (Deliverance) is a poignant critique of the socio-economic inequalities and the oppressive caste system prevalent in early 20th-century India. This analytical article dissects the layers of meaning within the narrative, examining the themes of class, caste, and human dignity. Through the lens of literary analysis, the work explores how Premchand exposes the moral decay wrought by societal structures and highlights the tragic futility of existence for marginalised individuals. By invoking a strong sense of realism characteristic of his work, Premchand compels readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the human condition.

Premchand is one of the most distinguished writers in Hindi and Urdu literature, acclaimed for his ability to depict the harsh realities of life, especially those surrounding social issues. His short story 'Sadgati' (Deliverance) serves not only as a narrative of individual suffering but also as a critical exploration of social inequities entrenched in the caste system. This tale, set in a rural village, draws attention to the pervasive nature of caste discrimination, the indifference of those in power, and the endurance of the oppressed. The present article aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the intricacies of caste depicted in 'Sadgati,' through a critical lens that foregrounds narration, characterisation, and the broader implications of Premchand's critique of social injustice. Ambedkar discussed the principles

of equality and justice in society and provided insight into how language and identity intersect with caste structures. In his text, he stated, "A great deal of our freedom understanding is controlled by the language we speak" (Ambedkar, 1935), suggesting that for the marginalised, their linguistic identity is tied to their social standing and can act as either a barrier or a bridge in their battles against caste discrimination.

In 1950s and 1960s, a certain 'class-consciousness', in Dalit literature can be traced that drew attention to a largely ignored section, which had often been pitied for the kind of treatment it had received at the hands of the so called 'upper caste' of Indian hierarchical caste system. Inspired by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the Black Panthers in the United States, the Dalit Panthers was founded in 1972. The founders of this organisation vocalised scathingly for the liberation against the Hindu caste system. One of the founders, Namdeo Dhasal is praised by Chitre, as having such works that reflects freedom, not bound by the traditional sacred style that appear to deliberately divide "caste culture from its noncaste contemporary" (Chitre, *Poet of the Underworld* 24). The context of Premchand's work provides a historical background that saw the social upheaval. Early 20th-century India was a period marked by significant social turmoil and transformation. The caste system, which had shaped society for centuries, became increasingly scrutinised due to colonial influence and rising nationalist sentiments. While the middle-class emerged as a powerful political force advocating for social change, the plight of the oppressed continued to largely be overlooked. Premchand's literary work emerged against this backdrop, where he became a vocal advocate for the marginalised. His narratives were not merely stories but reflections on society that aimed to incite change. He addressed the intersectionality of caste, class, and gender, laying bare the struggles of those pushed to the peripheries of society. "Sadgati," one of his poignant short stories, encapsulates these themes, offering readers a lens into the heart-wrenching realities faced by the lower castes.

Fromm analysed the social structures that breed destructiveness, positing, "Where human relations are characterised by subjugation and degradation, human nature becomes capable of severe destructiveness" (Fromm, 1973). This idea resonates with the narrative in 'Sadgati,' where Dukhi's suffering is emblematic of the systemic indifference and cruelty fostered by societal hierarchies. Further, Marx and Engels explored the dynamics of class struggle, stating, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Marx & Engels, 1848). This framework helps contextualise the caste dynamics in Premchand's work, revealing how the struggles of the lower castes like Dukhi are intrinsically linked to broader class conflicts. Looking into the literary landscape of the times, the works of Premchand were influenced by earlier writers who focused on social reform, including contributions from Indian and Western literature. Authors like Charles Dickens and Leo Tolstoy, who portrayed the struggles of the oppressed, resonated with Premchand, who adapted these influences to suit the socio-cultural milieu of India. His stories draw on realism, depicting genuine characters engaged in everyday struggles. The significance of 'Sadgati' lies not only in its narrative structure but also in its engagement with the socio-economic realities of its time. 'Deliverance' (Sadgati) is a sad and heart-rending tale of Dukhi, a 'chamar' or a low-caste leather worker in a rural village. The plot revolves around Dukhi's illness and eventual death, highlighting the indifference of the higher castes to his suffering. The story begins with Dukhi's deteriorating condition, illustrating a man grappling with not only physical affliction but also the societal stigma tied to his caste. His wife, in a moment of desperation, seeks help from the local priest, who, despite his position of religious authority, exhibits overt contempt for Dukhi due to his caste.

In 'Sadgati,' Premchand poignantly remarks, "When a man is born poor, he is born to sorrow" (Premchand, 2006), highlighting the relentless cycle of suffering faced by those at the bottom of the caste hierarchy. This quote encapsulates the essence of Dukhi's tragic journey, affirming the intersection of caste and socioeconomic status in determining individual fates. Ghosh also emphasises that "Premchand's narratives offer a mirror to society, reflecting the deep-seated biases and class disparities that impact the lives of the oppressed" (Ghosh, 2004). This analysis reinforces the critical function of 'Sadgati' in shining a light on the injustices of caste. The dynamics of the caste system is deeply entrenched into the societal set-up. The caste system, deeply embedded in Indian society, serves as an unyielding structure that determines individuals' social standing and, by extension, their worthiness of

compassion and assistance. Dukhi symbolises the struggle against this societal framework; his very existence is characterised by suffering and exploitation. In this context, sickness becomes a narrative device through which Premchand effectively exposes the cruel indifference and harsh realities faced by the marginalised. The representation of Dukhi is central to the caste system prevalent in India. Dukhi is an intense portrayal of the suffering inherent in marginalized lives. His name itself, meaning "sorrowful," is indicative of his existence and aligns with the broader societal neglect that characters like him face. Premchand's characterisation of Dukhi evokes a strong sense of empathy, and readers are drawn into his world—a place of struggle defined not just by personal misfortune, but by systemic oppression. The power dynamics between Dukhi and the higher castes illuminate the hierarchical nature of the caste system. The priest, who thrives on his elevated social status, embodies the condescension of a caste-privileged individual, perpetuating an oppressive tradition that counts Dukhi's life as little more than an inconvenience.

Dukhi's illness is central to the narrative, acting as a vehicle for exploring caste discrimination and societal apathy. When he becomes gravely ill, the response (or lack thereof) from the villagers exemplifies the significant societal barriers between castes. Dukhi's wife appeals to the priest for help, only to be met with a refusal that integrates both disdain and indifference. It becomes evident that, within the constraints of the caste system, Dukhi's suffering is rendered invisible; his plea for help is drowned by the harsh waters of prejudice. Premchand's depiction of Dukhi's physical suffering transcends the narrative, urging readers to contemplate the broader implications of such injustices within society. Dukhi's illness is not merely a personal crisis; it encapsulates the despair and hopelessness faced by countless others who inhabit the lower strata of society. The psychological impact of caste-based discrimination that Dukhi suffers can be seen as profound. It's a form of institutionalised violence, where the suffering of individuals is normalised and relegated to the background of societal consciousness.

The irony of the title 'Sadgati' emerges in the climactic moments of the story, as Dukhi's death represents the ultimate escape from his incessant suffering. Premchand constructs this moment not as a resolution of the narrative but as a powerful commentary on the failure of society to provide deliverance through compassion or social justice. Dukhi's demise serves as a tragic conclusion to a life burdened by systemic oppression, revealing a society unable—or unwilling—to change. The villagers' reactions following Dukhi's death further emphasise the desensitisation bred by caste discrimination. Instead of mourning the loss of a fellow human being, the community exhibits apathy, indicating that the caste-based hierarchies have so deeply embedded themselves into their consciousness that they can no longer recognise the humanity in the marginalised. In this sense, Dukhi's death acts as an indictment of a society that perpetuates suffering, reinforcing Premchand's critique of caste-based oppression.

'Deliverance' presents a strong narrative perspective as Premchand employs a third-person omniscient narrative voice that allows readers to delve into the thoughts and emotions of a range of characters, while simultaneously offering critical social commentary. This narrative perspective is essential for understanding the contrasting realities faced by Dukhi and those belonging to higher castes, facilitating a multi-dimensional exploration of caste inequality. The use of symbolism is a potent element in Premchand's narrative strategy. The recurring motifs of dirt and filth symbolise the social stigma tied to Dukhi's caste, revealing how these perceptions dehumanise those deemed 'untouchable.' For Dukhi, every interaction is colored by this filth. When relying on the priest, Dukhi is not only seeking medical help but is also rendered vulnerable to the priest's contemptuous gaze—one that sees him as less than human due to his caste.

Furthermore, the setting—a rural village—operates symbolically. It serves as a microcosm of Indian society, reflecting collective anxieties, biases, and social hierarchies. The village, with its close-knit networks, starkly reveals the societal divisions that are intricately tied to caste. Through vivid yet stark descriptions, Premchand constructs a landscape fraught with emotional weight, amplifying the narration's abject despair and hopelessness. Premchand's characterisation transcends simple individual portrayals; it serves as a platform for broader social commentary. Each character embodies specific societal archetypes, collectively reflecting the pathological nature of caste hierarchies. The character of the priest transcends individual attributes to become a vessel for critique. As a figure of religious authority, he embodies the complicity of spiritual institutions in perpetuating social hierarchies,

invoking questions about the moral responsibilities intertwined with his position. Dukhi's wife, an underrepresented character, symbolises the silent yet resilient struggles of women within a caste-stratified society. Her desperation signifies the intersectionality of gender and caste, as she not only battles the repercussions of her husband's tragedy but also faces her own subjugation. The duality of their experiences encourages readers to recognise that caste issues are not merely male-centric but encompass women's struggles as well.

'Deliverance' also presents the broader implications of social critique and moral responsibility. 'Sadgati' extends beyond its narrative as a poignant critique of the social fabric. Premchand's tale challenges readers not only to bear witness to the injustices inflicted upon the marginalised but to confront their own complicity in perpetuating such inequalities. The villagers' indifference, highlighted by their casual acceptance of the status quo, serves as a cautionary tale urging self-examination. Premchand implores his audience to recognise the mechanisms of oppression deeply intertwined with their everyday lives. The moral bankruptcy of the villagers exemplifies the need for ethical introspection. It presses readers to consider how they might similarly ignore the societal suffering around them. The themes of 'Deliverance' offer a perceptible resonance in contemporary society. The themes and struggles depicted in 'Sadgati' remain relevant, echoing in contemporary discussions about caste and social justice. Despite advances in legal frameworks and social reforms, practices of caste discrimination still endure in various forms. Movements advocating for the rights of marginalised communities draw inspiration from narratives like those presented by Premchand. Understanding 'Sadgati' in the context of modern India invites a critical examination of the ongoing struggles against caste discrimination. It urges a dialogue that acknowledges history while advocating for change in current societal paradigms.

'Sadgati' adheres to a classic narrative structure with exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. The exposition introduces the protagonist and his socio-economic status, laying the groundwork for understanding the ensuing conflict. The rising action unfolds through Dukhi's illness, highlighting societal indifference. The climax resonates with themes of tragedy as Dukhi meets his end, followed by a falling action that sees villagers unfazed by his death, leaving a poignant reflection on the social realities of caste. Irony pervades 'Sadgati,' particularly concerning the title. While 'sadgati' implies deliverance, Dukhi's death serves instead as a reminder of the tragic realities faced by marginalised individuals, the juxtaposition of the expectation of 'deliverance' against the harshness of Dukhi's lived experience critiques the very nature of caste, exposing the irony that societal apathy prevents genuine liberation. The conventional understanding of deliverance as salvation or improvement starkly contrasts the brutal realities faced by those at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The way in which the villagers react—or fail to react—to Dukhi's condition exemplifies this irony, providing a chilling commentary on the human cost of caste-based discrimination.

Premchand adopts a narrative style that fosters empathy, allowing readers to witness Dukhi's struggles intimately. The third-person perspective encapsulates the thoughts and emotions of various characters, heightening the reader's emotional engagement with the themes of injustice and suffering. This empathy is critical for allowing readers to understand the complex dynamics of caste, effectively drawing them into Dukhi's perspective. The narrative voice is foundational in shaping responses to the overarching themes. By varying the lens through which the story is presented, Premchand deepens the emotional resonance of Dukhi's plight. The stark contrast between Dukhi's misery and the indifference of the higher castes invites reflection on the societal constructs that perpetuate such disparities.

Premchand's 'Sadgati' emerges as an enduring exploration of caste and social inequality, masterfully intertwining narrative perspective, character development, and symbolism to present a compelling critique of systemic injustices. Kumar notes, "Premchand's works are pivotal in articulating the dignity and anguish of the lower castes while critiquing the social structures that degrade them" (Kumar, 2017). This observation underscores the lasting significance of 'Sadgati' in portraying caste-based oppression.

Through Dukhi's tragic tale, Premchand exposes the inherent flaws of a society governed by caste discrimination, amplifying the urgency of confronting these inequities. This narrative does more than relay the suffering of an individual; it catalyses critical reflection about our collective responsibilities in addressing systemic injustices. It invites readers to engage in dialogues around caste,

empathy, and moral accountability, ultimately championing a vision for justice. ‘Sadgati’ stands not only as a significant literary work but as a call to action, urging the ongoing struggle against inequality in contemporary society. The lessons embedded within the story remain relevant and timely, compelling future generations to acknowledge and confront the complex interplay of caste and social hierarchy in their own contexts. His wife also represents the plight of women in the lower strata of society. Tharu and Lalita state about the deplorable condition of women writers and their reflections on society, “Women’s voices often encompass themes of suffering and resilience, interlinked with broader narratives of social injustice” (1991). This observation is particularly relevant when considering the character of Dukhi’s wife in ‘Sadgati,’ whose silent suffering is emblematic of the intersecting oppressions faced by women in caste-dominated societies. Omvedt argues, "The struggle for social justice must be understood as inherently tied to the caste system, requiring both cultural and political changes" (Omvedt, 1994). This perspective is crucial for interpreting the themes of social injustice underscored in ‘Sadgati.’

In the poignant words of Premchand, we are reminded of our shared humanity and the imperative to act with compassion, challenging the structures that dehumanise and divide. Through recognition and resistance, we may work towards true deliverance for those, like Dukhi, who continue to grapple with the legacies of caste discrimination. There is a need to confront systemic inequalities to realise true deliverance. Khilnani discusses the complexities and contradictions of Indian identity, noting, "The promise of democracy is not fulfilled unless we face the realities of caste and class" (Khilnani, 1997). Asserting to scrutinise societal failings, Nussbaum reflects on societal divisions, stating, “A democracy that fails to protect all its members from discrimination does not truly embody its foundational values” (Nussbaum, 2007). By analysing ‘Sadgati,’ we engage not merely with a literary text but with a foundational experience that reflects the complexities and failures of society, urging us to advocate for a future that champions equality, dignity, and justice. Premchand’s ‘Sadgati’ remains an enduring literary masterpiece that challenges readers to confront the uncomfortable truths surrounding caste and class. Through nuanced character development, rich symbolism, and a poignant narrative, Premchand critiques the moral failings of society while championing the cause of human dignity. In a world still grappling with issues of inequality, ‘Sadgati’ serves as a reminder of the importance of compassion and empathy in the face of suffering.

Works Cited:

1. Ambedkar, B. R. *Thoughts on Linguistic State*. 1935.
2. Chitre, Dilip. “Namdeo Dhasal: Poet of the Underworld.” Namdeo Dhasal, 2 Apr. 2001, www.ambedkar.org/News/NamdeoDhasal.htm.
3. Fromm, Erich. *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. Howard Fertig, 1973.
4. Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. *The Communist Manifesto*. 1848.
5. Premchand, Munshi. ‘Sadgati.’ *Short Stories of Premchand*. Delhi: Orient Longman, 2006.
6. Ghosh, M. *Caste and Class in Premchand’s Short Stories*. Indian Literature, vol. 47, no. 1, 2004, pp. 33-46.
7. Tharu, Susie, and K. Lalita. *Women Writing in India*. Vol. 1. Feminist Press, 1991.
8. Kumar, Anup. “The Literary Representation of Caste: A Study of Premchand.” *Journal of Dalit Literature*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2017, pp. 1-15.
9. Omvedt, Gail. *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution*. Sage Publications, 1994.
10. Khilnani, Sunil. *The Idea of India*. Penguin, 1997.
11. Nussbaum, Martha. *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future*. Harvard University Press, 2007.

Memory, Intergenerational Conflict, and Silent Resistance: The Study of Colonial Trauma and Nation-Building in Tsitsi Dangarembga's "Nervous Conditions"

Ms. Sudipta Chaki,

Assistant Professor of English,

Dr. D. Y. Patil Arts, Commerce, Science College, Pimpri-18

Email - sudiptachaki1234@gmail.com

Abstract: *This paper analyzes "Nervous Conditions" by Tsitsi Dangarembga through the lenses of memory, intergenerational conflict, and silent resistance, tracing how colonial trauma shapes identity and nation-building in postcolonial Zimbabwe. The study answers the novel's interrogation of gender, class, and colonial domination, using memory as a prism for understanding inherited trauma and identity construction. While previous work has analyzed feminist and postcolonial aspects of Dangarembga's fiction, this research addresses a gap in analysis by considering the intersections of memory and silence in the construction of resistance. Applying an interdisciplinary approach combining memory studies, psychoanalytic theory, and postcolonial criticism, the study investigates the passing of colonial trauma across memory and how it affects Tambu and other characters. It draws attention to how conflicts between generations relate to wider negotiations of postcolonial identities. In addition, the study analyzes silence as resistance, disempowering dominant patriarchal and colonial orders and making room for empowerment and critique. The research shows that memory serves as a repository of trauma and a trigger for resistance, allowing characters to challenge and redefine inherited colonial legacies. Silent resistance is a powerful act of agency, highlighting resilience and subtle defiance in oppressive systems. These findings shed light on the intricacies of identity formation and add to the discussion of postcolonial literature. By placing memory and silence at the fore of its consideration, this paper highlights the ongoing significance of Nervous Conditions to understanding postcolonial nationhood and identity formation in the Global South, presenting new insights into how literature can negotiate the psychosocial wounds of colonization.*

Key Words: *Postcolonial Identity, Memory Studies, Colonial Trauma, Silent Resistance, Gender and Oppression, Intergenerational Conflict, Nation-Building.*

INTRODUCTION:

Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* (1988) is an early postcolonial African novel, providing a critical analysis of colonial trauma, gender subordination, and socio-economic adversity in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). The novel centers on Tambudzai (Tambu), a young woman struggling with the contradictions between tradition and modernity, individual desire and cultural expectation, and indigenous identity and colonial education. Through Tambu's life, Dangarembga probes how colonialism upends national and family identities, creating psychological tensions and inter-generational conflict.

Colonialism, as exemplified in *Nervous Conditions*, is not simply an economic and political framework but a psychological force that leaves deep impressions on collective and individual memory. The novel demonstrates how colonial orders construct identity, compelling individuals to navigate themselves through conflicting paradigms. Tambu's process depicts the long-term impact of colonial schooling, which enables but dislocates, resulting in a crisis of identity for the colonized. Further, the novel represents gendered processes of colonial trauma, demonstrating how women occupy the site of both patriarchal and imperialist oppressions.

The argument in this paper is centered around the *Nervous Conditions* and draws on themes of memory, intergenerational conflict, and quiet resistance to analyze how colonial trauma is able to come into being and subsequently impact identity formation and nation building in post colonized Zimbabwe. While previous scholarship has thoroughly critiqued the feminist and postcolonial aspects of the novel, they have not devoted the same attention to the memory of silence as a novel of resistance. The purpose of this research is to fulfill this gap by emphasizing how memories act as both an archive for deep seated trauma and a refuge for political battle, while 'silent' forms of resistance contend with the mechanisms of oppression in subtle yet powerful ways that go unquestioned.

In order to achieve this, the research in these pages takes an interdisciplinary approach, in this case, by combining memory studies, psychoanalytic theory and post colonial critique. Memory studies explain how trauma is passed along from one generation to the next and shapes personal and social identity. Psychoanalytic theory, more precisely the works of Sigmund Freud and Cathy Caruth, is deployed to explain the subconscious effects of colonial trauma. Post colonial critique (Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha) helps us define the method of identity formation and counter colonialism.

This study aims to partake in the broader debates concerning postcolonial identity and the complexities of literature as a medium for dealing with historical trauma. In doing so, it attempts to bridge the gap between memory, intergenerational conflict, and passive defiance. *Nervous Conditions* is still crucial in elucidating the intricacies of the history of colonization and its enduring sociocultural deleterious consequences.

BACKGROUND

A. Historical Context

The setting of the novel is Rhodesia during the 1960s, the height of colonial Britain. The colonial era was marked by fierce political, social and racial conflicts. It was during this time that the natives were forcibly introduced to the Western model of education and the patriarchal system. This setup, while deprecating women and other members of the native communities, put the westerners in an advantageous position to dominate over the natives. The purpose of the education system in Rhodesia was to ensure the dominance of the white minority by using European knowledge and teachings at the expense of indigenous knowledge systems (Chennells, 1995). Boys were given better education than girls, and this trend is very well captured in the book 'Nervous Conditions.' Tambu is forced to stay behind while her brother Nhamo is sent to school.

The consequences of colonial trauma are embodied in characters such as Babamukhulu, who assimilated colonial values in education and governance, and Ma'Shingayi, who is unable to adopt Western values and is suffocated by colonial and patriarchal oppression. While educated, Babamukuru's status as an African elite means that his existence is a testament to the ability of the colonial value systems to create native agents of their own ideologies. There was an emergence of nationalist resistance towards the reclamation of African identity and sovereignty during the political and social order of 1960s Rhodesia. These themes are touched upon in the novel when the author discusses the concealed impacts of colonial policies on family and gender relations. By placing the story of *Nervous Conditions* in this timeline, one is able to highlight the enduring deep societal and mental consequences of colonial domination.

B. Literary and Theoretical Approaches

Memory studies provide a remarkable lens through the reading of *Nervous Conditions*, paying particular attention to the intergenerational transmission of colonial trauma. It emphasizes the ways in which the memories of colonial oppression transcend the boundaries of time and destroy the very fabric of identity construction and agency. The term postmemory, which Hirsch (2012) writes about, describes the state of children with ancestors that have faced trauma and are prone to inheriting and becoming subject to the historical narrative that is intertwined with them. This is illustrated in Tambu's seeming contradictions when she desperately seeks for and is driven by colonial education to pursue an indigenous identity.

Psychoanalysis in the form of Freud's (1920) "repetition compulsion" and Cathy Caruth's (1996) trauma studies contend with the postcolonial legacy's impact in which the colonial superego is implanted on Dangarembga's characters. The rigidly enforced colonial ethos championed by Babamukuru has been disconnected from the core elements of his personality, which is an attempt to erase the memory or suppress the trauma of colonial society. Further, the eating disorder possessed by Nyasha has been the body's reaction to a deep psychological conflict where the modernized identity has been forcibly implanted into the being. As Fanon (1961) and Bhabha (1994) are thinkers of postcolonial theory, they help shine a light on the obsession in the novel with hybridity, mimicry, and resistance. Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) is a study of the psychological estrangement of colonized subjects who have adopted Western culture. Bhabha's (1994) theory of the "third space" is applicable to Tambu's movement between the indigenous and colonial powers. The power struggle over colonial languages in African literature is also problematized by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) who is mirrored in the double edged character of English in the novel as a tool of oppression and a means of empowerment. In engaging with these literary and theoretical debates, this paper situates *Nervous Conditions* in wider debates about colonial trauma, memory, and resistance, and offers a critical understanding of how these issues affect postcolonial identity and nation-building.

Memory and Colonial Trauma in *Nervous Conditions*

Memory in *Nervous Conditions* acts at once as a great oppressor's tool and a great instrument of resistance, which come together in the forming of the multi-dimensional selves of both Tambu and Nyasha. Again, the importance of memories—especially those of rural childhood and oral-storytelling—to Tambu and her grandmother ended up being very important for indigenous knowledge, knowledge that is deliberately destroyed through colonial schooling. "I was not sorry when my brother died," she affirms, a shocking assertion that reveals the gendered nature of colonial trauma—her own possibilities become possibilities only through patriarchal loss (Dangarembga 1). Nyasha, though, epitomizes the mental breakdown induced by colonial schooling, divided between her Shona culture and Western standards that vied for her allegiance imposed by her father, Babamukuru. She embodies this inner conflict when she protests, "They have trapped us. But I will not trap" (Dangarembga 200). Her psychological suffering places her according to Frantz Fanon's theory of the "colonized intellectual," between colonized and colonizer, and external to both indigenous and colonial worlds, embodying the general postcolonial condition of crisis of identity.

The psychological aspect of colonialism is evidently seen in Babamukuru, whose dictatorial role is a mimicry of colonial patriarchy. His unflagging faith in Western education and Christian values distances him from his culture. The insistence that Tambu join the mission school is a paradigm case of internalized colonialism, in which the power relations manipulated by the British are consolidated. The father figure Babamukuru's apparently benevolent control is a replica of the coercive aspects of colonial domination, imprisoning his family in the vicious cycle of externally imposed Western values. His insistence that Tambu's parents marry (through a Christian wedding ceremony) is his conviction on colonial moral superiority: "It is the right thing to do" (Dangarembga 148)—but what is right only if weighs including indigenous cultural values?

Intergenerational Conflict and Postcolonial Identity Negotiation

Nervous Conditions intergenerational conflict is the result of dissonance between the perceptions of colonialism and postcolonial identity. Babamukuru embodies the colonialist ideology that Western education is a vehicle for social and economic advancement. Ma'Shingayi, on the other hand, regards education as a form of colonial domination. This gulf between their opposite ideologies illustrates the conflict of postcolonial identity negotiation-where older generations absorb colonial values while younger generations try to redefine their cultural identity. Frantz Fanon elucidates this psychological alienation of the hegemonic influence in *Black Skin, White Mask*, when he states that colonial subjects tend towards emulation through the imposition of the standards of their colonial other, thus losing their self-worth (Fanon 12). The colonial logic is represented by Babamukuru's dressed concern for discipline and education.

A change in Tambu's attitude toward education signals a move towards critical postcolonial consciousness. Initially, she reveres Babamukuru and believes it to be a path to freedom, which she relinquishes in the moment after realizing that "the price of escape is estrangement" (Dangarembga 76). This realization becomes her so-called "unhomely moment", as articulated by Homi Bhabha in postcolonial literature, where one feels the cultural dislocation (*The Location of Culture* 13). Herein lies the conflict: for her, this "third space" of negotiation produces in-between views, rejecting and accepting colonial influence, never completely, while shifting towards a hybrid self.

The novel contrasts Babamukuru's wonder at colonial modernity with Ma'Shingayi's demand for indigenous custom. Babamukuru is adamant about very strict Western values of the kind which reflect the colonial ideology of defining modernity with progress. Ma'Shingayi, on the other hand, shows signs of mistrust as indigenous knowledge finds its way into an open conflict with Western imposed values. All this just goes to lend credence to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in *Decolonising the Mind*, where he calls for a shift back to forms of indigenous knowledge system in order to reclaim cultural identity (Ngũgĩ 20).

Tambu's constant oscillation between tradition and modernity is the negotiation of her postcolonial identity. Her higher understanding of the colonial power play is indicated by her recognition that "education is not the answer but a form of control" (Dangarembga 58). Edward Said's *Orientalism* describes the situation whereby Western education tends to consolidate the West-"backward" native cultures dichotomy, engaging in cultural hegemony (Said 36). Tambu's consequent rejection of such binaries is a step towards the recovery of agency.

Silent Resistance: A Subtle Form of Defiance

In *Nervous Conditions*, silent resistance congeals into a more vigorous mode of protest. The refusal of Nyasha to eat signifies a repudiation of patriarchal and colonial power. Her statement, "I'm not one of them but I'm not one of you" (Dangarembga 205), epitomizes the liminal location of postcolonial subjects. This dovetails with Judith Butler's theorization of performativity, wherein physical acts of protest interrogate normative power systems (*Gender Trouble* 147). Nyasha resists the imposition of colonial and racial norms on her-withholding her body from being what she is expected to be. Tambu also engages in a form of resistant silence consisting of reflection and slow disillusionment with Western values. Her pronouncement, "I had learned that sacrifice was necessary, and I would have to make mine" (Dangarembga 58), is a strong but silent refusal of the colonial world view. Michel Foucault's power/knowledge is here at play, as the more Tambu becomes aware, the more she can resist the disciplinary power of colonial education (*Discipline and Punish* 27). Her silent resistance shows how the marginalized can gain agency by inverting dominant discourses.

Written in a measured narrative voice, Dangarembga accentuates the strength of silence as a form of resistance. The novel engages in several subtle acts of resistant counter-discourse to colonization. By showing introspection, Tambu's reflection demonstrates how silence is used as a powerful tool for resisting and countering oppressive regimes. Her silent resistance goes against

colonial narratives when she realizes that "sacrifice was necessary" (Dangarembga 58) could not be undertaken by all herself. Nyasha's demise also presents another narrative of articulation juxtaposed with silence. Her internal conflict and unwillingness to abide by colonial and patriarchal standards reveal their hypocrisies. This lot is consistent with Gayatri Spivak's theory of the subaltern voice, wherein silence functions as a means of protest at the very moment when the voice is sealed (Can the Subaltern Speak? 103). By lingering on Nyasha's silent torment, Dangarembga chastises the damaging extent of colonial power and learns, in the process, many ways of claiming power.

FINDINGS:

Nervous Conditions deals particularly with memory, inter-generational conflict, and quiet rebellion, therefore giving a crucial insight into the psychological and socio-political ramifications of colonial trauma and its sustaining of postcolonial identity and nation-building. An understanding of how colonial trauma was passed down intergenerationally, thus carving out individual and collective identity, Nayuk will understand the heavy psychological pigmentations of colonial trauma under which Tamish and Nyasha label condemnation and oppression under these constructs. "Postmemory" (Hirsch 2012) is what Tambu is delegating with appropriation of her mother's and grandmother's trauma as she tries to make meaning of the colonial education system. Babamukuru symbolizes the same in the internalization of colonial ideology. His acceptance of colonialism creates a situation whereby acts of violence against their own fellow partner would be expected from the oppressed (Fanon 1961); these are situations where envy will breed violence. At first, for Tambu, education would be an alternative to oppression; yet soon came to realize that the very same education reinforced colonial hierarchies (Dangarembga 76).

Spanning three generations, the responses to the struggle against colonialism dividing characters: Babamukuru clings to colonial values, Ma'Shingayi rebels against assimilation, whilst Nyasha rebels against imposed restrictions with fanfare; this conflict mirrors grander conflicts in postcolonial societies over tradition, modernity, and identity (Bhabha 1994). This silent resistance thus takes the form of a counter-discourse of defiance. Silence, corporeal defiance (Nyasha's eating disorder), and inner introspection are the forms of resistance used against colonial and patriarchal oppression (Spivak 1988). Women, such as Nyasha and Ma'Shingayi, offer a counter-discourse critique of these colonial and indigenous patriarchal structures, and the very silence of their suffering becomes potent in an oppressive system: therefore, Spivak's voice about subaltern agency (Spivak 1988). The novel critiques indigenous cultures and colonial modernity in favor of a cosmopolitan negotiation of identity rather than just oppositional identities, Said 1978 argues. The novel's internal conflicts represent the struggle of nation-building in post-colonial Zimbabwe, where Sudden identity has to be rearticulated against cultural and historical tensions.

CONCLUSION:

The study demonstrates that *Nervous Conditions* elaborately examines colonial trauma, intergenerational conflict, and silent struggles, parceling out the intricacies of postcolonial identity and nation-building. Dangarembga reveals how colonialism operates as both an externalization and an internally felt psychological conflict that affects generations. In the novel, memory serves a dual purpose: retaining historical trauma and functioning as a weapon of resistance. The episodes highlighted by Tambu and Nyasha in the novel testify to the disintegration of mind induced by colonial education and systemic patriarchal rule. The paper suggests further that intergenerational conflict symbolized larger conflicts within postcolonial societies: the outgoing generation embodies colonial values whereas the younger generation attempts to redefine itself. There's more to it than just overt resistance-arising from subdued resistance. One could also see a duality in bodily resistance, psychic withdrawal, and forms of non-conformance. The essence of that novel reverberates with postcolonial theorists (Fanon 1961; Bhabha 1994; Spivak 1988), who concern themselves with hybridity, mimicry, and the margins of the subaltern discourse. The novel illustrates a negotiation ground where individuals are compelled to negotiate their identities within the purview of historical, cultural, and psychological territories. The book thus enriches the discourses of postcolonial literature, memory studies, and experiences of

gendered trauma, affirming the relevance of the novel to colonial legacies and their present impacts on individual and national identity.

REFERENCES:

1. Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.
2. Caruth, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
3. Chennells, Anthony. "Rhodesian Discourse, Rhodesian Novels and the Zimbabwean Liberation War." *Zambezia*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1995, pp. 21–36.
4. Dangarembga, Tsitsi. *Nervous Conditions*. The Women's Press, 1988.
5. Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann, Grove Press, 1967.
6. ---. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Richard Philcox, Grove Press, 2004.
7. Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Translated by C. J. M. Hubback, International Psycho-Analytical, 1922.
8. Hirsch, Marianne. *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust*. Columbia University Press, 2012.
9. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Heinemann, 1986.
10. Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Pantheon Books, 1978.
11. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp. 271–313.

Voices of Resistance: Gender Identity and Power Dynamics in *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood

Dr. Paramita Bhaduli

Assistant Professor of English, Department of English, Tamralipta Mahavidyalaya, Tamluk
Affiliated to Vidyasagar University,
District: Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, India
Email – paramitabhaduli@gmail.com

Abstract: Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments* (2019), a sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, explores feminist themes, gender identity, and intersectionality within the dystopian society of Gilead. The novel examines patriarchal power structures and strategies of resistance through the narratives of Aunt Lydia, Agnes, and Daisy. This research highlights the multifaceted nature of gender discrimination and the diverse approaches employed to challenge it. The book's focus on gender equality and opposition to oppressive regimes underscores the relevance of these issues to contemporary gender dynamics. Using feminist theory and the concept of intersectionality, this study delves into how intersecting identities—such as class, age, and social status—shape individual experiences within Gilead. Aunt Lydia's subversive methods illustrate the nuanced ways women navigate and undermine patriarchal systems, while the journeys of Agnes and Daisy reflect the construction and eventual dismantling of rigid gender norms. The depiction of women's solidarity, portrayed as both a source of empowerment and tension, captures the intricate dynamics within feminist movements. This paper situates Atwood's work within current sociopolitical discourse, emphasizing its relevance to ongoing debates about reproductive rights, gender-based violence, and systemic inequalities. As a work of feminist dystopian fiction, *The Testaments* reaffirms its enduring importance in critiquing and challenging societal norms. Through its layered narrative and compelling characters, the novel continues to provoke critical reflection on issues of gender, power, and resistance.

Keywords: Feminism, Gender Identity, Intersectionality, Self-liberation, Dystopian Literature.

INTRODUCTION:

Contemporary literature increasingly engages with themes of feminism, gender identity, and intersectionality, reflecting evolving societal conversations around equality, identity, and inclusivity. Modern feminist writing moves beyond simply critiquing patriarchal structures, offering nuanced explorations of the lived experiences of women across diverse cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic contexts. These works challenge traditional gender stereotypes, interrogate power dynamics, and celebrate women's resilience in the face of systemic oppression. In addition, contemporary literature frequently delves into the fluidity of gender, the construction of identities, and the struggles of those who defy binary conventions. By addressing the emotional and cultural impacts of gender expression, these narratives foster empathy and deeper understanding of LGBTQ+ experiences. This focus aligns with broader cultural movements aimed at recognizing and affirming diverse identities. The concept of intersectionality, introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, plays a vital role in these works by examining how overlapping systems of oppression—such as racism, classism, sexism, and heteronormativity—shape individual experiences. Contemporary authors integrate this perspective into their stories, illustrating how these interconnected forces perpetuate societal inequities. By doing so, modern literature not only

critiques these injustices but also encourages readers to engage with the complex, multifaceted realities of marginalized identities.

Contemporary literature has become a platform for exploring feminism and identity through diverse voices and narratives. Authors like Bernardine Evaristo, Roxane Gay, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie exemplify this evolution, fostering a more inclusive literary landscape. Among these influential voices, Margaret Atwood stands out for her incisive exploration of gender, power, and societal dynamics. Born in Canada in 1939, Atwood's prolific career spans novels, poetry, essays, and literary criticism, with a particular focus on dystopian and speculative fiction. Her groundbreaking work, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), is an internationally acclaimed critique of patriarchal oppression, inspiring numerous adaptations and discussions about gender and power. Atwood revisits the dystopian theocracy of Gilead in her sequel, *The Testaments* (2019), set fifteen years after the events of *The Handmaid's Tale*. The narrative unfolds through three perspectives: Aunt Lydia, a high-ranking enforcer of Gilead's rules; Agnes, a young woman raised within its oppressive structures; and Daisy, a Canadian teenager drawn into the resistance. These interwoven narratives provide a multifaceted view of life in and beyond Gilead, highlighting themes of power, survival, and rebellion. *The Testaments* delves into feminism, gender identity, and intersectionality, offering a profound critique of how oppressive systems affect individuals and their resistance. The novel examines women's agency, the complexities of solidarity, and the intersections of class, power, and gender. By expanding the story of Gilead, Atwood deepens her feminist critique while engaging with contemporary social and political issues, ensuring her work remains relevant to ongoing discussions about gender and power.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Margaret Atwood's body of work has long been a focal point for feminist literary analysis, owing to her incisive critiques of patriarchal structures and her exploration of women's experiences. Scholars frequently highlight her skill in combining dystopian settings with realistic gender dynamics, crafting narratives that resonate across cultures and eras. *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Atwood's most critically examined novel, delves into themes of reproductive rights, bodily autonomy, and state control, drawing parallels with historical and contemporary socio-political issues. Its depiction of theocratic oppression serves as a cautionary tale about the precariousness of women's rights. Academics like Coral Ann Howells and Gina Wisker emphasize Atwood's use of speculative fiction to critique patriarchal ideologies and amplify feminist concerns (Jones, 2017).

In *The Testaments* (2019), Atwood expands on these themes, exploring complicity, agency, and resistance within patriarchal systems. Aunt Lydia's multifaceted character has sparked discussions on the complexities of power and survival, while the inclusion of younger, diverse narrators broadens the feminist lens. The novel's focus on intersectionality deepens its critique, examining how class, race, and gender intersect under oppressive regimes. Atwood's broader oeuvre, including works like *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*, also tackles themes of gender identity and intersectionality. These speculative narratives address environmental and economic inequalities alongside patriarchal dominance, underscoring the interconnectedness of identity and structural oppression. By presenting complex and intersectional stories, Atwood cements her role as a vital figure in contemporary feminist literature. Modern feminist writing has evolved to encompass a wider array of issues, exploring how race, class, sexuality, and other social identities intersect with gender inequality. Authors such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (*We Should All Be Feminists*) and Bernardine Evaristo (*Girl, Woman, Other*) craft multidimensional female characters who challenge societal norms and assert their autonomy. Their works illuminate the multifaceted nature of women's experiences, emphasizing the interplay between gender and other identity markers. Gender identity and fluidity have also become prominent in contemporary feminist literature. Novels like Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater* delve into non-binary identities and the challenges of self-definition within binary-normative societies, fostering greater inclusivity in feminist discourse. Intersectionality, as conceptualized by Kimberlé Crenshaw, remains a cornerstone of modern feminist writing. Authors like Roxane Gay and Claudia Rankine explore the layered experiences of marginalization, illustrating how overlapping systems of oppression shape individual lives. These works encourage a deeper understanding of identity and privilege, advancing feminist literature's commitment to inclusivity and social justice. Through her exploration

of gender, identity, and intersectionality, Margaret Atwood continues to shape feminist discourse, situating her works alongside those of other contemporary authors who reframe narratives of oppression and resilience in nuanced and inclusive ways.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Feminist Themes in *The Testaments*

In Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments*, Aunt Lydia emerges as a complex character who embodies rebellion within the patriarchal system she outwardly supports. Initially portrayed in *The Handmaid's Tale* as a staunch enforcer of Gilead's oppressive regime, her narrative in *The Testaments* reveals the subversive depth of her actions. Aunt Lydia's resistance lies in her calculated maneuvering within Gilead's hierarchy. Rather than overt rebellion, she employs covert strategies, using her position of authority to undermine the system from within. By cultivating a public image of unwavering loyalty, she gains access to sensitive information and meticulously crafts a plan to dismantle Gilead. This dual role—both enforcer and saboteur—captures the intricacies of resistance in totalitarian regimes. Her introspective moments further reveal her discontent with Gilead's patriarchal oppression. Fully aware of the moral compromises required for her survival, she channels her indignation into a deliberate scheme to expose the regime's hypocrisies and secrets, ultimately facilitating its downfall. Through Aunt Lydia, Atwood examines complicity and resistance, challenging binary notions of morality. Her character demonstrates that survival and rebellion often intersect, especially for women navigating oppressive systems, and underscores the power of calculated disobedience over overt insurrection.

Atwood also explores women's solidarity in *The Testaments*, presenting it as both strength and a source of tension under patriarchy. The intertwined stories of Aunt Lydia, Agnes, and Daisy highlight the complexities of female alliances, shaped by intersecting identities, power dynamics, and survival strategies. Aunt Lydia's actions reflect the contradictions of unity under oppressive conditions. While appearing to uphold Gilead's rules, her ultimate goal of dismantling the regime signifies a hidden solidarity with the women subjugated by it. Her collaboration with Agnes and Daisy initially fraught with distrust becomes pivotal in exposing the system's vulnerabilities. The relationship between Agnes and Daisy further illustrates the challenges of solidarity. Coming from vastly different backgrounds Agnes as a product of Gilead's indoctrination and Daisy as an outsider their initial discord underscores the difficulty of reconciling ideological differences. Yet, their eventual partnership highlights the transformative power of shared purpose. Atwood's nuanced depiction of women's solidarity rejects simplistic ideals, emphasizing how personal experiences and systemic barriers complicate unity. *The Testaments* delves into the multifaceted nature of alliances in the fight against patriarchal oppression, showcasing both their strength and fragility, and the necessity of mutual understanding and collaboration.

GENDER IDENTITY:

In *The Testaments*, Agnes and Daisy serve as pivotal characters whose journeys underscore the effects of enforced gender norms and the complexities of navigating them both within Gilead and beyond. Agnes, raised in the rigidly patriarchal society of Gilead, embodies internalized compliance with gender stereotypes. Conditioned from an early age to accept her role as a submissive, obedient, and loyal woman, her identity is rooted in the expectation of serving men, particularly as a wife. Initially, Agnes accepts this fate, believing it to be her natural purpose a reflection of Gilead's deeply entrenched cultural indoctrination. However, as she begins to confront the repressive nature of her circumstances, she gradually develops the awareness needed to challenge these roles, initiating a subtle yet profound form of resistance. Daisy, in contrast, grows up in Canada, outside Gilead's totalitarian control. While her society is less overtly oppressive, it still imposes restrictive gender stereotypes concerning beauty, femininity, and social behavior. Unlike Agnes, Daisy's struggle is centered more on self-discovery than survival. Over time, she begins to recognize and assert her agency, defying conventional standards and reclaiming her autonomy. Together, Agnes and Daisy's journeys highlight the intricate interplay of gender, identity, and resistance within a patriarchal context.

Gilead's totalitarian regime enforces rigid gender roles, categorizing women into hierarchical positions such as Wives, Marthas, and Handmaids. These roles strip women of autonomy, reducing

them to functional entities serving the patriarchy's needs, primarily reproduction. Religion and societal norms are weaponized to sustain these structures, with severe punishments and constant surveillance ensuring compliance. Agnes exemplifies this indoctrination, initially embracing her role as a wife while internalizing subservience. Handmaids, on the other hand, are entirely defined by their reproductive purpose. Despite this systemic oppression, Atwood portrays resistance in various forms. Agnes gradually questions the constraints imposed on her, recognizing that her identity is not confined to the role of a wife. Aunt Lydia, deeply embedded in Gilead's power hierarchy, subverts the system from within, leveraging her position to gather intelligence and plot its downfall. Daisy's resistance is more overt; she rejects Gilead's ideology outright, adopting a self-determined identity that defies traditional expectations. Atwood's narrative underscores that resisting rigid gender norms requires both internal awakening and external acts of defiance. Through Agnes, Daisy, and Aunt Lydia, *The Testaments* reveals the multifaceted nature of rebellion against patriarchal systems, illustrating that defiance can take both subtle and overt forms to dismantle oppressive ideologies.

INTERSECTIONALITY:

Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments* delves deeply into the intersectionality of gender oppression in Gilead, revealing how race, class, and social status amplify the systemic subjugation of women. Gilead enforces a strict racial hierarchy that privileges white women while marginalizing women of color. Although racial diversity is not a central theme in the novel, the implicit racial inequalities become evident in the treatment of characters such as the Marthas. These women, relegated to domestic labor, endure severe and often brutal conditions shaped by their gender and perceived racial or ethnic identity. Class is another foundational element of Gilead's oppressive structure. High-ranking women, like Wives, enjoy relative privileges but remain subordinate to men, while Handmaids and Marthas experience dehumanization through their assigned reproductive and labor roles. Handmaids, in particular, endure the harshest oppression, reduced solely to their reproductive function, stripped of social status, and subjected to relentless surveillance. Through this lens, Atwood portrays Gilead as a system where race, class, and gender converge to create a complex and hierarchical web of discrimination. The oppression of women is far from uniform, as their experiences are deeply influenced by their socioeconomic status and ethnic identity.

Atwood also explores how socio-political status shapes individuals' experiences of gender oppression within Gilead's patriarchal framework. Agnes, raised as a privileged wife-in-training, initially views her position as a natural extension of her status. Yet, as she grows more aware of Gilead's repressive nature, she recognizes her lack of autonomy and begins to challenge the system. Conversely, Daisy, raised in Canada, enjoys greater freedom but is still subject to societal expectations and Gilead's far-reaching brutality. Her eventual resistance stems from the revelation of her true identity, shaped by her socio-political context outside Gilead. Aunt Lydia, operating within Gilead's political structure, uses her position strategically to gather intelligence and undermine the regime from within. Through these characters, Atwood illustrates how socio-political status affects one's ability to navigate and resist Gilead's oppressive systems. In *The Testaments*, Atwood draws parallels between Gilead's dystopian framework and contemporary global challenges, particularly concerning reproductive rights and gender-based violence. Gilead's rigid control over women's reproductive functions critiques ongoing debates about bodily autonomy. The coerced pregnancies of the Handmaids starkly reflect modern struggles over abortion rights and access to reproductive healthcare. By depicting women reduced to their biological roles, Atwood critiques governmental control over women's bodies, mirroring real-world battles in countries where reproductive freedoms remain contentious. Atwood also condemns gender-based violence as a cornerstone of Gilead's society. Women endure physical and psychological abuse, including sexual violence, public executions, and mutilation. Patriarchal ideologies that dehumanize women and treat them as property institutionalize this violence. These themes resonate with contemporary issues such as the #MeToo movement and international campaigns against femicide, underscoring Atwood's critique of cultural and legal inadequacies in protecting women from harm. The portrayal of women's suffering in Gilead serves as a heightened reflection of these enduring global challenges, warning against the erosion of women's rights and autonomy.

Atwood's feminist critique extends beyond the fictional realm of Gilead, tackling universal issues such as gender inequality, reproductive rights, and institutional subjugation. The novel's themes resonate with ongoing struggles for reproductive freedom and gender equity, especially in regions where access to abortion and contraception is restricted. Atwood's examination of women's complicity and resistance aligns with global feminist movements, including #MeToo, highlighting the importance of solidarity in confronting patriarchal oppression. *The Testaments* has left a significant mark on feminist discourse and popular culture, continuing the conversations sparked by *The Handmaid's Tale*. Its exploration of women's culpability, resistance, and solidarity has ignited critical discussions about patriarchy's mechanisms and how they manifest in modern society. The novel's impact has been amplified by the cultural prominence of *The Handmaid's Tale* television adaptation, with its iconic red cloaks and white bonnets becoming global symbols of resistance. Through her work, Atwood continues to inspire activists, artists, and scholars, reminding readers of the precariousness of women's rights and the ongoing need for vigilance in the fight for gender equality (Ferns, 1999). In *The Testaments*, Atwood reaffirms her role as a leading voice in feminist literary and cultural criticism.

CONCLUSION:

Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments* is a compelling continuation of her feminist critique, delving deeply into themes of gender identity, feminism, and intersectionality while addressing pressing global issues. The novel examines the rigid gender norms enforced by the theocratic state of Gilead, a regime that seeks to dominate women by reducing them to their reproductive roles. Through her portrayal of diverse female characters, Atwood highlights the complexities of resistance, agency, and complicity within oppressive systems, offering a profound exploration of how women navigate and challenge patriarchal frameworks. One of the central themes of *The Testaments* is women's agency and resistance in Gilead. Characters such as Aunt Lydia, Agnes, and Daisy exemplify different approaches to confronting the regime. Aunt Lydia is a particularly complex figure, embodying both complicity and rebellion. Operating within Gilead's power structure, she strategically uses her position to undermine the regime from within, ultimately contributing to its downfall. Her character invites readers to grapple with the intersections of power, survival, and resistance, particularly in environments where overt rebellion is nearly impossible. Meanwhile, Agnes and Daisy, who come from starkly different socio-political contexts, reveal how privilege and personal experience shape women's responses to gendered oppression. The exploration of gender identity is another crucial aspect of the novel. Gilead imposes rigid classifications on women—Wives, Marthas, and Handmaids—defined by their roles, race, and reproductive capabilities. These categories create varying forms of oppression. For example, Agnes, raised as a wealthy wife-in-training, experiences a constrained existence masked by privilege, while Daisy, who grows up outside Gilead, faces oppression of a different nature. Their eventual alliance underscores the transformative power of solidarity, demonstrating that unity against oppression must transcend social divides. Atwood's narrative implicitly critiques the ways race, class, and gender intersect to shape unique experiences of subjugation. By expanding on the critical dialogue introduced in *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Testaments* advances discussions about gender and power in significant ways. While Gilead is an exaggerated dystopia, its themes—gender-based violence, government control over women's bodies, and the politicization of reproductive rights—resonate deeply with contemporary issues (Booker, 1994). The novel warns against the fragility of women's rights and autonomy, highlighting the dangers of gender oppression masked as law and order. Atwood draws direct parallels between Gilead's theocracy and current global struggles over reproductive rights, offering a cautionary tale about the erosion of freedoms in the guise of societal regulation.

The novel also makes an essential contribution to the discourse on intersectionality, emphasizing how race, class, and gender converge to shape women's experiences within patriarchal structures. Through characters like Aunt Lydia, who embodies both enforcement and subversion; Agnes, who initially represents internalized compliance; and Daisy, whose rebellion is informed by privilege, Atwood broadens the feminist conversation. She underscores the importance of a feminism that acknowledges the diverse and intersecting ways women experience oppression. Solidarity, while crucial, must account for these intersections to be truly effective. Atwood challenges the notion of 'savior feminism' by portraying a diverse range of characters, each contributing to Gilead's downfall in

unique ways. This multifaceted approach to resistance underscores that meaningful change is driven by a spectrum of defiance, from overt acts of rebellion to subtle, strategic subversion. By doing so, Atwood critiques reductive portrayals of feminism in media and advocates for a more nuanced understanding of feminist action. *The Testaments* is a profound contribution to feminist literature, offering a layered, intersectional critique of power, oppression, and gender. Atwood's exploration of women's agency, solidarity, and resistance serves as both a call to action and a stark warning about the fragility of rights in patriarchal systems. Through its richly developed female protagonists, the novel emphasizes the necessity of acknowledging the complexities of gender discrimination and fostering unity in the fight for equality.

REFERENCES:

1. Abbasi, H. (2022, October 7). Mahsa Amini did not die from blows to body, Iranian coroner says amid widespread protests. NBC News. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/mahsa-amini-death-iran-morality-policeprotests-coroner-report-rcna51169>.
2. Allardice, L. (2019, September 20). Interview: Margaret Atwood: 'For a long time we were moving away from Gilead. Then we started going back towards it.' The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/sep/20/margaret-atwood-moving-away-from-gilead-testaments>
3. Atwood, M. (1996). *The Handmaid's tale*. London: Vintage.
4. Atwood, M. (2017, March 3). Margaret Atwood on What 'The Handmaid's Tale' Means in the Age of Trump. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/10/books/review/margaret-atwood-handmaidstale-age-of-trump.html>
5. Atwood, M. (2018, April 25). Margaret Atwood on How She Came to Write The Handmaid's Tale: The Origin Story of an Iconic Novel. Literary Hub. <https://lithub.com/margaretatwood-on-how-she-came-to-write-the-handmaids-tale/>
6. Atwood, M. (2019). *The Testaments*. New York: Doubleday.
7. Bethune, B. (2019, September 6). Margaret Atwood's urgent new tale of Gilead. Maclean. <https://www.macleans.ca/culture/books/margaret-atwoods-urgent-new-tale-of-gilead/>
8. Braidotti, R. (2017). "Four theses on posthuman feminism." In R. Grusin (Ed.), *Anthropocene Feminism*. The University of Minnesota Press.
9. Cixous, H. Cohen, K. and Cohen, P. (1976). The laugh of the Medusa. *Signs*, 1(4), the University of Chicago Press, 875–893.
10. Critics Quotes Flashcards Preview. <https://www.brainscape.com/flashcards/critics-quotes7725083/packs/12740214>
11. EU and council of Europe 'alarmed' at Poland's plan to leave domestic violence treaty. (2020, July 27). SBS News. <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/eu-and-council-of-europe-alarmed-at-polands-plan-to-leave-domestic-violence-treaty/tu98v6pym>
12. Feldman, Lucy. (2019, September 10). Let's Break Down the Most Mysterious Parts of The Testaments, With a Little Help From Margaret Atwood. Time. <https://time.com/5673535/the-testaments-plot-questions-margaret-atwood/>
13. Felski, R. (2000). *Doing time: Feminist theory and postmodern culture*. New York University Press.
14. Globus, G. G. (1995) *The Postmodern Brain*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
15. Howells, C. A. (2018). Science fiction in the feminine: The handmaid's tale. July 16, 2018. <https://scrapsfromtheloft.com/books/science-fiction-in-feminine-handmaids-tale/>
16. Jardine, A. (1985). *Gynesis: Configurations of woman and modernity*. Cornell UP.
17. Margaret Atwood on the real-life events that inspired *The Handmaid's Tale* and *The Testaments*. (2019, September 8). Penguin Books. <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/2019/09/margaret-atwood-handmaids-taletestaments-real-life-inspiration>
18. Oates, J. C. (2006). Margaret Atwood's tale. *The New York Review of Books*, November 2.

19. The Irish Times Women's Podcast. Soundcloud. <https://soundcloud.com/irishtimeswomen/ep-247-margaret-atwood?fbclid=IwAR0mLmRwQkCdsHxLnADoPHFOCoVFeOb9axSSz0uAJtIZCz8fnI7AHifPjk>
20. Van Dam, D., and Polak, S. (2021). Owing Gilead: franchising feminism through Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and *The Testaments*. *European Journal of English Studies*, 25(2) (02. August 2021): 172-189.

To Hail Humanity Rectification Of Religious Customs (Sati Pratha & Johar)

Dr. Neelam Narayan

Post Graduate, Department Of Philosophy
Awadhesh Pratap Singh University, Rewa, Madhya Pradesh.
M.Ed & Doctorate in Sociology
Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Maharashtra.
Email.id: dr.neelamnaranayan999@gmail.com

Abstract: Religious customs embody the traditions and values of faith, guiding individuals in their spiritual journey and instilling virtues like compassion and humility. They provide comfort during distress, joy in celebrations, and stability in uncertain times. However, certain customs, when misinterpreted or outdated, become oppressive stigmas. In Hinduism, practices like Sati and Johar once symbolized devotion and resistance but later perpetuated gender inequality. Sati, where widows immolated themselves, became a forced societal obligation, while Johar, a wartime act of self-immolation, glorified violence against women. Reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy championed their abolition, leading to the legal ban on Sati in 1829, ensuring women's autonomy and dignity. This article explores how it was rectified by making strict laws to hail humanity towards women.

Keywords: Humanity, Religious Customs, Sati Pratha, Johar Pratha, Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

INTRODUCTION:

Religious customs are practices that reflect faith, connect individuals with the divine, and foster a sense of community. These rituals include prayer, a form of communication with the divine through praise, thanksgiving, or petitions. Worship often involves collective rituals, hymns, and sermons. Sacrifices symbolize devotion or repentance, while fasting serves as spiritual discipline. Pilgrimages to sacred sites offer spiritual renewal, and festivals celebrate key religious events or figures. Religious customs provide meaning, purpose, and belonging while preserving beliefs and traditions across generations, shaping cultural identity and strengthening bonds within faith communities. Rationale for Selection of this Topic: Religious customs are the essence of a faith, connecting individuals to their spiritual roots while promoting unity, discipline, and cultural continuity. They are a reflection of humanity's quest for meaning and connection, enriching both personal and collective lives. But, once misinterpreted or followed rigidly, it becomes inhumane. Such inhumane religious customs highlight the need for reform and education to ensure that religious practices align with contemporary human rights standards. By addressing these harmful traditions, societies can preserve the positive aspects of faith while eliminating cruelty and injustice. In Indian history, and in Hinduism, the 'Sati' and 'Johar' customs are the most evident examples.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

1. Soman, Priya, [2023], RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY AND THE ABOLITION OF SATI SYSTEM IN INDIA, Raja Ram Mohan Roy undertook a lot of social reform to change the society and worked to uplift the status of women in India. Raja Ran Mohan Roy was strictly

against to the social evils like Sati, child marriage caste Rigidity etc. Ram Mohan Roy's impact on modern Indian history was a revival of the pure and ethical principles of the Vedanta school of philosophy as found in the Upanishads. He founded the Brahma Samaj. The Brahma Samaj played a major role in reforming and modernising Indian society. He successfully campaigned against sati, the practice of burning widows.

2. Shamsuddin, M, [2020], "A Brief Historical Background of Sati Tradition in India", The exact origin of the Sati is unknown, but scholars say that it emerged for two reasons first, for the upper-class funerals; it added more grandeur to their funerals, and the idea of cremating the items of the deceased with him is applied here, as his wife is considered one of his possessions. Second, to keep the women safe from the enemy invading their territory, for example, Mughals invading the Rajput territory. It is said that when a soldier of the Rajput army was killed in the battle, his wife would immolate herself on his funeral pyre to prevent herself from falling into the hands of Mughals. There is a resemblance in Sati and Jauhar, and the only difference is Jauhar was done by Rajput widows at the end of a defeated battle, while Sati by a normal Hindu widow in a religious context. A widow gains dignity and power if she decides to die alongside her husband, and by doing that, she brings honour to her husband's family. Therefore, by her dignified sacrifice, the widow can avert being despised and procure glory for herself and her family.

Objectives of this Research:

1. To study the religious scripts related to 'Sati' and 'Johar' customs.
2. To analyze reasons for religious historical implication of 'Sati' and 'Johar' customs.
3. To study the specific incidents of 'Sati' and 'Johar'.
4. To explore the Constitutional provisions and implication of Laws to stop it.
5. To study present scenarios related to 'Sati' and 'Johar' customs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

1. Historical Analysis: Examining religious scripts and incidents.
2. Case Study Approach: Specific incidents of Sati and Johar which took place in history.
3. Analytical Study: Analysis Of Constitutional provision and implication of Laws to stop it.

Source of Data:

1. Primary Sources: Historical documents, religious texts, and archival materials.
2. Secondary Sources: Academic journals, books, reports.
3. Case Studies: Specific incidents of Sati and Johar which took place in history.

FINDINGS:

Definition: Religious customs:

Religious customs are practices rooted in history and spiritual belief, embodying the values and traditions of a faith. They provide structure and discipline, guiding individuals in their spiritual journey through rituals like prayer, fasting, or pilgrimage. Customs symbolize cultural heritage, preserving traditions and uniting communities across generations. Festivals such as Diwali, Eid, or Christmas serve as both religious and cultural celebrations. Additionally, religious customs strengthen community bonds through gatherings and ceremonies, fostering cooperation and emotional support. They also offer psychological comfort, providing stability during uncertainties and instilling values like compassion, humility, and generosity for the betterment of society.

Sometimes, Need of Rectification in Religious customs:

Religious customs, while often rooted in cultural significance and moral teachings, can sometimes devolve into inhuman practices when misinterpreted or followed rigidly. Religion plays a role in maintaining social order and promoting virtues, but certain practices reveal the darker side of blind faith also, like:

1. **Sati Pratha (Hinduism):** This ancient custom in India forced widows to immolate themselves on their husband's funeral pyres, justified as an act of devotion. It was abolished in 1829 due to its inhumanity.
2. **Female Genital Mutilation (Islamic Communities):** Practiced in some parts of Africa and the Middle East, this custom violates women's rights and inflicts physical and psychological harm.
3. **Witch Hunts (Christianity):** In Europe and North America during the 15th-18th centuries, countless women were accused of witchcraft and executed, often based on baseless suspicions.
4. **Child Marriage (Various Faiths):** While justified by cultural and religious traditions, child marriage remains a violation of human rights, depriving young girls of education and safety.
5. **Ashura Self-Flagellation (Shia Islam):** Observers of Ashura sometimes engage in self-flagellation to commemorate Imam Hussain's martyrdom. While symbolic, the practice often results in self-harm and health risks.

Custom of Sati:

The practice of Sati, rooted in Hindu traditions, originated from the mythology of Goddess Sati, the wife of Lord Shiva. Sati self-immolated in fury after her father, Daksha, insulted Shiva, symbolizing extreme devotion. Though not a widow, her act inspired the ritual, which evolved into widows immolating themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres. The term "Sati" means "chaste woman" or "good wife," later anglicized as "suttee."

In Hinduism, it was considered a way to join one's husband in the afterlife, widows committing Sati were deified, with temples built in their honor. Over time, this oppressive practice was abolished, leaving a complex cultural legacy. Globetrotters such as Al Biruni (973-1048 CE), and Ibn Battuta (b. 1304 CE) and many others who travelled to India have mentioned in their travel books about Sati being performed openly and publicly.

Historical Evidences:

1. **The Mahabharata Madri's 'Sati':** After the death of Pandu, Madri chose to be Sati into Pandu's funeral pyre. But, The first wife of Pandu did not choose to be Sati and she lived her princely life with her five sons, in which two sons were of Madri.
2. **The Sati at Bengal:** (17th Century CE): French traveler François Bernier documented several instances of Sati in Bengal, where young widows, some as young as 12, were coerced or persuaded to immolate themselves. Societal pressure and religious beliefs glorified Sati as a virtuous act, making it difficult for widows to refuse.
3. **The Sati of Maharani Raj Rajeshwari of Nepal:** (1799 CE): After the death of King Rana Bahadur Shah, his queen, Maharani Raj Rajeshwari, performed Sati.
4. **The Sati of Rani Maina of Jodhpur:** (1843 CE): Rani Maina performed Sati after the death of Maharaja Man Singh of Jodhpur.
5. **The Sati of Rani Shankaravati:** (9th Century CE): Inscriptional evidence from Andhra Pradesh mentions Rani Shankaravati committing Sati on her husband's funeral pyre, which was commemorated by erecting a memorial stone.

Reasons Behind Sati:

1. **Spiritual Beliefs:** Sati was believed to ensure the woman's salvation and a reunion with her husband in the afterlife.

2. **Cultural Honor:** The widow's sacrifice was seen as a testament to her chastity and loyalty, protecting the family's reputation.
3. **Societal Pressure:** Community expectations often left widows with little choice, as refusing Sati could lead to social ostracization.
4. **Patriarchy and Widowhood:** In patriarchal societies, widows faced significant stigma and restrictions. Sati was viewed as a way to escape the hardships of widowhood.
5. **Religious Endorsement:** Certain Hindu texts and priestly classes propagated the practice as a sacred duty, further reinforcing its legitimacy.

CUSTOM OF JOHAR:

Johar was an act of the rite of collective self-immolation, performed by the women, young children, and other dependants of a besieged fort or town when it was felt that holding out against the enemy was no longer possible and that death appeared the only honourable way out of the impasse. The custom of Johar, predominantly practiced in the Rajput communities of medieval India, involved mass self-immolation by women and children to avoid capture, enslavement, or dishonor at the hands of invading armies. The act was considered a heroic sacrifice, embodying the Rajput ideals of honor, valor, and resistance.

Differences between 'Sati' and 'Johar':

Aspect	Sati	Johar
Definition Of The Custom	An act of self-immolation by a widow on her husband's funeral pyre, either voluntarily or under societal pressure.	A mass self-immolation of women (often accompanied by children) in anticipation of capture or dishonor during a siege.
Purpose	To demonstrate loyalty, devotion, and eternal union with the deceased husband in the afterlife.	To protect honor and avoid enslavement, assault, or dishonor at the hands of an invading enemy.
Timing	Performed after the death of the husband, during his cremation.	Performed before the final battle, when defeat and capture by the enemy were inevitable.
Participation	Individual woman (widow) who was the wife of the deceased.	Groups of women and children, even of the royal household and community.
Key context	Religious and societal practice linked to marriage and widowhood.	Strategic and collective acts tied to war and invasion.
Origins	Derived from Hindu texts and customs that glorified a woman's loyalty to her husband.	Rooted in the Rajput ethos of valor, honor, and sacrifice during medieval warfare.
Famous Examples	Rani Raj Rajeshwari of Nepal (1799 CE) Instances in Bengal as documented by François Bernier	- Rani Padmini and the Johar of Chittorgarh (1303 CE) & Johar of Jaisalmer (1295 CE) and (1818 CE).
Associated Symbolism	Seen as the epitome of a woman's devotion and chastity.	Seen as an act of collective resistance and honor in the face of inevitable defeat.
Regions Practised	Practiced across India, particularly in Rajasthan, Bengal, and Nepal.	Predominantly associated with the Rajput kingdoms of Rajasthan.
Frequency	Could occur during peacetime or wartime if a woman's husband died.	Happened only during wartime, when kingdoms faced an overwhelming enemy invasion.

Thus, the researcher found that, Sati was an individual act tied to widowhood and religious devotion, while Johar was a collective wartime sacrifice to protect the honor of a community. Both were practiced, while rooted in notions of loyalty and honor, are now viewed as tragic and oppressive traditions, abolished due to their coercive and patriarchal nature.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF 'JOHAR':

- Johar of Jaisalmer: (1295 CE):** Rawal Jethsi was the ruler of Jaisalmer.
 - Facing invasion by Alauddin Khalji's general, the women of Jaisalmer performed Johar while men perished in battle. It is estimated that around 24,000 Rajputs lost their lives.
- Johar of Ranthambore: (1301 CE):** Raja Hammir Dev Chauhan was the ruler of Ranthambore.
 - Approximately 10,000 Rajputs were killed. The royal women and Rajput women of Ranthambore participated in the Johar, after realizing that defeat was imminent by Alauddin Khalji.
- Johar of Chittorgarh: (1303 CE):** Rana Ratan Singh was the Ruler of Chittorgarh. Rani Padmini, also known as Padmavati, famed for her beauty and valor.
 - Historical accounts suggest that 30,000 Rajputs, including warriors and civilians, were killed during Alauddin Khalji's siege of Chittorgarh. Rani Padmini and thousands of other Rajput women committed Sati after their husbands were killed in battle.
- Johar of Raisen: (1532 CE):** Raja Silhadi Tomar, was the ruler. Though he eventually sided with the Mughals, leading to betrayal.
 - Emperor Humayun of the Mughal Empire invaded Raisen. Approximately 5,000 Rajput warriors were killed in the battle, while women and children committed Johar to avoid dishonor.
- Johar of Chittorgarh: (1535 CE):** Rana Vikramaditya Singh was the ruler of chittorgarh.
 - During Bahadur Shah of Gujarat's siege, Rani Karnavati led the Johar of thousands of women while Rajput warriors fought to their deaths. Around 13,000 women and children committed Johar, while approximately 32,000 Rajput warriors and civilians perished during the battle and subsequent massacre by Bahadur Shah's forces.
- Johar of Chittorgarh (1568 CE):** Rana Udai Singh II was the ruler. It is documented that he fled to Udaipur before the siege began to save the lineage.
 - Under Emperor Akbar's siege, the women of Chittorgarh, including queens and commoners, immolated themselves as Rajput warriors fought in a desperate last stand. Approximately 8,000 women and children committed Johar, while 40,000 Rajputs were killed.
- Johar of Bundi: (1569 CE):** Rao Surjan Singh Hada was the ruler. Though he later surrendered to Emperor Akbar.
 - Emperor Akbar, during his conquest of Rajasthan, several thousand Rajputs died in the battle, and women committed Johar in anticipation of defeat.
- Johar of Chittorgarh: (1587 CE):** Maharana Pratap was the ruler. Chittorgarh had already fallen to the Mughals in 1568, and this was during his ongoing resistance against Akbar.
 - Emperor Akbar, who sought to completely subjugate the Mewar kingdom. Thousands of Rajputs and their families are believed to have participated in Johar.
- Johar of Mehrangarh: (1679 CE):** Ajit Singh Rathore was the ruler. He was an infant at the time, and Marwar was under attack.
 - Aurangzeb, the Mughal emperor, during his campaign to annex Marwar. Thousands of Rajput warriors perished in battle, and women performed Johar.
- Johar of Udaipur: (1734 CE):** Maharana Sangram Singh II was the ruler.
 - In the expansionist campaigns of Maratha forces, thousands of Rajput women and children participated in Johar, while warriors fought to the death against Maratha forces.
- Johar of Churu: (1814 CE):** Thakur Shivdan Singh was the ruler.
 - Colonial British forces, assisted by local allies, sought to annex the territory. Hundreds of women committed Johar, while the men defended the fort to the death.

12. **Johar of Jaisalmer: (1818 CE):** Maharawal Mulraj II was the ruler.

- Amir Khan Pindari, a notorious warlord allied with the Marathas. Specific names are not mentioned, but royal women led the act. Around 24,000 women and children performed Johar, while thousands of Rajput warriors died in battle.

13. **Last Recorded Johar: Chittorgarh: (1840 CE):** Rana Gopal Singh was the ruler.

- Because of the combined attack of Mughals and Britishers it took place. Though on a smaller scale than previous incidents, this is considered the last recorded Johar, marking the decline of the practice due to changing times.

REASONS BEHIND JOHAR

1. **Preservation of Honor:** For Rajputs, honor (especially of women) was paramount, and Johar was seen as a way to maintain dignity in the face of inevitable defeat.
2. **Cultural Beliefs:** Deep-rooted patriarchal values and a sense of community pride encouraged collective acts of sacrifice.
3. **Religious Ideals:** The concept of purity and joining one's loved ones in death aligned with the Hindu belief system.
4. **Fear of Enslavement:** In medieval warfare, women were often captured, enslaved, or forced into harems by victors, making Johar a more honorable choice.
5. **Defiance of the Enemy:** Johar symbolized resistance and denial of satisfaction to the invaders who sought to claim the women as war trophies.

ABOLITION OF SATI:

- Sati was the practice of the immolation of a Hindu woman on the death of her husband in his funeral pyre. Although this practice does not have any Vedic sanction, it had become prevalent in some parts of India.
- Many cases of Sati were voluntary whereas some were forced.
- In the year 1817 alone, about 700 widows were burnt alive.
- Raja Rammohan Roy, the great Hindu reformer from Bengal fought many societal evils prevalent in the Hindu society of Bengal and Sati pratha was one of the chief ones.
- He had witnessed the live immolation of his own sister-in-law. He started his struggle against this practice in 1812.
- William Carey, an English missionary, also fought against this barbaric practice.
- It was first banned in 1798 in Calcutta, however, the custom continued in the surrounding areas.
- Raja Rammohan Roy was a vociferous campaigner against Sati. He argued that the Vedas and other ancient Hindu scriptures did not sanction Sati.
- He wrote articles in his journal Sambad Kaumudi advocating its prohibition. He stressed with the East India Company administration to ban this practice.
- Lord William Bentinck became the Governor-General of India in 1828. He helped Raja Rammohan Roy to suppress many prevalent social evils like Sati, polygamy, child marriage and female infanticide.
- Lord Bentinck passed the law banning Sati throughout the Company's jurisdiction in British India.
- The act of Sati was made illegal and punishable by the courts. (Sati Regulation XVII A. D. 1829 of the Bengal Code)

LEGISLATIVE STATUS OF SATI IN PRESENT-DAY INDIA:

Following the outcry after the sati of Roop Kanwar, the Government of India enacted the Rajasthan Sati Prevention Ordinance, 1987 on 1 October 1987, and later passed the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987.

The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 Part I, Section 2(c) defines sati as:

The burning or burying alive of –

- (i) any widow along with the body of her deceased husband or any other relative or with any article, object or thing associated with the husband or such relative; or
- (ii) any woman along with the body of any of her relatives, irrespective of whether such burning or burying is claimed to be voluntary on the part of the widow or the women or otherwise.

The Enforcement of India's 1987 Sati Law:

The passing of The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 was seen as an unprecedented move to many in India, and was hailed as a new era in the women's rights movement.

The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 Act:

- "(i) The observance of any ceremony or the taking out of a procession in connection with the commission of Sati; or
- (ii) The supporting, justifying or propagating of the practice of Sati in any manner; or
- (iii) The arranging of any function to eulogise the person who has committed Sati; or
- (iv) The creation of a trust, or the collection of funds, or the construction of a temple or other structure or the carrying on of any form of worship or the performance of any ceremony thereat, with a view to perpetuate the honour of, or to preserve the memory of, a person who has committed Sati”.
- (v) The punishment for glorifying sati is a minimum one-year sentence that can be increased to seven years in prison and a minimum fine of 5,000 rupees that can be increased to 30,000 rupees.

CONCLUSION:

Religious customs hold significant importance as they embody the traditions, values, and principles that define a faith. These practices, rooted in history and spiritual belief, serve as a bridge between the divine and the community, fostering a sense of identity and belonging. But once misinterpreted, these customs became stigmas because they normalized practices start to devalue individual rights and lives, particularly those of women. Here, it is very important to quote that, the verses mentioned in Holy scriptures were interpreted wrongly, like, mentioned in:

Rigveda, 10.18:7.

Atharvaveda, 18.3:1.

Brahma Purana, 80:75.

Daksa Smruti, 4:18-19.

Agni Purana, 222:19-23.

Garuda Purana, 1.107:29.

Garuda Purana, 10:42.

Mahabharata, Adi Parva, 1:125, 1:126, & 1:95. 27

Devi Bhagavatam, 6.25:35-50, 2.6:53-71.

Mahabharata, Mausala Parva, 16:7.

Kurma Purana, 2.34:108b-109.

Vishnu Purana, 5:38.

Shiva Purana, Koti Rudra Samhita, 4.10: 23-24.

Brihaspati Smriti, 24:11.

The perpetuation of religious customs relied on rigid societal hierarchies, fear, and sometimes on religious misinterpretations. When religious customs deny fundamental human rights and perpetuate harm, they must be re-examined and reformed to align with ethical values, ensuring society progresses without sacrificing cultural heritage.

Recommendation:

Rectification of Misinterpreted and Inhuman Religious Customs:

1. **Education and Awareness:** Promote education to combat ignorance and raise awareness about the historical and spiritual context of customs. Emphasize the difference between faith-based practices and their misinterpretations.
2. **Community Dialogue:** Encourage open discussions within religious and cultural communities to identify practices that are harmful or outdated. Involve scholars, spiritual leaders, and community members to reinterpret customs in alignment with modern values.
3. **Reform by Religious Leaders:** Engage respected religious leaders to advocate for reform. Their endorsement can help change perceptions and influence followers.
4. **Legal Frameworks:** Implement and enforce laws to prevent inhumane practices. Examples include the abolition of Sati and child marriage, which were eradicated through legislative action.
5. **Empowerment of Marginalized Groups:** Empower women, minorities, and other affected groups through education, economic opportunities, and legal rights to resist oppressive customs.
6. **Alternative Practices:** Introduce symbolic or non-harmful alternatives to replace outdated practices. For instance, rituals that emphasize spiritual values without harm.
7. **Public Campaigns:** Use media and public platforms to highlight the negative impacts of inhumane customs and advocate for change.
8. **Incorporating Modern Ethics:** Align religious customs with universal principles of human rights, ensuring they promote compassion, dignity, and equality.
9. **Support Systems:** Provide counseling, financial aid, and safe spaces for individuals pressured into harmful practices to encourage their autonomy and safety.
10. **Periodic Re-evaluation:** Religions should periodically re-examine their customs to ensure relevance and prevent outdated practices from perpetuating harm.

Hail to humanity, the inhumane practices of 'Sati' and 'Johar' are now remnants of a dark past. These customs, born from misinterpreted traditions, symbolized suffering and sacrifice during turbulent times. Rooted in the brutal invasions and hardships of Mughal-era India, they reflected the desperate measures taken to preserve honor. Thankfully, such practices have been abolished, marking a significant step toward progress and equality. Today, they serve as historical lessons, reminding us to uphold dignity and humanity above all else.

REFERENCES:

JOURNAL

1. SHAMSUDDIN, M, [2020], "A Brief Historical Background of Sati Tradition in India", Religion and Philosophical Research Journal, Volume: 3, Number: 5.

2. Soman, Priya, [2023], RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY AND THE ABOLITION OF SATI SYSTEM IN INDIA, International Journal of Humanities, Art and Social Studies (IJHAS), Vol. 1, No.2
3. V Lalitha, [1990], "Sati in the Deccan," Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, (JSTOR), Vol. 51.
4. Sarojini Devi, [1961], "Sati in Vijayanagara [Summary]," Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, (JSTOR), Vol. 24.
5. Jenny M Bushaw, [2007], "Suicide or Sacrifice? An Examination of the Sati Ritual in India," (ACADEMIA Journal), Number 16.

Thesis

1. Chahal, Sachin, [2024], Sati in early medieval northern India a study of literary and epigraphical traditions, Department of History, Panjab University.
2. Kumar, Manoj, [2022], Adivasi katha sahitya mein astitva aur asmita ke prashan bisvi sati ke antim do dashak evam ikkisvi sati ke vishesh sandarbh mein, Department of Hindi, Jiwaji University.
3. Subhani, Uzma Tasneem, [2020], Maulana Mohammed Ali Johar Ki Adabi Khidmaat, Department of Deccan Muslim Education and Research Institute, Savitribai Phule Pune University.
4. Kinsana, Ven, [2012], Various perspectives of sati mindfulness as depicted in pali literature, Department Of Philosophy, K.J. Somaiya Centre for Buddhist Studies, University of Mumbai.

Congruence of Greek and Indian Myths Unfolded through Epic Study

Dr. R. Vidyavathi

Asst.Prof, English Department, Kristu Jayanti College, Bangalore-77
Email: Vidyavathi.r@kristujayanti.com,

Abstract: *Myth or mythology, the omnipresent element in all the religions and literature refers to the origin of world, cultures, civilization where many natural and super natural elements are involved. Myth also relates to something that is woven around actual events. Myths often relate the creation of the world and sometimes its future destruction as well. They tell how gods created men. They depict the relationships between various gods and between gods and men. They provide a moral code by which to live. And myths treat the lives of heroes who represent the ideals of a society. In short, myths largely deal with the significant aspects of human and super-human existence. This article unveils the prominence of myth, its etymology, usage, and impetus revealed through the Epics comparing and contrasting Greek, Roman and Indian mythologies. The word 'myth' traces to Greek origin, derived from 'mythos' - "speech, thought, word, discourse, conversation; story, saga, tale, myth, anything delivered by word of mouth".*

Key words: *mythology, supernatural, moral, Greek, Roman and Indian.*

INTRODUCTION:

Classical mythology is a term often used to designate the myths belonging to ancient Greek and Roman traditions. The myths are believed to have been acquired first by oral tradition and the pioneers, who brought this to limelight are Homer and Hesiod who flourished during 7th and 8th century. The latter is hailed as the "father of Greek didactic poetry." Two of his complete epics have survived, the *Theogony*, relating the myths of the gods, and the *Works and Days*, describing peasant life

Greek myths were narratives related to ancient Greek religion, often concerned with the actions of gods and other supernatural beings and of heroes who transcend beyond human traits. Major sources for Greek myths include the Homeric epics, that is, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Known versions are mostly preserved in sophisticated literary works shaped by the artistry of individuals and by the conventions of genre, or in vase painting and other forms of visual art. In these forms, mythological narratives often serve purposes that are religious, entertainment and even social issues.

One of the most important aspects of the Greek worldview was that it was the first to put humans at the centre of the universe. Unlike the animal deities of the Egyptians and Mesopotamians, the gods of the Greeks are human in form. Not only do they possess human physical characteristics, but they embody the emotional flaws of humans as well. To the Greeks, the life of the gods so closely resembled human life that the gods felt real and tangible, rather than incomprehensible and remote. There is a rational view of the supernatural—like humans, the gods are often unpredictable. They do not always operate on the highest moral grounds, and they get angry and jealous, sometimes doing terrible things like exacting vengeance or calling for sacrifices. Even though Greek myth lacks wizards and demonic spell casters, there are still plenty of horrible magic creatures—the snake-haired Gorgons, for instance—that appear to be relics of that older, primitive world. These myths are more akin to proto-

scientific stories that are meant to explain natural phenomena, such as thunderstorms or the setting of the sun. Some myths are pure entertainment and are not meant to explain anything.

India has a very profound history from its roots and is considered as a land of interesting stories, legends, and superstitions. Indian myths and religion are closely interwoven and cannot be separated. These stories have been passed on for generations and have been told over a million times even to this day. Further, there are plethora of Indian myths attributed to great Epics- *Ramayana and Mahabharata*, Tamil literature, Panchatantra tales, and Mangal Kavyas of Bengal. The earliest Indian texts are the *Vedas*, a series of sacred hymns in honour of the Aryan gods, who personified natural forces such as the sun, storm, fire, rain, wind etc. The Vedic religion was materialistic, devoted to obtaining power, prosperity, health, and other blessings by means of ritual and sacrifice resulted in Hinduism, a major religion of India with three major gods: Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva.

India and Greece are widely known for their rich civilizational and mythological backgrounds that are mostly similar with respect to the mythical characters that figure in their descriptions. Both Hellenic and Greek and Indian mythologies are the oldest known set of ancient evidence that are interconnected with each other in essence, with marked similarities. Iliad, the Greek epic and Ramayana the India epic are both comparable on numerous grounds. Both the Trojan War in Iliad and war in Ramayana, are battled for a lady. While Trojan War was lead my Menelaus to recover his better half Helen from the Prince of Troy, Paris, the war in Ramayana was battled by Rama to redeem his wife Sita from Ravan, the king of Lanka. Troy was attacked and burnt in the war. Likewise, Lanka was also attacked and burnt by Hanuman. The Trojan War is battled on the shoreline and the Greeks found it very hard to assume control over Troy. Correspondingly, Ramayana war is battled predominantly on the ocean shore and the monkey armed force faced extraordinary troubles in breaking through to Lanka. The war finished with the city of Lanka being overthrown by Rama, and Sita returning home securely. The war in the Iliad closes with Troy being overthrown and Helen returning home securely.

Zeus or Dionysus, Gods of Greek Mythology is compared with Indra and Shiva, prime deities of Hindu Mythology. Sharvara is a famous mythical hound from hell whose owner is Lord Yama. The Greek counterpart to this is the Cerberus that accompanied Hades, both of which guard the gates of the netherworld. Like Sita was abducted by Ravana, Persephone was carried away by Hades. It was carried out against their will. They also merge into mother earth under different contexts. Kamadeva and Cupid are known by different names but they function in the same way. Both shoot arrows into the hearts of people to make them fall in love.

Zeus and Karna of Mahabharata, the most skilled warriors of their times, are strikingly similar with respect to their impenetrable armour that made them indomitable. Both were demigods and were requested by their mothers not to participate in the ensuing war. With the death of these two warriors the Great Wars came to an end. The concept of the Holy trinity is the same to both traditions. We have Gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva who are a part of the holy trinity, Similarly Greek mythology has Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon who respectively rule the heavens.

Further, to compare *Mahabharata* and *Illiad*, there are few similarities. Pandavas were sent to forest for 13 years. The battle of Troy was fought for 14 years. When the war starts out, Arjuna is reluctant to fight. Similarly, when the Trojan War starts, Achilles does not want to fight. Arjuna laments over the dead body of his son Abhimanyu and pledges to kill Jaydrath the following day. Achilles laments on the dead body of his brother Patroclus, and pledges to kill Hector the following day. Ghatotkacha attacks the Kaurava army during night and causes massive destruction. Ghatotkacha uses "Fire" as his weapon and "burns" the Kaurava camps. Hector attacks the Greek army during night and causes massive destruction. Hector also uses "Fire" as his weapon and "burns" the ships. Sanjaya narrates the war to king Dhritarashtra. Similarly, one of the minister narrates the war to the Trojan king. Dhritarashtra is blind for his wicked son Duryodhana. The Trojan king is blind for his son, Paris. Duryodhana wins Draupadi in the game of dice, he exclaims, "This is the happiest day of my life, Draupadi is our slave." In The Iliad, Briseis, a Trojan, is awarded to Achilles during the Trojan War. She was awarded after she was molested by other Kings or soldiers. In Iliad, the prophecy is about Paris, who will cause destruction to his kingdom. In Mahabharata, the prophecy is about Duryodhana, who will cause the destruction of his own kingdom. Dhritarashtra had 100 sons. The Trojan King had a total of 68 sons, 18 daughters on record which equals to 86 and the numbers are close by. The Trojan War

began because Paris stole King Menelaus' wife, Helen. However, the war was also driven by the greed of Agamemnon, a powerful and fearsome king.

In *The Mahabharata*, the war began mostly because of Duryodhana's jealousy on Pandavas. Draupadi loves Arjuna, also begins to have a soft corner for Karna. Helen, although loves Paris, begins to have a soft corner for Hector, for she knows that Paris is useless and not respected while Hector is the warrior and well respected. Bheeshma is an impossible character in Mahabharata who cannot be defeated. Krishna had to trick him to kill him. On the Greek front, Hector is another impossible character who cannot be defeated. No Greek warrior is able to kill him.

To conclude, Epics are long poems in verse. Justification to some extent is made as classical and Indian are two great civilizations. These epics follow the universal saga that 'Virtue is always rewarded and vice punished'. The same goes even in correlation with other epics like Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. There are so many characters in the epics, esp. the Gods and Demi-Gods and the detailed study of these epics can make the reading further interesting and fascinating.

REFERENCES:

1. *Mythology: Study Guide* | SparkNotes. (n.d.). spark Notes. <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/mythology/>
2. <https://www.boldsky.com/yoga-spirituality/festivals/12-similarities-between-hindu-and-greek-mythology-that-will-take-you-by-surprise/articlecontent-pf241357-143035>
3. Pattanaik, Devdutt. *Hindu and Greek Mythology*: How Similar they are. 2013. Web. 6.
4. Roychowdhury, Adrija. Similarities between Greek and Indian Mythology, In the eyes of Devdutt Pattanaik. The Indian Express, 8 December 2017.

Mothers, daughters, and the Sea: A feminist reading of Karuthamma and Chakki in Chemmeen

¹M Lakshmi Narasimha, ²P Chitti Babu

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities & Sciences, Annamacharya University, Rajampet, 516126

Email - marellanarasimha123@gmail.com

²Academic Consultant, Department of English, Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa.

Email - pottipoguchittibabu@gmail.com

Abstract: Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai's *Chemmeen* (Pillai) portrays the harsh realities faced by women in Kerala's coastal fishing communities, where patriarchal traditions and rigid social norms dictate their lives. The novel examines the struggles of Karuthamma and Chakki as they navigate love, duty, and societal pressures within a deeply hierarchical structure. Karuthamma's doomed romance with Pareekutty underscores the weight of honour placed on women, while Chakki's resilience highlights the endurance required to maintain familial stability in a male-dominated world. The ever-present sea, or Kadalamma, serves as a metaphor for both sustenance and retribution, reinforcing the belief that a wife's chastity determines her husband's fate. By intertwining personal tragedy with cultural beliefs, *Chemmeen* critiques the oppressive systems that confine women while showcasing their strength and agency in the face of adversity. This study explores how the novel reflects gendered struggles, the moral dilemmas faced by its female characters, and the symbolic role of the sea in shaping their experiences.

Keywords: Female resilience, Love and duty, Sea goddess.

INTRODUCTION:

Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai's *Chemmeen* (1956) is a landmark novel in Malayalam literature, set against the backdrop of Kerala's coastal fishing communities. At its core, the novel explores themes of love, morality, fate, and the social structures that govern human relationships. One of its most striking aspects is its nuanced portrayal of gender, particularly the struggles of women in a rigidly patriarchal and caste-based society. Through the experiences of Karuthamma and Chakki, *Chemmeen* highlights how women navigate societal expectations, familial obligations, and personal desires while confronting deeply ingrained social and economic inequalities.

Karuthamma, the novel's protagonist, is emblematic of the tensions between individual autonomy and societal constraints. As a young woman in a conservative fishing village, her love for the Muslim trader Pareekutty is deemed unacceptable, not only due to religious differences but also because of the community's rigid social codes. These unwritten yet powerful laws dictate that a fisherman's wife must remain virtuous and loyal; otherwise, the sea goddess, Kadalamma, will unleash her wrath. This belief system underscores how patriarchal morality is intertwined with supernatural fears, further restricting women's agency. Karuthamma's fate is ultimately shaped by these forces, revealing the tragic consequences of transgressing societal norms.

Chakki, Karuthamma's mother, serves as a more grounded representation of resilience within the oppressive system. As a wife to Chembankunju, a man increasingly consumed by greed and ambition, Chakki must maintain the fragile balance of household stability. She recognizes the sacrifices required of women and often acts as the voice of reason and morality, confronting Chembankunju when he betrays Pareekutty by refusing to sell him fish. Chakki's interactions with her daughter further illustrate the generational burden of women in such a society: while she understands Karuthamma's pain, she also knows that rebelling against established norms is perilous.

The society depicted in *Chemmeen* is deeply patriarchal, with strict gender roles that favor men's economic and social dominance. The novel demonstrates how women, despite being central to the family and community, have little control over their destinies. Marriage, reputation, and obedience to traditional values define their worth, and any deviation is met with harsh consequences. Karuthamma's tragic arc exemplifies the inescapable nature of these societal pressures, while Chakki's endurance reflects the survival strategies employed by older generations of women.

The sea, or Kadalamma, plays a symbolic role in shaping female experiences in the novel. It is both a giver of life and a force of destruction, mirroring the precarious position of women in this community. Just as fishermen depend on the sea for sustenance but fear its unpredictable wrath, women must navigate their lives within the constraints of an unforgiving social order. The myth of Kadalamma's judgment reinforces the idea that a woman's virtue determines the community's fate, placing an immense burden on female characters.

Women and the Sea: Symbolism in Coastal Literature

In *Chemmeen*, intricately portrays the lives of women caught between familial loyalty, cultural expectations, and personal desires. The symbolism of the sea in coastal literature provides a powerful lens through which to examine the complex relationships between mothers and daughters, particularly in how these relationships are shaped by societal constraints, generational differences, and gendered expectations. By examining the bond between Karuthamma and her mother, Chakki, within the context of the sea's symbolism, we gain insight into the feminist dimensions of *Chemmeen*, highlighting themes of survival, sacrifice, and rebellion.

The Sea as a Symbol of Restriction and Resistance

In *Women and the Sea: Symbolism in Coastal Literature*(DATTARAY), the sea is portrayed as both a source of freedom and a force of oppression. This duality is essential to understanding the lives of women in coastal communities, where the sea is both a lifeline and a boundary. In the case of Karuthamma and Chakki, the sea represents the complex tension between the freedom Karuthamma seeks and the limitations imposed on her by tradition and family.

Chakki: The Sacrificing Mother

Chakki, Karuthamma's mother, embodies the sacrifices made by women to secure the survival of their families. Her life revolves around the daily grind of selling fish to provide for her family, and while she has dreams of a better life, she is deeply entrenched in the survivalist mentality of the community. Her relationship with the sea is one of duty and hardship, reflecting the constrained role women play in maintaining the socio-economic structures of coastal life.

Chakki's maternal love is entwined with the sea's harshness. She pushes Karuthamma toward marriage not out of genuine desire for her happiness but as a way of securing her future in a world where women's security is largely defined by marriage. The sea, which Chakki once viewed as a source of livelihood, becomes a symbol of her own trapped existence, and she seeks to pass that sense of limitation to

Karuthamma. Her relationship with the sea mirrors her relationship with societal expectations: while she is fully immersed in its cycles, she hopes her daughter can escape its confines.

In one scene, Chakki reflects on her sacrifices for the family and laments her lack of choices:

"I have spent my life in the sea, selling fish, supporting your father's ambitions. But now, I cannot bear it unless Karuthamma's future is ensured."

Chakki's frustration with the oppressive nature of both the sea and the gendered expectations of her life reveals a critical moment in the feminist reading of *Chemmeen*. Despite her sacrifices, she is still shackled by the same systems that she hopes to protect her daughter from.

Karuthamma: The Daughter's Rebellion and Love

Karuthamma's relationship with the sea, like her mother's, is one of constraint, but it also offers an opportunity for resistance. Karuthamma's yearning for freedom and love contrasts sharply with the restrictions placed on her as a woman in a traditional coastal society. Her love for Pareekutty, a Muslim boy, symbolizes her desire to transcend societal divisions and forge her own path. However, she faces constant pressure from both her family and the community to conform to societal norms, which is reinforced by her mother's insistence on a secure, traditional marriage.

Yet, Karuthamma's silence, when confronted about her love for Pareekutty, becomes a form of feminist resistance. By choosing to remain silent, Karuthamma defies the expectation to speak on behalf of her emotions, turning silence into a powerful act of defiance. Her refusal to marry according to her family's wishes demonstrates her desire for autonomy in a world that seeks to control her actions. The sea in this context symbolizes both the longing for escape and the danger of transgression.

"Look, the sea's crying," (pg22)

Karuthamma says, illustrating her recognition that the sea, in all its vastness, mirrors her own emotional turmoil. She is caught between the love she feels for Pareekutty and the impossibility of that love in the face of societal expectations.

Generational Conflict: The Sea as a Site of Inherited Struggles

The generational difference between Karuthamma and Chakki becomes evident in their respective relationships with the sea. For Chakki, the sea is a site of survival, a place where women have no choice but to endure and comply with established roles. However, for Karuthamma, the sea represents both the generational inheritance of suffering and the possibility of resistance.

While Chakki accepts her position within the social and cultural constraints of the coastal community, Karuthamma's dreams of love and freedom reflect the emerging desire for personal agency among women. Karuthamma's internal conflict between love and duty speaks to the broader feminist narrative of women fighting for autonomy in a patriarchal world. This generational clash highlights the evolving relationship between women and tradition, where the older generation's submission to societal norms is challenged by the younger generation's desire to break free.

Conclusion: The Sea as a Feminist Symbol in *Chemmeen*

In *Chemmeen*, the sea is a powerful feminist symbol that represents both limitation and liberation for the women of the coastal community. Chakki's maternal love is rooted in the belief that securing

Karuthamma's future through marriage is the best way to protect her from the harsh realities of the sea, which in turn reflects her own survival in a patriarchal system. Karuthamma, however, rejects this fate, symbolizing the growing feminist consciousness that seeks both freedom and love beyond societal constraints.

By reading *Chemmeen* through the lens of feminist theory, we see how the sea becomes not only a symbol of nature's power but also a metaphor for the gendered structures that confine women's lives. Karuthamma's struggle to navigate between love and duty, between freedom and constraint, highlights the ongoing negotiation between personal desires and cultural expectations in the lives of women. The sea, in this context, is not just a literal body of water but a profound reflection of the challenges women faces in their quest for autonomy, identity, and justice.

REFERENCES:

1. Thakazhi, Sivasankara Pillai. *Chemmeen*. Translated by Anita Nair, Harper Perennial, 2018.
2. Bhagyalekshmi, R. "Myth of Chastity as a Patricentric Clutch on Women: A Study on Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai's *Chemmeen*." *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2019.
3. DATTARAY, Debashree. "Asea for Encounters: Changing Epistemologies in Ts Pillai's *Chemmeen*." *REINVENTING THE SEA*, p. 45.
4. Pillai, Thakazhi Sivasankara. *Chemmeen*. Harper Collins, 2018.

Corpus linguistics and its applications in English language teaching

Dr. Sheeba Sardar ali

Assistant Professor

College of Education, Department of English, Majmaah University, KSA

Email - sheeba11parvez@gmail.com

Abstract: *Corpus linguistics, the study of language through the analysis of large collections of authentic texts (corpora), has become an invaluable tool in understanding language use and structure. In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), corpus linguistics offers powerful methods for examining real-world language data, which can enhance both teaching and learning experiences. Through the use of corpora, educators can identify patterns of language use, word frequency, collocations, and grammatical structures that are more representative of natural communication. This data-driven approach allows for the creation of teaching materials that reflect authentic language, promoting a deeper understanding of English as it is used in various contexts. Additionally, corpus-based methods enable learners to engage with language that is relevant and current, aiding vocabulary acquisition, grammar instruction, and the development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The integration of corpus linguistics into ELT also supports the customization of lessons to cater to specific learner needs, fostering more effective and dynamic language learning environments. This paper explores the role of corpus linguistics in ELT, its practical applications, and the benefits it offers both teachers and students in improving language proficiency.*

INTRODUCTION:

Corpus linguistics enables language teaching professionals to access vast databases of authentic, real-world language usage, allowing for an empirical and data-driven approach to teaching. This is in contrast to more traditional methods that might rely heavily on intuition, anecdotal evidence, or theoretical grammar. By incorporating corpus-based insights, teachers can enhance the relevance and applicability of their lessons. This research paper explores how corpus linguistics can be integrated into English Language Teaching (ELT), covering key applications, challenges, and future prospects.

What is Corpus Linguistics?

Corpus linguistics involves the collection and analysis of large datasets (or corpora) of authentic language use. These corpora can consist of written or spoken texts and are typically analyzed using computational tools to identify patterns, such as word frequency, collocations, syntactic structures, and more. By using real-world data, corpus linguistics provides a more accurate reflection of how language functions in context, compared to theoretical or prescriptive approaches.

Types of Corpora:

1. **General Corpora:** Represent a wide range of texts across genres (e.g., the British National Corpus, or BNC).
2. **Specialized Corpora:** Focus on specific domains such as academic writing, medical English, or business English.
3. **Learner Corpora:** Contain language produced by non-native speakers, helping to analyze common learner errors (e.g., ICLE – International Corpus of Learner English).

Applications of Corpus Linguistics in English Language Teaching

The integration of corpus linguistics into English Language Teaching (ELT) can enhance various aspects of language learning, from vocabulary and grammar instruction to listening and pronunciation practice. Below are expanded sections with examples and potential visuals.

Vocabulary Teaching:

Corpus linguistics allows teachers to focus on high-frequency words, collocations, and lexical bundles, offering learners insights into how words are used in context.

Benefits:

- **Word Frequency Lists:** These lists identify the most commonly used words in various genres, providing teachers with a basis for selecting relevant vocabulary.
- **Collocations:** Using corpus data, teachers can highlight word combinations that frequently occur together (e.g., "heavy rain," "take a look").
- **Lexical Bundles:** Corpus-based analysis can reveal multi-word expressions or common phrase structures (e.g., "as a result of," "in conclusion").

Table 1: Example of High-Frequency Words and Collocations

Word	Frequency Rank	Common Collocations	Contextual Use
Take	25	take a look, take responsibility	"I'll take a look at the report."
Make	15	make a decision, make an effort	"She needs to make a decision soon."
Heavy	50	heavy rain, heavy load	"There was heavy rain last night."

Diagram: Word Frequency Distribution

- *Pie Chart:* Showing the distribution of word types in different genres (e.g., academic, fiction, conversation) using corpus data

Grammar Instruction

Corpus linguistics helps teach grammar not as abstract rules but as forms used in specific contexts. Teachers can draw on corpora to show how certain structures are used in real-world communication.

Benefits

- **Grammar in Context:** Corpora allow teachers to demonstrate grammar usage based on authentic examples, helping students understand grammatical patterns and exceptions.
- **Grammatical Variation Across Registers:** Corpus analysis can highlight differences in how grammar is used in formal vs. informal settings, or in speech vs. writing.

Table 2: Example of Grammatical Variation Across Registers

Grammar Structure	Formal (Written)	Informal (Spoken)
Present Perfect	"I have finished the report."	"I've finished the report."
Passive Voice	"The research was conducted."	"They did the research."
Modal Verbs	"You should submit the proposal."	"You gotta submit it."

Diagram: Use of Modal Verbs in Spoken vs. Written Language

- *Bar Chart:* Comparing frequency of modal verbs like *should*, *might*, and *could* in spoken vs. written corpora.

Pronunciation and Listening Skills

By analyzing spoken corpora, teachers can provide students with insights into pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns commonly used in conversation. Learning these features helps learners speak and understand English in more natural ways.

Benefits:

- **Pronunciation Patterns:** Corpora reveal features of connected speech, like elisions (e.g., “gonna” for “going to”) and reductions (e.g., “wanna” for “want to”).
- **Intonation and Stress Patterns:** Teachers can use corpora to show how stress and intonation affect meaning (e.g., rising intonation for yes/no questions).

Table 3: Pronunciation Features from a Spoken Corpus

Feature	Example	Usage
Elision	“gonna” (for “going to”)	“I’m gonna call you later.”
Reduction	“wanna” (for “want to”)	“I wanna go to the movies.”
Linking Sounds	“gimme” (for “give me”)	“Gimme a moment to think about it.”

Diagram: Stress and Intonation Patterns

- *Waveform Diagram:* Showing a sample sentence with annotations on stress patterns and rising/falling intonations.

Error Analysis and Learner Corpora:

Learner corpora provide teachers with insight into common errors made by non-native speakers. By analyzing these errors, teachers can design targeted lessons to address specific issues.

Benefits:

- **Identification of Common Errors:** Corpus analysis allows teachers to spot recurring mistakes, such as misuse of prepositions or incorrect word order.
- **Tailored Pedagogical Strategies:** Based on error patterns, teachers can focus on particular problem areas, providing more effective corrective feedback.

Table 4: Common Learner Errors Identified in Corpora

Error Type	Example Mistake	Correct Usage	Frequency
Preposition Misuse	“I am interested in of sports.”	“I am interested in sports.”	High
Word Order Error	“She always not plays tennis.”	“She does not always play tennis.”	Moderate
Article Omission	“I want to go to university.”	“I want to go to the university.”	Low

Diagram: Error Frequency by Category

- *Pie Chart:* Showing the distribution of error types (e.g., preposition misuse, word order errors, article omission) in learner corpora.

CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF USING CORPUS LINGUISTICS IN ELT

While corpus linguistics offers numerous benefits, there are several challenges to consider when integrating it into ELT practices:

Technical Expertise:

Using corpus-based tools requires some familiarity with computational tools like concordancers, corpus query software, and analysis techniques. Teachers may need additional training to effectively integrate corpus linguistics into their teaching practices.

Access to Resources:

Many premium corpora require subscriptions or institutional access, which may not be available in all educational settings. Open-access corpora can mitigate this issue, but they may not always be as comprehensive or up-to-date.

Data Interpretation:

While corpus data can reveal valuable patterns, interpreting the results requires a nuanced understanding of linguistic principles. Teachers need to be trained in distinguishing between statistically significant patterns and coincidental occurrences.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN CORPUS LINGUISTICS AND ELT:

The future of corpus linguistics in ELT is promising, with emerging technologies and methodologies opening new possibilities for educators.

Personalized Learning Tools:

Advances in technology, such as AI and machine learning, can lead to personalized language learning tools that adapt based on individual learner needs. By analyzing learners' output, AI-powered systems could identify areas of weakness and provide tailored materials based on corpus findings.

Integration with AI and NLP:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies can make corpus-based tools more accessible and interactive. These technologies could be integrated into language learning apps and platforms, providing real-time feedback and personalized recommendations.

CONCLUSION:

Corpus linguistics offers a wealth of insights and practical applications for English Language Teaching, allowing for more authentic, context-based instruction. By integrating corpus analysis into ELT, teachers can enhance vocabulary instruction, grammar teaching, pronunciation practice, and error correction. Despite challenges in terms of technical skills and resource access, the potential for future developments—such as AI integration and personalized learning tools—points to an exciting future for corpus linguistics in ELT.

REFERENCES:

1. McEnery, T., & Hardie, A. (2012). *Corpus Linguistics: Method, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1998). *Corpus Linguistics: Investigating Language Structure and Use*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Hunston, S. (2002). *Corpus Linguistics: A Student Guide*. Routledge.
4. O'Keeffe, A., McCarthy, M., & Carter, R. (2007). *From Corpus to Classroom: Language Use and Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Sita's Uncharted Odyssey: Echoes of Independence in “*The Forest of Enchantments*” by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

¹ Rashmi Verma , ² Dr. Geeta Sharma

¹ Research Scholar - English, Eternal University Baru Sahib, Distt. Sirmaur (H.P)

² Assistant Prof. & Supervisor/Guide, Eternal University Baru Sahib, Distt. Sirmaur (H.P)

Email - rashmibt@gmail.com

Abstract: "Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's ' *The Forest of Enchantments*' encapsulates the timeless tale of Sita, portraying her amidst the enchanting yet challenging realms of the Ramayana. This research explores Sita's character, delving into her journey through the mystical forest. Amidst societal constraints and traditional norms, Sita's narrative unveils a compelling odyssey of independence. This paper critically analyzes Sita's resilience, agency, and poignant quest for autonomy within the constraints of her environment. It examines her decisions, actions, and relationships, unraveling the layers of societal expectations and patriarchal influences. The exploration not only highlights Sita's struggle but also underscores her profound impact as an emblem of independence, challenging established gender roles and echoing the timeless pursuit of autonomy within an enchanted world."

INTRODUCTION :

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Forest of Enchantments" offers a captivating reimagining of the timeless epic, the Ramayana, focusing on the resplendent yet often enigmatic character of Sita. Within the tapestry of this narrative, Sita emerges as a beacon of strength and resilience, navigating the labyrinthine trails of an enchanted forest that mirror the complexities of societal expectations and gender norms. In the annals of mythological lore, Sita stands as an iconic figure, embodying the virtues of sacrifice and devotion. However, Divakaruni's rendition delves beyond the traditional portrayal, unraveling Sita's journey with a lens that accentuates her agency, independence, and nuanced complexities.

The enchanted forest serves not merely as a backdrop but as a metaphorical crucible where Sita's character undergoes a transformation, evoking echoes of an uncharted odyssey towards independence. This research aims to dissect Sita's multifaceted persona, exploring her traverses through this mystical terrain, and discerning the resonating echoes of her quest for autonomy within a society steeped in stringent expectations and entrenched patriarchal structures.

This exploration seeks to decipher the subtleties and contradictions within Sita's character, highlighting moments where she defies societal norms, exercises her agency, and propels her narrative beyond the boundaries of conventional expectations. By critically examining Divakaruni's narrative, this study endeavors to unearth the layers of Sita's independence, shedding light on the dichotomy between her portrayal as a revered icon and a woman grappling with the complexities of self-determination.

Through an analysis of Sita's actions, relationships, and struggles within the enchanted forest, this paper endeavors to illuminate the vibrancy of her character, presenting her as a symbol of resilience and autonomy. In dissecting Sita's uncharted odyssey, this research endeavors to uncover the reverberating echoes of independence that resonate within the enchanting confines of the forest. This introduction sets the stage for a deep dive into Sita's character within the context of the enchanted forest, emphasizing the exploration of her agency and independence within societal norms and expectations.

Sita, an iconic figure from the Indian epic Ramayana, has been subject to multifarious interpretations across literary adaptations and scholarly discourse. Traditionally depicted as the epitome of virtue,

sacrifice, and devotion, her character has undergone extensive reimagining, offering diverse perspectives that accentuate her agency and independence.

Previous Interpretations of Sita's Character: In classical renderings of the Ramayana, Sita embodies the idealized archetype of femininity, revered for her unwavering dedication to her husband, Rama, and her willingness to undergo trials for the sake of societal ideals. However, contemporary adaptations, such as Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Forest of Enchantments," diverge from this conventional portrayal. Divakaruni's narrative encapsulates Sita's inner turmoil, presenting her as a woman with aspirations, desires, and a voice that transcends the confines of traditional expectations.

Feminist Perspectives on Sita's Portrayal: Feminist scholars have critically examined Sita's portrayal in Indian mythology, highlighting the dichotomy between her revered status and the constraints imposed by patriarchal norms. They argue that Sita's character embodies inherent strength and resilience, which often get overshadowed by traditional gender roles. Authors like Urmila Pawar and P.L. Deshpande have explored Sita's subjugation within the patriarchal framework, underscoring her struggles and advocating for a reinterpretation that acknowledges her agency and autonomy.

Comparative Analysis with Literary Works: Comparisons with other literary works further illuminate Sita's agency. For instance, in Arshia Sattar's "Uttara: The Book of Answers," Sita's narrative extends beyond her association with Rama, focusing on her individual journey and quest for identity. Similarly, Volga's "The Liberation of Sita" presents an alternate perspective, portraying Sita's emancipation and self-discovery after her return from exile.

These comparative analyses reveal the evolving landscape of Sita's character, showcasing diverse interpretations that accentuate her agency, resilience, and quest for independence. They challenge conventional narratives, offering a nuanced portrayal that transcends traditional boundaries, positioning Sita as an emblem of strength and autonomy within the framework of Indian mythology.

This literature review encapsulates various perspectives on Sita's character, showcasing how her portrayal has evolved across different adaptations and scholarly viewpoints, especially in terms of agency and independence.

Sita's Independence in the Enchanted Forest

Initial Portrayal and Societal Expectations: In the traditional Ramayana narrative, Sita is introduced as the paragon of virtue and loyalty. Her societal role primarily revolves around being a devoted wife to Rama, embodying idealized qualities of chastity and sacrifice. However, within Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Forest of Enchantments," this depiction undergoes transformation. Sita emerges as a woman with introspective thoughts, aspirations, and an unspoken desire for autonomy.

Decision to Accompany Rama and Agency in Choice: Sita's decision to accompany Rama into exile reflects her agency. It's a choice rooted in loyalty and devotion but also underscores her independent will. Her resolve to share Rama's destiny in the forest echoes her agency in making a decision that defies societal norms and showcases her strength of character.

Resilience and Actions in the Enchanted Forest: Throughout her stay in the enchanted forest, Sita's resilience shines through amidst adversity. Her actions reveal a multidimensional character: nurturing the forest inhabitants, displaying self-sufficiency, and exhibiting unwavering courage in the face of danger. Despite the unfamiliar and challenging environment, Sita's adaptability and resourcefulness become evident, amplifying her independence beyond the traditional confines of her role as a dutiful wife.

Relationships and Interactions: Sita's interactions with characters like Rama, Lakshmana, and the forest dwellers unveil layers of her independence. Her conversations with Rama display not just obedience but also moments of assertion and introspection. Additionally, her rapport with Lakshmana

illustrates a nuanced dynamic, where she values his protection but doesn't shy away from expressing her thoughts and opinions, exhibiting her autonomy within relationships.

Impact of Patriarchal Norms: Societal norms and patriarchal ideologies significantly influence Sita's choices and actions. Despite her inner strength, Sita grapples with societal expectations that dictate her behavior and decisions. The societal gaze burdens her with unrealistic standards, confining her within predefined roles and limiting her autonomy.

Challenges in Maintaining Independence: Sita's journey in the enchanted forest is marred by the challenge of preserving her independence amidst societal pressures. The scrutiny and expectations imposed on her test her resilience, often overshadowing her autonomy and complicating her pursuit of independence.

Societal Expectations' Impact on Decisions: The societal pedestal where Sita is placed comes with immense pressure, impacting her decisions. Her choices are entangled with societal expectations, influencing her actions even when they contradict her inner desires, highlighting the struggle between societal obligations and personal autonomy.

This exploration highlights Sita's agency and struggles within the enchanted forest, portraying her as a woman grappling with societal norms while endeavoring to assert her independence and autonomy.

Impact of Patriarchal Norms on Sita

Societal Norms and Influences on Choices: Sita's choices and actions are profoundly influenced by entrenched patriarchal ideologies and societal norms prevalent in the Ramayana's narrative. The expectations of being an ideal wife and conforming to societal standards heavily weigh on her decisions. Her adherence to these norms is seen through her unwavering commitment to Rama's journey into exile and her enduring sacrifice, reflective of societal expectations of a devoted wife.

Challenges in Maintaining Independence: Despite her innate strength and resilience, Sita grapples with maintaining her independence amidst the pressure to conform. Patriarchal norms limit her agency, confining her within predefined roles and societal expectations. The societal gaze scrutinizes her every action, constraining her autonomy and complicating her pursuit of self-determination.

Analysis of Societal Expectations: Sita's character is burdened with the weight of societal expectations that epitomize the idealized woman. The societal pedestal upon which she is placed demands perfection in adherence to moral standards, particularly regarding chastity and loyalty. These expectations limit her freedom and overshadow her individuality, shaping her decisions and actions in accordance with societal norms rather than her own desires or aspirations.

Impact on Decision-Making: The influence of patriarchal norms profoundly impacts Sita's decision-making process. While she demonstrates moments of independence and agency, her choices are often entangled with societal expectations, constraining her from fully expressing her autonomy. The fear of societal judgment and the pressure to adhere to societal norms become dominant factors in shaping her decisions, often suppressing her inner desires and aspirations.

Societal Constraints on Autonomy: Patriarchal norms create constraints that hinder Sita's ability to exercise her autonomy fully. Her struggle to balance societal expectations with personal autonomy illustrates the internal conflict between conforming to societal ideals and pursuing her own sense of agency and independence.

This examination underscores how entrenched patriarchal norms within the societal framework significantly impact Sita's choices, actions, and ability to assert her independence, showcasing the pervasive influence of societal expectations on her character within the Ramayana narrative.

Resilience and Agency of Sita

Instances of Resilience and Strength: Sita's character exhibits remarkable resilience and strength, evident in various challenging situations throughout her journey in the enchanted forest. Her unwavering demeanor and fortitude in the face of adversity, whether it's adapting to the forest life or confronting unforeseen dangers, portray her as a resilient figure. Her ability to navigate unfamiliar terrains, endure hardships, and maintain composure in distressing circumstances underscores her inner strength.

Exercise of Agency within Constraints: Despite the constraints imposed by societal expectations, Sita showcases moments of agency and independence within her circumstances. Her decisions, while often influenced by societal norms, occasionally reveal her assertiveness and autonomy. Instances like her refusal to accept Ravana's advances, her unwavering belief in her chastity, and her dignified silence in the face of accusations during her captivity exemplify her agency within the limitations of her situation.

Significance of Sita's Actions and Decisions: Sita's actions and decisions hold immense significance within the narrative, transcending the traditional portrayal of her character. Each instance where she demonstrates resilience or exercises agency challenges the established norms and contributes to a multifaceted portrayal of her character. Her choices not only showcase her individual strength but also reflect a silent rebellion against societal constraints, becoming pivotal points that redefine her character beyond the confines of traditional expectations.

Assertiveness and Independence: Sita's moments of assertiveness and independence serve as subtle yet powerful expressions of her inner strength. Her ability to assert her beliefs, maintain her dignity, and uphold her values despite challenging circumstances amplifies her as a figure of resilience and agency. These instances reveal her as an individual with an indomitable spirit, carving her own narrative amidst the limitations imposed by societal norms.

Symbolism in Sita's Actions: Sita's actions and decisions carry symbolic weight in the narrative, reflecting not just her personal strength but also serving as a symbol of defiance against the societal norms that seek to confine her. Each act of resilience and assertion contributes to reshaping her character, portraying her as an emblem of strength and autonomy.

This exploration emphasizes Sita's resilience, agency, and moments of assertiveness, highlighting her ability to assert her independence within the constraints of societal expectations, and reshaping her character beyond traditional confines.

Conclusion :

The journey of Sita through the enchanted forest in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Forest of Enchantments" unfolds as a captivating odyssey, revealing layers of her character that transcend the traditional portrayal within the Ramayana. This exploration has illuminated Sita's quest for independence within the enchanted woods, showcasing her evolution as a woman of resilience, agency, and unwavering strength.

Throughout her sojourn in the enchanted forest, Sita's character undergoes a profound transformation. She emerges as a figure who grapples not only with the challenges of the wilderness but also with the societal expectations and patriarchal norms that seek to confine her. Her decisions, actions, and moments of assertion depict a woman striving for autonomy within the constraints of her circumstances.

The evolution of Sita's character within the enchanted forest narrative exemplifies her as an independent woman, far beyond the confines of a traditional, passive portrayal. Her resilience in the face of adversity, her moments of agency despite societal pressures, and her assertiveness in challenging situations all contribute to a multidimensional depiction of her character.

Sita's narrative holds immense significance in challenging traditional gender roles and perceptions. Her portrayal as a woman of strength and resilience challenges the age-old stereotypes that confine women within predefined roles. It serves as a testament to the complexity and depth of female characters in mythology, urging a reexamination of traditional narratives through a lens that acknowledges their agency and independence.

In conclusion, Sita's odyssey through the enchanted forest not only delineates her quest for independence but also redefines her character as a symbol of resilience, agency, and defiance against societal norms. Her narrative serves as an inspiration, prompting a reevaluation of traditional gender roles and advocating for a more nuanced understanding of female characters within mythological narratives.

This conclusion encapsulates Sita's evolution, emphasizing her quest for independence and the significance of her narrative in challenging conventional gender roles within the realm of mythological storytelling.

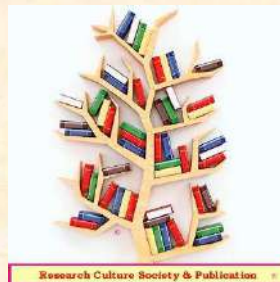
REFERENCES :

1. Divakaruni, C. B. (2019). *The forest of enchantments*. HarperCollins.
2. Deshpande, P. L. (1991). *Ladies coupe*. Seagull Books.
3. Pawar, U. (2001). *The weave of my life: A Dalit woman's memoirs*. Columbia University Press.
4. Sattar, A. (2019). *Uttara: The book of answers*. Penguin Random House India.
5. Volga. (2016). *The liberation of Sita*. Harper Perennial.
6. Pattanaik, D. (2008). *Sita: An illustrated retelling of the Ramayana*. Penguin Books India.
7. Chakravarti, U. (1993). *Gendering caste through a feminist lens*. Stree.
8. Narayan, R. K. (1972). *The Ramayana: A shortened modern prose version of the Indian epic*. Penguin Classics.
9. Valmiki. (2006). *Ramayana*. HarperCollins India.
10. Bose, M. (1999). *Faces of the feminine in ancient, medieval, and modern India*. Oxford University Press.

Benefits to publish in IJRCS:

- ❖ IJRCS is an Open-Access, peer reviewed, Indexed, Referred International Journal with wide scope of publication.
- ❖ Author Research Guidelines & Support.
- ❖ Platform to researchers and scholars of different study field and subject.
- ❖ Prestigious Editorials from different Institutes of the world.
- ❖ Communication of authors to get the manuscript status time to time.
- ❖ Full text of all published papers/ articles in the form of PDF format and Digital Object Identification (DOIs).
- ❖ Individual copy of "Certificate of Publication" to all Authors of Paper.
- ❖ Indexing of Journal in all major online journal databases like Google Scholar, Academia, Scribd, Mendeley, and Internet Archive.
- ❖ Open Access Journal Database for High visibility and promotion of your article with keyword and abstract.
- ❖ Organize Conference / Seminar and publish its papers with ISSN.
- ❖ Provides ISSN to Conferences / Seminars Special issues or Proceedings issues.

Published By



RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY & PUBLICATION

Email: editorijrcs@gmail.com

Web Email: editor@ijrcs.org

WWW.IJRCS.ORG